

**INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
September 12, 2008**

PRESENT: President Philip Glotzbach, Chair; Professor Sue Bender, Vice Chair; Mary Lou Bates, Rochelle Calhoun, Michael Casey, Dan Nathan, Ann Henderson, Susan Kress, Muriel Poston, Jeff Segrave, Justin Sipher, Kim Marsella, Michael West; Mark Huibregtse, Barbara McDonough, Jackie Shydrowski, Winston Grady-Willis, Mary Cogan; Barbara Krause (Secretary).

1. Welcome and Introduction of New Members

President Glotzbach began the meeting by welcoming all new and returning members to the IPPC. He expressed his special thanks to Sue Bender for agreeing to serve as Vice Chair for the coming year. Professor Roy Rotheim, who had been elected to the Vice Chair position last spring, requested a deferral in light of unanticipated teaching commitments this fall. President Glotzbach also thanked Mark Huibregtse, who has agreed to complete the remaining one-year term created by the resignation of Professor Mehmet Odekon.

Other new members of IPPC are Rochelle Calhoun, Dean of Student Affairs; Dan Nathan, Chair of CEPP; Jackie Shydrowski, Class of '09, SGA President; Kim Marsella (fall '08) and Erica Fuller (spring '09), Co-Chairs of CEC. Positions remaining to be filled include a faculty representative and a second student to be selected by SGA.

2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the meeting of May 2, 2008 were approved with the following revision: under item 5 (Strategic Action Agenda 2008-09), the 4th bullet should read as follows:

- Academic Planning (need for a structure to do this work; Academic Affairs has made some progress this year and will continue this work).
 - What is the relationship of academic planning to the College's *Strategic Plan*?
 - How do the current academic projects fit into the larger vision of Academic Affairs?
 - What is the process for developing new projects?

3. Annual Report 2007-08

President Glotzbach thanked Mark Huibregtse for his work in preparing the Annual Report for IPPC's work last year. The report was endorsed by the Committee and has been posted on the IPPC website.

4. Strategic Action Agenda 08-09

The draft Strategic Action Agenda 2008-09 was distributed in advance of the meeting. President Glotzbach noted that he and members of his Cabinet worked on the document over the summer, taking into consideration input received last spring from IPPC and the Board of Trustees' Strategic Planning Committee. The preamble introduces the concept of *strategic literacy*. President Glotzbach invited comments on whether that concept has merit and, if so, what IPPC's role should be to enhance strategic literacy throughout the Skidmore community. Comments included the following:

- In response to a question about whether there was a literature on strategic literacy, it was noted that the phrase came from a member of the Board of Trustees.
- The concept of strategic literacy is an important one that will help the community better understand choices that must be made in a context of limited resources.
- There was some concern about whether the term "literacy" is overused (we now have information literacy, scientific literacy, intercultural literacy, etc.). The key is to ask what information members of the community need to know in order to participate well in institutional decision-making.
- It would be helpful to define the notion of strategic literacy for the entire community. What expectations follow for day-to-day decision-making? Many small choices can have a significant strategic impact.
- The campus as a whole should have a sense of the larger strategic vision and understand that choices in individual areas are only a piece of a larger picture.
- One way to enhance strategic literacy would be to return to the themes raised in the *Strategic Plan* and the Strategic Action Agenda as issues are raised, and to base answers to those questions on the themes and on relevant data.
- It would be helpful to have a better understanding to the term "sustainability". This is something that CEC might work on.
- The phrase *strategic literacy* provides a shared vocabulary.
- It was noted that last year's Strategic Action Agenda included the theme of *leadership* – strategic literacy is an elaboration of that theme.

President Glotzbach then invited comments on the particular action items identified in the second part of the document. Comments included the following:

- Do we have the capacity – including the time and financial resources – to complete all of the work? President Glotzbach indicated that he and the Cabinet believe they do have this capacity, but acknowledged that completing all of the items would not be easy.
- Regarding item 11 (College Calendar), it was suggested that work in the coming year might focus on the operational aspects and development of a plan to ensure better utilization of services across campus. It was noted, for example, that the demands on Dining Services and Facilities can be enormous when many events are scheduled on campus at the same time. It was noted that SGA has recently purchased “Orgsync” software to assist them in calendaring club events.

