

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 4, 2011

PRESENT: Acting President Susan Kress, Chair; Hugh Foley, Vice Chair; Mary Lou Bates, Rochelle Calhoun, Michael Casey, Winston Grady-Willis, Mark Huibregtse, Bob Turner, Muriel Poston, Paty Rubio, Jeff Segrave, Justin Sipher, Michael West, Adrienne Zuerner, Anne Petruzzelli, Gail Cummings-Danson, Denise Smith, Alexandra Stark, Jonathan Zeidan, and Barbara Krause (Secretary).

ABSENT: Joseph Stankovich

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the December 17, 2010 meeting were approved as distributed.

2. Budget Planning FY12

Vice President for Finance and Administration Michael West reported that the bond issue to support construction of the Scribner Village replacement project closed the previous day at rates favorable to the College. As part of the bond issuance, the College was re-rated by Moody's and retained its A-1 rating. Site work has begun for the Scribner Village project.

Mr. West then updated IPPC members on a number of developments relating to College's budget planning:

- The Consumer Price Index as of December 2010 was 1.5%, somewhat lower than expected. Current budget modeling assumes that the CPI as of June 2011 will be 2.0% due in part to increasing fuel prices.
- Other colleges and universities are beginning to announce comprehensive fee increases. Princeton announced a 1% increase, and Cornell announced 4.5% for its privately endowed colleges. If Middlebury College adheres to the pledge it made one year ago, its comprehensive fee increase would be no more than 2.5% (CPI plus 1%).
- Mr. West's office has conducted a sensitivity analysis assuming a proposed Skidmore increase and comparing that to potential peer increases ranging from 1% to 4%.

Mr. West then reviewed the preliminary recommendations and budget assumptions for FY12. Points here included the following:

- Admissions applications overall are down approximately 4% from one year ago. The quality of applications has remained constant.

- Mr. West reviewed the preliminary Comprehensive Fee increase that was recommended at the Trustee Budget Workshop meeting in late January. He noted that an earlier, higher proposed increase (suggested at IPPC's Budget and Finance Committee) had been withdrawn.
- In all conversations, the difficult challenge is to balance the desire to enhance accessibility (which would favor lower increases to the Comprehensive Fee) against the desire to enhance our educational offerings (which suggests higher increases to provide additional revenue). Members acknowledged the importance of ensuring that all allocations for new initiatives are made in the way that best advances strategic priorities.

Mr. West shared a confidential draft of proposed new initiatives as of late January. Concern was expressed in the IPPC Budget and Finance Subcommittee, as well as at Cabinet and in Board discussions, regarding the cumulative budgetary impact of new initiatives in the out years. Questions and comments from IPPC members included the following:

- Clarification of the fee waiver for United World College students.
- While expressing support for the work that is reflected in the proposed list of new initiatives, several members expressed concern about how few of the new initiative items relate directly to the core educational (curricular) areas of the College.
- Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs Muriel Poston commented on the difficulty of bringing forward proposed new initiatives from Academic Affairs that far exceeded the money available for new initiatives. In this context, she supported Transition and Transformation as the highest strategic institutional effort for the coming year.
- One member suggested that it would be helpful to have context over time of what initiatives had been proposed and which had been funded. In other words, where have we allocated our new initiative dollars over the past several years, and with what results?
- Related to the previous point, it was noted that of the 5.6 FTE positions being proposed as new initiatives, none are for faculty lines. There is an allocation to convert a faculty position to a regular line, and other allocations support faculty work (e.g., lab tech and support for HCAC).
- There was further discussion about the extent to which various proposed new initiatives can be viewed as supporting the work of the faculty. Members expressed differing opinions on this point.
- Vice President for Advancement Michael Casey noted that three of the positions in Advancement are for Gift Officers. These positions are net revenue producers, on average, after 1-2 years.
- Mr. Casey also noted that many of the initiatives, although not directly supporting the curriculum, are critical to attract the best students to Skidmore. For example, Transition

and Transformation is a priority, in part, because the College is relatively under-resourced in that area at the present time and because it is something that students and their parents are demanding. He also noted that there has been a significant investment in financial aid to attract strong science students.

