

COMMITTEE ON INTERCULTURAL AND GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-09

Committee Membership:

- Lisa Aronson, Associate Professor of Art History
- Rochelle Calhoun, Dean of Student Affairs
- Herb Crossman, Assistant Director for EEO and Workforce Diversity
- Coreen Filson, Director, Office of Off-Campus Study and Exchanges
- Winston Grady-Willis, Director of Intercultural Studies/ Associate Professor of American Studies (committee chair)
- Margaret Hegener, Academic Advisor, Higher Education Opportunity Program
- Mary Jablonski, Assistant to the Director, Schick Art Gallery
- Barbara Krause, Executive Director, Office of the President
- Bradley Martin, Director of Planned Giving, Development Office
- Mariel Martin, Director, Office of Student Diversity Programs
- Peter McCarthy, Lecturer, Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work
- Dean Mendes, Assistant Director of Admissions
- Katarra Peterson, Class of '09, SGA Vice President for Diversity Affairs
- Andrea Roman Alfaro, Class of '12, SGA Representative
- Julia Routbort, Director, Counseling Center

Introduction

CIGU met eleven times during the 2008-2009 academic year, including one meeting to conduct exit interviews with graduating students of color. This being the inaugural year for the committee, a key ongoing issue has been the effort to define its role and determine the parameters of its influence. A driving concern that informs these efforts is the commitment to seeing Goal Two of the Strategic Plan come to fruition.

Goal II Assessment Rubric

The first of two specific charges to CIGU by its predecessor, IGUTF, the committee was responsible for drafting an assessment rubric document to measure progress with respect to Goal Two of the Strategic Plan. Throughout the year, CIGU members worked to fashion a document that both lays the groundwork for diversity assessment and stands in conversation with the overall assessment efforts undertaken by Sarah Goodwin (Professor of English and College Assessment Coordinator) and others. Many of the items in the

document are stated at the level of objectives; the next step will be to identify quantitative, measurable, items for assessment where possible. While there is support for quantitative assessment, several members suggested the importance of retaining qualitative information as well. For example, quantitative measures of student success such as retention and academic achievement could be favorable, but students might still report a less-than-positive experience at Skidmore. Future work to assess progress toward Goal Two will need to incorporate not only racial and ethnic diversity, but also, diversity related to areas such as sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religious preference, disabilities, as well as incorporate a substantive treatment of global diversity. (See Appendix A for the document in narrative form; the document in grid form continues to undergo revisions as members of different campus divisions and offices provide input.)

Bias Response Protocol

The second of two specific charges to CIGU by its predecessor, the committee was responsible for reviewing and revising the College's interim Bias Response Protocol. The primary responsibility for reviewing the protocol rested with the Bias Response Group (BRG), a subcommittee of CIGU chaired by Rochelle Calhoun (Dean of Student Affairs) that had been established two years ago by the IGUTF. After providing input for further revision, CIGU members approved the revised protocol in the spring. (See Appendix B for the Bias Response Protocol document. Although the BRG is a subcommittee of CIGU, it has operated fairly autonomously. Please consult the BRG's forthcoming annual report for a substantive discussion of its incredibly successful year.)

Recruitment and Retention

A definite concern on the part of CIGU is helping Skidmore institutionalize the responsibility of producing a higher yield of multicultural accepted students, specifically, underrepresented students of color. As Dean Mendes (Assistant Director of Admissions) has asked, "How can we get the entire campus community to understand the importance of yielding these students?" From 2005-2008, the College has seen an overall jump of 58 percent in applications from students of color, from 1056 in 2005 to 1668 in 2008; consequently, there has been a corresponding rise in the percentage of students of color on campus.¹

¹ Dean Mendes reports that few students of color apply for early decision and that Opportunity Program students (irrespective of their ethnic background), in particular, tend not to apply for early decision, likely because they typically do not get as much support and guidance through the college admissions process.