Other minor changes were noted and will be referred for further consideration.

5. Optimization

President Glotzbach reminded IPPC members that last spring, upon the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee, IPPC recommended that the College complete the third optimization question that had been left unresolved in the spring of 2006. Over the summer, the Cabinet drafted a document (distributed to IPPC members in advance of the meeting) that summarized the optimization issues and laid out the questions that would need to be interrogated. As the Cabinet prepared that draft document and considered what would be entailed in the context of the other items listed in the Strategic Action Agenda, the Cabinet decided to recommend that the College *not* undertake the study of optimization question 3 at this time. Among other reasons to defer this work, President Glotzbach noted the workload of other items in the Strategic Action Agenda, the fact that we are still working to attain the targeted NFE of 2,280 as identified from the previous optimization work, and the belief of Cabinet that planning for the Scribner Village replacement can be flexible enough to accommodate student housing needs. President Glotzbach then invited discussion of Cabinet’s recommendation. Comments included the following:

- The perception of doing an optimization study at this time – when, despite best efforts, we have not achieved the previous target of 2,280 – could be negative. However, the College continues to struggle to live within its budget even with “over enrollment” revenue. Eliminating these funds would produce a serious strain on the College’s budget.
- The workload issue is real. Postponing official consideration of optimization question 3 would allow us to benefit from information that we could learn in the interim (e.g., the effect of peer institutions’ revised financial aid policies; demographic shifts; the opportunity to discern whether improved retention rates will stabilize; academic staffing issues; student affairs issues such as counseling, housing, athletics and recreation facilities; etc.).
- It was noted that CEPP had concerns last year about the wisdom of doing the next phase of the optimization work; those concerns included, among others, faculty teaching loads and classroom space.

- There could be many positive effects of bringing more students to campus, including increased vibrancy and a positive financial impact.
- The challenge of predicting long-term study abroad patterns is an important factor in this discussion.

Following this conversation, members of IPPC unanimously supported the Cabinet recommendation not to undertake the optimization work at this time. It was noted, however, that the working draft is a good document and will provide a useful starting point if and when this conversation is taken up in the future. The Strategic Action Agenda will be edited to reflect the decision to defer this work.

6. Update on Major Capital Facilities Planning Process

The President's Cabinet has worked over the summer to develop a facilities planning process that includes both major capital projects and the work of a Space Planning Working Group. The Cabinet is close to completing that work and will share that the proposed process at an upcoming meeting.

7. IPPC Agenda for 2008-09

President Glotzbach invited members to identify issues that they believe will benefit from IPPC consideration during the coming year. That list included the following:

- Budget
- Establishing the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU) and, in particular, considering the Bias Response Protocol and composition of the Bias Response Team.
- Establishment of the Responsible Citizenship Task Force and reporting from that group.
- Major Capital Facilities Planning Process/Space Planning Working Group.
- UWW Working Group recommendations (in partnership with CEPP).
- Academic planning more broadly (following consideration by CEPP; IPPC work not anticipated until 2nd semester).
- Center for Faculty Excellence (report due in April and would go first to CEPP).
- Science Plan (following consideration by CEPP).

- Recommendations from the Health Task Force (to be presented first to IPPC Student Affairs Subcommittee).
- SGA items could include Integrity Board and Falstaff Corporation.
- Case-Ladd Task Force (following Cabinet review).
- Strategic Literacy (ongoing).
- Strategic Action Agenda 09-10 (early spring).
- IRC (possible issues related to communications and technology).
- Oracle-related issues.

8. Other Updates

Enrollment: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Mary Lou Bates provided a brief update on enrollment figures. The total fall enrollment for the first-year class is 652, which is 6 over the target of 646. Dean Bates suggested that a lower than expected summer melt was responsible for the difference. She also noted that the number of students in the three highest bands of “Academic Quality Rating” has increased significantly over the past several years. The expected NFE as of September 12, 2008, was 2,373. IPPC members expressed appreciation for the excellent work of Dean Bates and her staff.

Due to time constraints, updates on construction of the Zankel Music Building and the Case-Ladd Task Force will be deferred to a later meeting.

Minutes prepared by Barbara Krause. Please notify of any changes.