

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 2, 2012

PRESENT: President Philip A. Glotzbach, Chair; Erica Bastress-Dukehart, Vice Chair; Mary Lou Bates, Barbara Black, Beau Breslin, Paul Calhoun, Gail Cummings-Danson, Donald Duff, Bill Duffy, David Karp, Wendy Kercull, Jackie Murray, Riley Neugebauer, Denise Smith, Joe Stankovich, Natalie Taylor, Matt Walsh, and Mike West; Barbara Krause (Secretary).

ABSENT: Michael Arnush, Rochelle Calhoun, and Michael Casey.

GUEST: Sarah Goodwin.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the October 19, 2012 meeting were approved as distributed.

2. Assessment Steering Committee

Faculty Assessment Coordinator and Professor of English Sarah Goodwin joined IPPC for a discussion of the Assessment Steering Committee. She briefly reviewed the history of this group, noting that recently retired Vice President for Academic Affairs Susan Kress appointed the Assessment Steering Committee (ASC) in the fall of 2007 as a subcommittee of the Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP). This structure was created following the Middle States Periodic Review Report, after a year-long consultation, and emphasized the increasing importance of assessment and using data to inform decision-making.

The ASC has done important work in collaboration with other groups and individuals, including drafting the Goals for Student Learning. It is now the moment to consider what work must be done, who should do it, and what structures are needed to support it.

An external consultant reviewed the ASC and recommended that the group remain a subcommittee of CEPP. Professor Goodwin indicated that she initially felt the group should be constituted as an independent College committee. CEPP suggested that the IPPC might incorporate the ASC as a subcommittee. This could make sense given the broad institutional perspective of IPPC and the model of some IPPC subcommittees as working somewhat independently. It also was noted that the IPPC has representatives in its membership that are critical for the assessment and accreditation processes, including Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Finance and Administration, and Institutional Research.

In response to a question about how the ASC might function as an IPPC subcommittee, Professor Goodwin suggested that the group might meet 2 to 3 times a year in "retreat" format to

craft a working plan for the year. The ASC would bring a draft of that plan each year for IPPC's review and for its oversight.

IPPC then considered what the membership of this group might look like.

Barbara Black, on behalf of the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC), voiced a concern about the growing number of IPPC subcommittees and asked whether this work is being done elsewhere?

Professor Goodwin responded that while there is work being done at the present time, primarily by Professor Goodwin with assistance from Lisa Christensen, it is important to build a structure that will not be dependent on individuals and that will provide accountability, prioritization, and support the involvement of all faculty.

IPPC members expressed appreciation and support for the impressive work that has been accomplished by Professor Goodwin. There was acknowledgment of the fact that the Middle States reaccreditation process will require greater attention not only to assessment efforts, but to using assessment data to make institutional strategic decisions. The group then discussed various advantages and disadvantages to incorporating Assessment as part of the IPPC.

President Glotzbach asked what additional information IPPC members would need in order to make a decision. Comments included:

- Need to clarify what role students would have on an IPPC assessment subcommittee.
- IPPC should consider whether it anticipates creating any additional subcommittees in the coming years (e.g, whether the Space Planning Working Group will be reconstituted and in what form).
- If it is true that Assessment is not as far along as it should be, why is that, and would incorporating Assessment within the IPPC structure change that?

President Glotzbach noted that the importance of this work is not simply the external pressure from Middle States, but the question of doing what is best for Skidmore College. A robust assessment process will enhance the College's ability to tell the story of what we do with our students, and will provide the data to help us make decisions about strategic allocation of resources.

As a next step, Interim DOF/VPAA Beau Breslin will confer with Professor Goodwin and submit a written proposal for what an assessment subcommittee of IPPC would look like. Vice President for Finance and Administration Mike West encouraged IPPC to consider whether new initiative money would be needed to support assessment efforts.

3. Update on Board of Trustees Meeting

President Glotzbach reported on the Board of Trustees meetings that were held the previous week. He reported that the primary topic for all meetings was Admissions and Financial Aid –

particularly, the role of financial aid in enrolling each class. Various Trustee subcommittees took up related topics (e.g., Academic Affairs discussed the Academic Quality Rating, Budget and Finance discussed the discount rate, etc.). In addition, Trustees reviewed preliminary designs for science facilities and a new Admissions building. The meetings, under the leadership of new Board Chair Linda Toohey, were excellent. The Board will hold a special meeting in New York City in late November to discuss science planning. Any new facilities projects will be reviewed by IPPC at an appropriate time.

4. Policy on Policies

IPPC confirmed its support for the Policy on Policies draft to be presented for a “sense of the faculty” at the faculty meeting later today. If there is support from the faculty for the policy, there would be no need to return to IPPC.

President Glotzbach and Professor Bastress-Dukehart will confer following the Faculty Meeting and determine whether the Policy on Policies should come back to IPPC for further discussion or be referred to the working group.

5. Space Planning Working Group

Continuing a conversation from the previous meeting, IPPC considered the future of the Space Planning Working Group (SPWG). The conversation included a review of what the work of this group would be and what its membership should be. Faculty and student members both expressed concern about the nature and frequency of consultation with their constituencies. Various views were expressed, and it was noted that however this group is constituted, much of its work must be done during the summer months.

One suggestion was made that in identifying the groups with whom the SPWG must consult, the document could list, for faculty, IPPC faculty representatives and department chairs and program directors as appropriate; and, for students, IPPC SGA representatives and members of the “Academic Council” representatives, as appropriate.

Interim Dean of Special Programs Paul Calhoun noted that the Office of Special Programs has extensive space planning work and facilities procedures that are followed each year for summer programs. If that work is to be part of the purview of the SPWG, he would advocate for including a member of the Special Programs staff.

Members then debated the various pros and cons of constituting the SPWG as an all administrative committee with a mandate to consult early and often with appropriate constituencies; as opposed to a standing committee whose membership includes faculty and staff who would serve for a term.

Interim Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Beau Breslin will confer with Mike Hall and Paty Rubio and prepare a revised draft for IPPC's consideration.

Please notify Barbara Krause of any changes to these minutes.