Nevertheless, Skidmore tends to lose accepted candidates of color to specific peer and aspirant institutions. One critical factor is reputation. Specifically, certain schools such as Vassar, Wesleyan and Oberlin continue to attract some of our strongest candidates. While these schools do not necessarily have a geographical advantage over Skidmore, they do have a history of a demonstrated commitment to diversity. A second factor is material resources. Schools such as Bowdoin and Wesleyan have used a distinct advantage in resources to provide a range of opportunities for visiting prospective students. In response, Skidmore organized 300 more school visits in fall 2008 versus last academic year. These visits have included urban charter schools located in areas that Skidmore has not recruited in previously, including Atlanta, Washington, DC and Philadelphia. Skidmore also invited 70 community-based organizations (30 came) devoted to helping students attend college to a presentation featuring an alumni panel.

As significant as recruitment of students of color is, however, it is of little value without a concomitant commitment to retention of those students. Sue Layden (Associate Dean of Student Affairs) and Michael Ennis-McMillan (Dean of Studies) noted to CIGU members that Skidmore has a high overall retention rate, but that it is uneven across years and among various student populations. While Skidmore's overall retention numbers for students of color are certainly respectable when viewed nationally, there is clear room for improvement. Certain groups have been particularly vulnerable, including Black and Latino males and Asian American females. The retention of male students of color is a critical issue for CIGU to consider. Sue Layden, Monica Minor (Interim Programs and Outreach Director for HEOP) and Joshua Woodfork (Assistant Professor of American Studies) began an important initiative last academic year in stressing the need for ensuring academic strength among this group of students. However, these students also confront problems outside the classroom, including sometimes tension-filled community relationships, such as those with campus safety or local police.

Committee members agree that CIGU must gather more information on retention that is both substantive and nuanced—indeed, raced and gendered. As important, such data should paint a picture of the landscape over the course of several years. One way CIGU could accomplish this task is to consider a dynamic approach to assessing student success that addresses a progression from admission to retention to flourishing. Exit interviews have been conducted with graduating students of color. One of the limitations of exit interviews, however, is that they capture an end moment without giving us earlier data when there is a chance to intervene. It is hoped that the 2009-2010 academic year will usher in initiatives that call for surveys, focus groups and other assessment

measures that target first-year students moving forward. Furthermore, it is hoped that assessment measures will be identified that target faculty and staff members at Skidmore as well.

Campus Climate

Throughout the year CIGU members have attempted ways to make the entire campus community aware of the reality that domestic students of color and international students—as well as members of other underrepresented constituencies—are not having an entirely enjoyable experience here. The BRG received nine reports in the spring semester about bias incidents on campus, including removal and defacement of posters from the student group SOAR (Students Organized against Racism) and misogynist graffiti on domestic violence posters from the Center for Sex and Gender Relations.

During the spring 2009 semester CIGU learned of concerns on the part of international students and faculty. Pushkala Prasad (Zankel Chair Professor of Management and Business) spoke to the committee regarding concerns raised by several African students about derogatory remarks made by U.S. students during particular classes. The frequency with which such remarks have been made was of special concern to these students, as well as their perception that some faculty members were not doing enough to challenge them. In other cases, faculty members would intervene, but in pedagogically unsound ways, such as singling out the international student(s) for a response, as if those students were the designated representatives for their ethnic or racial group.

Professor Prasad also spoke to CIGU about a March meeting organized by international faculty designed to address their specific concerns. The nearly two-hour meeting revolved around three areas: (1) the immigration/ visa process, (2) specific classroom concerns and (3) the overall culture and climate at Skidmore. International faculty have become increasingly concerned with disrespectful and condescending behavior on the part of students both in the classroom and at office hours. Cori Filson (Director of OCSE) noted that Skidmore students from the United States who studied abroad often critiqued institutions that did not operate from a U.S. liberal arts college model in their evaluations. However, she noted that these students often brought assumptions to their study abroad experience suggesting that the U.S. liberal arts model was the only valid approach to higher education, assumptions which were problematic. Rochelle Calhoun noted that a fundamental problem is the key disconnect between the rhetoric about respecting different perspectives and worldviews seen in the Strategic Plan and the reality of the culture on campus.

However, as provincial as students tend to be with international faculty, the issue may be as problematic with Skidmore colleagues, according to Professor Prasad. She indicated that many international faculty have noted that U.S. faculty often assume that there is little in the way of intellectual production overseas, as evidenced by patronizing remarks and assumptions about their socioeconomic backgrounds. "I thank my lucky stars that I didn't come here as a junior faculty member," Professor Prasad noted, indicating that things are tougher for international faculty early in the tenure process. These concerns inform the way departments assess student evaluations of international faculty, as well as the way U.S. faculty gauge participation by international faculty socially. In each case not enough substantive effort is made to understand the cultural styles of societies outside the United States.