- Notwithstanding these arguments, a faculty member noted that the failure to add faculty lines when student enrollment has increased has a negative impact on students' educational experience.
- A member asked about the goals for new faculty lines that were articulated at the beginning of the previous campaign. Mr. Casey affirmed that the campaign had established a goal for new faculty lines in the sciences and that the campaign had not been very successful in that regard. He did note, however, that one position had been funded conditionally and, again, that new financial aid to attract science students had been added.
- One member noted that we have planned for the replacement of retiring faculty over the coming years, and that each of those hires will represent an opportunity to advance our diversity efforts.
- Two members expressed the view that competitive compensation for all members of the faculty and staff must be a high priority.
- Acting President Kress noted that the proposed budget relies on Presidential Discretionary Funds to advance strategic initiatives including significant allocations for development of high-impact experience opportunities and the development of a scientific literacy curriculum. Those items are one-time allocations and will require ongoing support to be built into later operating budgets.

Vice President West noted that the new initiatives list will be the subject of ongoing discussion and that decisions need not be made until May, when the new budget will be implemented. For now, the budget models include a placeholder for the total new initiative allocation. Acting President Kress encouraged all IPPC members with further comments or questions to be in touch with Vice President West.

3. February Board of Trustees Meetings

Acting President Kress reported that the Board of Trustees will meet on campus February 24-25, 2011. Several items will be the subject of preliminary discussion with the Board, and she asked the appropriate individuals to provide a brief overview to IPPC.

CTM 2.0:

Vice President Casey reminded IPPC that his office, in conjunction with the Admissions Office and others, are engaged in a review of the "Creative Thought Matters" (CTM) communications platform. The focus of this current effort is to make more "material" for our

students the value of a Skidmore education. This work is being done in coordination with the Transition and Transformation Working Group and will highlight the educational value of various high-impact experiences. The research to date has included a number of focus groups with faculty members, students, and alumni. Next steps will include testing various messages and developing a new plan (CTM 2.0) by the spring for implementation next year.

Science Planning:

Acting VPAA Poston reported that there will be a presentation to the full Board on the Science Vision and a preliminary look at possible approaches to implement that vision. The presentation will include preliminary discussion of options developed by Art Lidsky, a program planner from Dober, Lidsky and Mathey. Acting President Kress noted that the College's facilities planners, working with Academic Affairs, will review the Lidsky report and consider additional options. She affirmed that improving our science offerings is a strategic priority and indicated that implementing the Science Vision must be scaled to our ambitions and our strengths. Finally, in response to a question as to whether the current science planning anticipates needs for future growth, Acting VPAA Poston confirmed that it does.

Transition and Transformation:

Dean of Student Affairs Rochelle Calhoun reported that the Transition and Transformation Working Group is close to finalizing a report that will be circulated to the campus community more broadly this semester. She provided a document with a summary of the working group's goals and timeline. A key to this initiative is to create and support a cross-divisional infrastructure that involves collaboration among academic departments, the Career Services Office, and Alumni Affairs. She also noted that the Director of Career Services search is underway and that candidates will be visiting campus in the coming weeks.

There was some discussion about the role of faculty members as mentors in the context of the Transition and Transformation proposal. Dean Calhoun suggested that the focus is to provide support for faculty as they engage in certain conversations with students and to provide additional support through the Career Services Office. Another key objective is to help students think broadly about internships, placements, etc. The Committee on Educational Policies and Planning will host a series of roundtables in the spring to explore high-impact experiences and ways to advise students earlier into such experiences.

Optimization Planning Conversation:

Acting President Kress referred IPPC members to a summary report of preliminary optimization data that had been prepared by Cabinet members. She noted that Optimization will be the subject of conversation at the Board's Strategic Planning Committee meeting. She expects that the feedback from Trustees will help to inform future IPPC conversations regarding this topic. She expects those conversations to include a review of what the preliminary data tell us, what additional questions we should be asking, and what possible next steps are most advisable.

4. CIGU Update

Professor Winston Grady-Willis noted that the CIGU meeting was postponed due to the College's inclement weather closure last week. He did ask, however, whether the Board would discuss the Compton's incident. Acting President Kress reported that the Board has been kept up-to-date on the status of that case and that there will be a conversation at the meeting in February regarding the incident. SGA President Alex Stark reported that SGA will host a student-only open forum to discuss campus climate issues brought to light last semester by the Food for Thought posters and further elevated this semester by the Compton's incident. The forum will be facilitated by IGR-trained students and peer mediators. In response to a question, Professor Grady-Willis responded that those organizing the teach-in, which also was postponed due to inclement weather, are looking at possible dates to reschedule.

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