One response by CIGU will be to create a sense of receptivity and engagement among members of the larger campus community around issues of inclusion. Too often, the audience for the types of discussions that CIGU addresses is literally and figuratively too small. In this regard CIGU can play a key role with respect to programming of events. Lisa' Aronson (Associate Professor of Art History) is part of a group coordinating a Tang exhibit for spring 2011 highlighting environmental justice issues worldwide. The exhibit might provide a context for bringing Nobel Laureate Wangari Mathai on campus from Kenya. Mathai had been honored for her grassroots tree-planting efforts and contributions to the Green Belt Movement.

Recommendations

Based on its work over the course of the 2008-2009 academic year, CIGU, a subcommittee of the IPPC, makes the following friendly recommendations to the IPPC and campus community.

- CIGU recommends that the IPPC formally approve the revised Bias Response Protocol (Appendix B), and early in the fall 2009 semester, if possible.
- CIGU recommends that the IPPC endorse the Inclusion at Skidmore College Assessment document (Appendix A) as one of several tools with which to measure progress toward the realization of Goal Two of the Strategic Plan. The subcommittee makes this recommendation with the understanding that the assessment document in grid form will continue to be revised and reshaped in subsequent months.
- CIGU recommends that the relevant campus offices at Skidmore take up the discussion of the campus climate for international faculty, staff and students during the 2009-2010 academic year.

- CIGU recommends that the IPPC and President's Cabinet revisit the definition used to categorize "students of color" across divisions of the College. The absence of consistency in this regard has sent contradictory signals not only to current students, staff and faculty, but also, to individuals considering becoming members of the institution.
- CIGU recommends that the relevant campus offices at Skidmore begin assessing campus climate for students of color and other underrepresented groups via coordinated surveys, focus groups, and/ or interviews throughout the campus experience, and not senior year exit interviews exclusively.

Conclusion

Several CIGU members have wondered aloud whether there might be serious consequences for efforts to realize Goal Two of the Strategic Plan in the wake of the current economic crisis. Others have noted that certain Goal Two items require sacrifices of time and energy, but not necessarily financial resources. Specifically, the committee can play a key role in helping to shape the conversation around diversity at Skidmore. Although CIGU is not a faculty committee, per se, it may be able to impact the issue of diversity within the curriculum by pressing for a clearer articulation of what is meant by "intercultural literacy" across campus by supporting initiatives such as Intergroup Relations, the cultivation of courses in areas such as queer theory, and a possible minor in intercultural studies. CIGU also may be able to impact what could prove to be an important series of conversations about the climate on campus for international students and faculty.

APPENDIX A

Assessing Diversity and Inclusion at Skidmore College

Our wish for our students is to learn about and advocate for social justice in the context of both American culture and the larger world... Fostering global awareness throughout the Skidmore community

Goal II – Intercultural and Global Understanding

We will challenge every Skidmore student to develop the intercultural understanding and global awareness necessary to thrive in the complex and increasingly interconnected world of the 21st Century.

Introduction

During the 2007-2008 academic year the Intercultural and Global Understanding Task Force (IGUTF) discussed certain diversity-related objectives that Skidmore might wish to measure. IGUTF members reviewed materials, two components of which became central: the Middle States Accreditation documents (2006) and *Engaged Liberal Learning: The Plan for Skidmore College 2005-2015*. Focusing primarily on specific language from the Strategic Plan and Middle States documents, Susan Layden, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, prepared an exhaustive draft rubric for assessing diversity at Skidmore, and led a fruitful initial discussion among IGUTF members.

Subsequently, the IGUTF members who comprised the recently assembled diversity triad—Herb Crossman, Assistant Director for EEO and Workforce Diversity, Mariel Martin, Director of the Office of Student Diversity Programs, and Winston Grady-Willis, Director of Intercultural Studies—began meeting to further discuss the draft rubric with the aim of prioritizing the various objectives. They also met (either individually or as a group) with Susan Layden and with faculty members Pushkala Prasad and Patricia Rubio to further consider key objectives that Skidmore might seek to measure over time. The academic year ended (as did the charter of the IGUTF) before full consideration could be given to the rubric; however, the group did identify five broad areas around which to continue further discussions: institutional markers, curricular items, co-curricular items, faculty issues, and student learning outcomes.

During summer 2008 members of the triad continued their effort to formulate a rubric for assessing diversity, now joined by Rochelle Calhoun, incoming Dean of Student Affairs. Now a quartet, this group has further revised the initial rubric, brought the document before the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (the IGUTF's permanent successor group), and held subsequent meetings with Susan Layden and Professor Sarah Goodwin, Faculty Assessment Coordinator. What follows is the most recent draft of a document that seeks to gauge diversity and inclusion at Skidmore College. It is now organized under seven broad headings: access for all students; success for all students; support to faculty, staff and administration; changes to curriculum; campus climate and co-curricular engagement; hiring and retaining faculty, staff and administration; and student learning outcomes.² We feel that it would be inappropriate to rank or prioritize these broader headings. Within each of the headings, however, an attempt has been made to prioritize the objectives.

Access for All Students

- In attending to diversity, we need to think inclusively, considering factors such as: socioeconomic background, geographical distribution and national origin, as well as race, gender, ethnicity, cultural heritage, sexual orientation, religious background, etc.
 - Increase our endowed scholarship funds for students with economic need—paying special attention to students who will contribute most to the goals of educational excellence, rigor and diversity
 - Target new scholarships toward students with strong interest in the science and mathematics
- Provide a welcoming environment for members of underrepresented groups and international students, a place where their intellectual lives prosper and their personal interests are supported and nourished as well as challenged
- Be clear about our objectives with regard to increases in specific populations, such as students of color and international students
 - **Continue to expand, stabilize and enhance our successful HEOP/AOP programs, which were**

² Objectives placed in **boldface** have been met or substantially realized.

expanded by 40% in 2004, ensuring that they will continue regardless of the vicissitudes of external funding.

- Aim for 20% of the students to be students of color by 2015, and provide the necessary support to retain those students and ensure their success
- Our long-term objectives must include not only a more diverse student population drawn from across the United States, but also, a substantial increase in the number of international students attending Skidmore
- Begin with existing contacts and target our admissions efforts to recruit additional international students who can afford to study at Skidmore and who—through their presence here—have the potential to attract additional students from their homelands
- Take advantage of existing relationships with known feeder schools in the United States, and work to extend those relationships to new schools
- Identify high schools with significant populations of first-generation American and immigrant students who can bring to Skidmore perspectives shaped by first-hand international experience
- Make selective use of existing contacts with individuals and school in other countries and programs such as United World College where, with their help, our recruiting efforts can be most efficient and effective
- Increase our efforts through mentoring and programmatic changes to enable a higher percentage of our students to study abroad for at least one semester, with an initial goal of 60% of Skidmore graduates having such an experience
 - Reduce the obstacles to students going abroad from certain disciplines (e.g., the natural sciences)

- Develop additional resources to support faculty efforts to create opportunities to take our students abroad for experiences that foster global awareness

Success for All Students (progression, retention, etc.)

- Continue efforts to understand why performance on certain student populations fails to meet our expectations and, based on that enhanced understanding, we will increase our efforts to meet their needs more successfully
- Improve retention and achievement among traditionally underrepresented student groups by improving academic support where it is needed
 - Apply successful HEOP/ AOP models for programming, mentoring and curriculum to other areas of the College
- Given the psychological and academic toll that co-curricular work can take on committed and persistent student leaders, provide greater day-to-day, evening-time, and weekend support from the College's Student Affairs staff

Support to Faculty, Staff and Administration

- Engage in a vigorous conversation within our faculty and across our community to clarify our understanding of what our students need to know about Goal II
- Consistently include programs to enhance the skills that relate to Goal II in the professional development of our faculty, staff and administration
- Provide incentives to faculty for course development, including workshops and stipends for intercultural literacy or intercultural and global understanding curriculum

- Using Fulbright and other international grants, bring accomplished international scholars to Skidmore to teach as visiting faculty members, in short residencies, etc
- Encourage and support attendance at conferences that focus on diversity and global understanding
- **Launch into full activity the Presidential task force on intercultural and global understanding, as called for in the Strategic Plan, to a) prioritize the College's goals so that resources are appropriately allocated and b) develop a strategy for effective assessment of our achievements in implementing Goals II and III of the Strategic Plan.**

Changes to Curriculum

- **Students must study at least one foreign culture and language.**
- Introduce intercultural learning early and often in the student experience.
- Create more courses and programs that examine both global and domestic cultural differences as defined by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender, and sexualities.
- Provide additional resources to faculty members to meet the pedagogical needs of an increasingly diverse student population and take advantage of the opportunities represented by a more multicultural classroom environment.
- Departments and programs take the lead in enhancing curricula to advance both intercultural literacy and global understanding.
- Provide additional encouragement and assistance to faculty whose research and teaching have an international *or transnational* focus.
- Support programs (e.g., the International Affairs major), curricula, courses, lectureships, and symposia that enhance global awareness on campus
- Allow all majors to offer study abroad as an option.
- Make the most of the interconnections by coordinating international and global studies events

Campus Climate & Co-Curricular Engagement

- Help *all* of our students develop the interpersonal skills required to interact successfully within an increasingly diverse College population
- Strengthen programs that enhance campus climate and promote understanding among cultures, racial groups, religions, and individuals, such as the Intercultural Center
- Establish and sustain an effective relationship between Academic and Student Affairs . . .
- Develop new ways to engage our students beyond the classroom, through collaborative research, service learning, internships and volunteer activities
- Cultivate effective partnerships between the FYE program, advisors, and Student Affairs professionals
- Begin gathering information systematically about student clubs and organizations and how their activities relate to matters of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic differences, gender and sexualities, especially given that these organizations comprise such an important part of College life
- Develop new ways to engage our students beyond the classroom, through collaborative research, service learning, internships, and volunteer activities
- These concerns also need to be reflected in the shared conversations prompted by visiting speakers, symposia, performances and other such public events
- Take advantage of resources represented by students returning from study abroad to enrich the campus community
- It is essential that international and global studies events be coordinated with events planned around race, ethnicities, and cultural differences in the U.S., both to avoid conflicts and to make the most of their interconnection

- Increase the number of residence halls programs that focus on race and ethnicity
- Support initiatives to increase diversity through improved collaboration between the relevant OSDP programs and Admissions, HEOP/ AOP, and relevant departmental programs
- Increase institutional capacity to take advantage of returning study abroad students (including London Program first-year students) by developing new ways for these students to share their study abroad experiences with others (e.g., via Web logs, Academic Festival, etc.)

Hiring and Retaining Faculty, Staff and Administration

- Expand the recruitment sources presently used in order to recruit faculty members, administrators, and staff members who represent excellence in their field and who also will increase the diversity of our employee population
 - Review all applications to insure lists contain diverse candidates.
 - Provide support to new faculty, staff and administrators who add diversity to the employee population in order to retain these individuals long term
- Recruit faculty of color in tenure track lines and in more flexible positions, taking advantage of developing further possibilities for a variety of positions
 - Where feasible, we will use flexible interdisciplinary faculty positions to increase the diversity of our application pool
- Send clear signals that we are seeking faculty interested and experienced in working with previously under-served student populations
- **Complete the search for the Director of Intercultural Studies, a high-level administrator with faculty status responsible for overseeing curriculum and hiring that promotes the Strategic initiative outlined.**

- Complete the search for a Director of Student Diversity Programs who will collaborate with the Director of Intercultural Studies to coordinate efforts in the curriculum and co-curriculum.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

- We seek to engage our students more fully in learning about cultural diversities, both domestic and global, understanding that no one's worldview is universal, that other people may have profoundly different perspectives and values
- Provided with ample contexts to learn about race, ethnicity, and other kinds of differences in their coursework and in the curriculum, as well as in home-stays, internships and fieldwork, our wish is for our students' education to lead them to greater intercultural understanding, analytic insight, and capacities for communication
- Develop skills to identify and analyze complex international problems in their historical, technological, and ethical contexts, understanding the dynamics *of both domestic and* international conflict, collaboration, and negotiation
 - Differentiation between phenomena that are area-specific and transnational
 - Recognition that world systems are interdependent, and that local choices have global impact
- Encountering and engaging students, faculty, and staff from backgrounds that are both different from and similar to their own

APPENDIX B

Revised Bias Response Protocol

Statement of Values

Engaged Liberal Learning: The Plan for Skidmore College 2005-2015 sets forth the College's strategic direction and goals for the coming decade within the context of our broad educational mission, which encompasses the College's academic, co-curricular, and residential life. Goal II of The Plan states that we "will challenge every Skidmore student to develop the intercultural understanding and global awareness necessary to thrive in the complex and increasingly interconnected world of the 21st Century." If we are to achieve this objective, we must, in the words of Gandhi, "be the change we wish to see in the world." That is, we must first develop within and across our community the knowledge and skills that we seek to impart to our students. As one necessary means to achieving this end, we must recreate Skidmore itself as a more diverse, globally conscious academic community – one that is ever more capable of supporting this crucial educational goal. Indeed, the College we envision is one that truly lives up to the commitment in our "Mission Statement" to educate "a diverse population of talented students who are eager to engage actively in the learning process."

Liberal education itself requires the interplay of the broadest possible spectrum of ideas, viewpoints, and perspectives. We enhance the intellectual and cultural vitality of our community when persons of many different backgrounds and viewpoints draw upon distinct personal histories and engage in honest dialog. Diversity, likewise, links directly with creativity: interactions between disparate perspectives frequently strike the intellectual sparks that herald the emergence of a new idea. Attention to difference in background, cultural perspective, life experience, and worldview is thus an essential element within the larger framework of Skidmore's most fundamental and longstanding institutional commitments.

The educational mission of the College can be fulfilled only with the full participation of all community members in the life of the institution. Achieving this ambitious vision requires that all members of our community treat one another with civility and mutual respect. The College, therefore, is determined to confront and discourage conduct and attitudes that exhibit bias or that harass or discriminate against any of our community members on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, nationality, economic background, age, physical or mental

ability, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, veteran status, or religious practice.

The commitment to creating a welcoming, safe, and inclusive community does not mean that community members will never be offended. Skidmore College vigorously endorses the principle of academic freedom as outlined in the College's Faculty Handbook, and the College is committed to providing a learning environment that encourages a robust, stimulating, and thought-provoking exchange of ideas. Among other things, we expect our students as well as other members of the community to become comfortable with the discomfort of being challenged by new experiences and ideas and, above all, of being challenged to achieve excellence. Nothing in this Bias Response Protocol is intended to stifle academic freedom, protected speech, or lawful protest.

The College, then, strives to strike a balance between its commitment to academic freedom and free speech – which may result in critical dialog, difficult conversations, or even offensive comments – with its commitment to ensuring that all members of community experience the campus as a hospitable and welcoming place. Such an environment will support students, faculty members, and staff members as they strive to achieve the level of excellence to which we all aspire. Bias incidents undermine the ability of individuals to participate fully in the life of the College and, in so doing, undermine the integrity of our educational mission. The College, therefore, adopts this Bias Response Protocol as a means to furthering the educational and professional aspirations of the entire Skidmore community.

Purpose of this Protocol

The purpose of this Bias Response Protocol is to establish an understanding of how Skidmore College defines a “bias incident” and to constitute and describe the function of a Bias Response Group. As set forth more fully below, the Bias Response Group's responsibilities will include considering and recommending responses to reports of bias incidents; more generally, the Bias Response Group will play an educational role in helping to cultivate the community values of inclusion, civility, and mutual respect described above.

Issues related to intercultural and global understanding are multidimensional and complex. They are issues that other colleges and universities – and, indeed, our society as a whole – are facing as well. Members of the Skidmore community, therefore, should expect that the definitions and procedures set forth in this document will continue to evolve. The College encourages active engagement by all community members in the ongoing conversations and efforts that will be required if we are to make real progress toward our goal of intercultural and global understanding.

Definitions of 'Bias Incident' and 'Hate Crime'

Skidmore defines a bias incident as an act of bigotry, harassment, or intimidation involving a member of the Skidmore community that a reasonable person would conclude is directed at a member or group within the Skidmore community based on race, color, ethnicity, nationality, economic background, age, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, veteran status, or religious practice. A bias incident can occur whether the act is intentional or unintentional. Speech or expression that is consistent with the principles of academic freedom does not constitute a bias incident.

A hate crime is defined under New York State law (Title Y: Section 485.05 – Hate Crimes) as follows:

1. A person commits a hate crime when he or she commits a specified offense and either:
 - a) intentionally selects the person against whom the offense is committed or intended to be committed in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation of a person, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct, or
 - b) intentionally commits the act or acts constituting the offense in whole or in substantial part because of a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation of a person, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct.

Note: All hate crimes are bias incidents, but not all bias incidents are hate crimes.

Reporting a Bias Incident or Hate Crime

Any individual member of the Skidmore College community – or any group of persons within the community – who observes or is the target of a bias incident or hate crime is strongly encouraged to report the incident as soon as possible to Campus Safety at 518-580-5566 and/ or file a Bias Response Report, available on line at <http://cms.skidmore.edu/bias/reporting.cfm>. If there is an immediate danger or need, please contact Campus Safety immediately. Campus Safety will document what happened, including where and when the incident occurred, the names of the victims, and names of witnesses, if any. Whenever possible, the individual(s) who observe the incident should not touch or disturb any physical evidence related to the incident.

Any person or group may also opt to contact any of the following individuals or offices:

- any staff member from Student Affairs, including Residential Life (student and professional staff), Campus Life, Counseling Services, or Chaplain's Office;
- the Dean of Student Affairs or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs;
- the Director of Student Diversity Programs;
- the Director of HEOP/ AOP;
- the Assistant Director for EEO and Workforce Diversity (ADEWD);
- the Dean of the Faculty or the Associate Dean of the Faculty;
- the Dean of Studies;
- an Academic Department Chair;
- a student's academic advisor; or
- your supervisor (if an employee of the College).

Any of these individuals will work closely with the person or groups affected in determining where to direct the complaint and how the College might respond effectively to the incident.

Referrals of Bias Incidents

Behavior reflecting bias, harassment or discrimination may constitute a violation of Skidmore College policies, including but not limited to those set forth in the Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook (Part Six), the Exempt and Non-Exempt or the Employee Handbook, or Union Contracts. Such conduct also may violate local, state, or federal laws. The College's response to reports of bias incidents will depend on various factors including the nature of the complaint, whether the alleged violator can be identified, the complainant's wishes as to how the matter should be handled, the College's obligations to the campus community as a whole, and the College's obligations under the law.

The following procedures will apply:

1. All reported bias incidents will be referred to the Bias Response Group (see below for membership and function). Referral to the Bias Response Group is appropriate even when the person(s) believed to have committed the act or acts in question cannot be identified, or in situations where the person or persons subjected to an act constituting a bias incident do not wish to pursue campus disciplinary or criminal charges.
2. Reports of a hate crime should be referred to Skidmore Campus Safety. If appropriate, Campus Safety will involve external law enforcement agencies with

jurisdiction over the incident. Reports of a hate crime on campus also will be referred to the Bias Response Group.

3. Reports of harassment or discrimination* alleging that a student or student organization has violated College policy should be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs (or designee) for consideration and resolution pursuant to the Skidmore Judicial System.

4. Reports of harassment or discrimination* alleging that an employee of the College or contractor has violated College policy should be referred to the Assistant Director for EEO and Workforce Diversity (ADEWD) for consideration and resolution pursuant to appropriate employment procedures. Reports alleging that a faculty member has engaged in harassment or discrimination may also be made to other College officials as set forth in Part Six, Article VII.C of the Faculty Handbook.

Bias Response Group Membership

The following individuals will serve on the College's Bias Response Group:

- Dean of Student Affairs (chair)
- Two students, one of whom will be the SGA VP of Diversity Affairs;
- Assistant Director for EEO and Workforce Diversity (ADEWD);
- Director of Student Diversity Programs;
- Director of Intercultural Studies or other academic leadership;
- One faculty member appointed by the President with the concurrence of the Faculty Executive Committee;
- One additional Student Affairs representative (at the level of Associate Dean or higher).

The Bias Response Group is free to call upon other members of the community (e.g., faculty members who are knowledgeable about a particular field, Residence Life staff, counselors, Campus Safety, or others) for assistance at any time. The Bias Response Group will work closely with a designated representative from the Office of the President and with other offices as appropriate to consider what response, if any, is appropriate to any report of a bias incident.

The Function of the Bias Response Group

The members of the Bias Response Group are charged with two distinct but related responsibilities. First, they constitute the College's first-response team in dealing with reported bias incidents. Second, working with other appropriate

individuals, offices, and organizations, they will play an educational role in helping to foster a climate of openness and inclusion on the Skidmore campus, a climate that is intolerant of harassment or discrimination directed against any member of the Skidmore community. Given the College's broad educational mission, it is important that the Bias Response Group involve representatives from both academic and co-curricular programs, members of the faculty and staff, and students in its ongoing, proactive efforts to sustain of the desired campus climate.

Response Group for Bias Incidents

All reports of bias incidents will be referred to the Bias Response Group chair. The chair will confer with and/ or convene the Bias Response Group expeditiously after receiving an incident report. In such instances, the role of the Bias Response Group will be as follows:

1. Upon receipt of a bias incident report, the Bias Response Group chair (or designee) will immediately contact the individual who submitted the report to acknowledge receipt.
2. Ensure that appropriate College officials and other individuals, groups, or organizations are notified and consulted to provide the context necessary to consider the report of a bias incident.
3. Determine whether the reported act meets the definition of a "bias incident" as set forth in this document.
4. If the reported act is determined to be a bias incident, consider appropriate educational measures to address the incident. Such measures, which must not interfere with any disciplinary proceedings that might be underway or contemplated, could include the following:
 - Notifying the community of the bias incident as appropriate. This notice might be distributed via e-mail, web site, posters, Skidmore News, and/ or other means of communication. The notice might be made following a particular incident or as part of a periodic report to the campus community. In deciding what sort of notice is appropriate and from whom the notice should come, the Bias Response Group must consider the full context of the incident and may consult relevant constituencies. The nature of such communications will necessarily depend upon the nature and severity of a reported incident. In some cases, the nature of the incident will determine that the initial communication to the campus community comes from an administrator who is not a member of the group. Because of its close working relationship with all major administrative offices, the Bias Response Group will be able to nominate an appropriate spokesperson and

expedite such communication, to ensure that the community is informed on a timely basis. The Bias Response Group also may determine that campus-wide notification of an individual incident is not appropriate and that a higher educational value would result by communicating about the incident in a different context, or that notification in a particular case would not serve any educational purpose.

- Suggesting educational programming within the building(s) where the incident occurred or for the campus more broadly. In order to enhance the likelihood that such programming can be provided quickly in response to a bias incident, the Bias Response Group will develop a list of written resources as well as a list of individuals, including faculty members, staff members, and students, who are willing to be consulted and involved when various types of incidents occur.

Educational role in fostering a climate of inclusion, civility, and mutual respect

In addition to considering reports of bias incidents, the Bias Response Group will assume an educational role in fostering a climate of inclusion, civility, and mutual respect throughout the Skidmore community. In carrying out this responsibility, the role of the Bias Response Group will be as follows:

1. To make recommendations – to appropriate administrators, governance bodies, organizations, or other groups – as to how to best foster an inclusive campus climate characterized by civility and mutual respect.
2. To prepare an annual report describing the number and type of bias incidents reported and how the incidents were addressed.
3. To develop and distribute materials setting forth the definition of a bias incident and the Bias Response Protocol and to publicize these materials every year, most significantly with new students and employees.

* As of Fall 2008, the Bias Response Group is an official standing subcommittee of the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU). This provisional document reflects the work of the Bias Response Group and incorporates comments from the Intercultural and Global Understanding Task Force (IGUTF), the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee, and the President's Cabinet. In Fall 2007, the President requested that it also be reviewed by the Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR). The terms of this document will be implemented immediately, with the understanding that the

President and appropriate governance bodies will review it on an ongoing basis and will modify it as appropriate.

* The **reasonable person** is a legal fiction of the common law representing an objective standard against which any individual's conduct can be measured. For purposes of this section, the individual must also be appropriately informed of College policies and applicable law.

* Note that definitions of 'harassment' and 'discrimination' may be found on the Skidmore website at: [http:// cms.skidmore.edu/ hr/ eeo-and-diversity.cfm](http://cms.skidmore.edu/hr/eeo-and-diversity.cfm)