

2022-2023 Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness Annual Report

Sponsored by
IPPC Subcommittee on Institutional Effectiveness

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INTRODUCTION

The 2022-2023 academic year demonstrates continued commitment to promote assessment and institutional effectiveness as institutional priorities. Reflective of the change in Middle States guiding principles, Skidmore has already begun the quest to utilize disaggregated data in relation to the student experience and incorporate a DEI focus within assessment activities. The institutional commitment to Racial Justice continued through ongoing participation in the NACCC Survey alongside other initiatives throughout the College. The faculty engaged assessment on the general education curriculum, departmental learning goals, as well as completing a project centered on student success based on selected student demographic categories. This work will expand in the 2023-2024 academic year through the committee of the SIE's commitment to propose an approach to systematic measurement of student success.

This report is prepared by the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC) Subcommittee on Institutional Effectiveness (SIE). The purpose of the annual report is to both highlight and document assessment related activities from across the college. Per the charge of the committee, our goal is to use the results from these assessments to guide institutional action both in regard to student learning and operational effectiveness.

The 2022-2023 membership consists of representatives from each division within the college:

- Michael Arnush, Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs
- Catherine DeLorenzo, Director of Admissions
- Finance and Administration- Vacant
- Amy Ballesteros, Web Developer/Programmer
- Michael Sposili, Assistant VP for Alumni Relations and College Events
- Joe Stankovich, Director, Institutional Research
- Jamin Totino, Associate Dean of Student Affairs & Dir of Student Academic Services
- Amy Tweedy, Institutional Effectiveness Specialist, **Co-Chair**
- Kelly Sheppard, Faculty Director of Assessment, **Co-Chair**
- Joshua Woodfork, VP for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENTS

Values and Vision

The President began an institutional effort to engage our community in a series of high-level questions that seek to open discussions about what our defining values are and what is most distinctive about Skidmore. The President held conversations with constituents including students, faculty, staff, the Board of Trustees and retirees. In addition, a survey was distributed to the entire community. Three overarching themes emerged from this qualitative review as essential to the college: our people, our places and spaces, and the creativity that pervades every part of the institution.

These, and other themes that were identified in regard to our community’s commitments to how we live, work, and learn, and to the values that define us, are being reflected back to the community to determine how well they resonate and provide an opportunity for further feedback. The results from this planning exercise will be used as a basis to inform strategic planning.

Board of Trustees Assessment

The Board of Trustees underwent a board effectiveness review beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year. Spencer Stuart, a nationally recognized consulting firm, was selected to lead the assessment and provide recommendations that could move our board toward even greater governance excellence. The assessment consisted of interviews, a survey and a board materials review. Areas of focus included:

- Oversight of institutional goals and the strategies pursued to achieve them;
- Structure, composition, role and responsibilities of the board;
- Involvement and engagement with College leadership;
- Composition and functionality of the committees within the board;
- Relationships among Trustees.

The Skidmore Board will utilize the 2023-2024 academic year to continue to review and implement the recommendations.

Racial Campus Climate: NACCC Surveys

In the fall of 2020, as a founding member, Skidmore College joined 68 other colleges across the nation to form the Liberal Arts Colleges Racial Equity Leadership Alliance (LACRELA) in order to address shared experiences involving racial climate on campus. As an initial step, LACRELA is partnering with the USC Race and Equity Center in a student-centered racial climate survey — the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC). The College committed to surveying students in 2021, staff in 2022 and faculty in 2023.

NACCC Student Survey

The College administered the survey to students in the spring of 2021 analyzed in the spring of 2022. The results were shared with President’s Cabinet, to the campus community as a session within In It 6 and to CEPP and are available on the [College website](#).

NACCC Staff Survey

- *70% Participation Rate*
- *Results analyzed during the 2022-2023 academic year*

The College administered the survey to staff in the spring of 2022 resulting in a 70% participation rate. Analysis of the results began during the 2022-2023 academic year in collaboration with Human Resources, the Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity and the office of Institutional Research. Results will be shared to the college community during the 2023-2024 academic year.

NACCC Faculty Survey

The USC Diversity and Equity Center which administers the NACCC surveys postponed the administration of the faculty survey to the 2023-2024 academic year.

HHMI High Impact Experiences Assessment

Skidmore College has joined a Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) learning community investigating using practices that center diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and access (DEIJA). As part of the track to use data-informed improvement of DEIJA outcomes, Kelly Sheppard, faculty director of assessment and associate professor of chemistry has partnered with the IPPC Subcommittee on Institutional Effectiveness (SIE) to focus on student participation in high impact practices as defined by the LEAP initiative.

Research Question

Are students across different dimensions of identity at Skidmore participating equally in high impact practices? If not, why not?

The research question is: Are students across different dimensions of identity at Skidmore participating equally in high impact practices? If not, we need to ask the follow-up of why not.

The committee spent the academic year creating a list of high impact experiences along with identifying where data related to those experiences was available and accessible. In addition, what demographic data to utilize was

reviewed. The SIE is grateful to the work Institutional Research (IR) completed during the summer of 2023 merging multiple data files in various formats and from various sources. Data analysis, communicating the results and developing an action plan will occur during the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 academic years.

NSSE

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) was administered in the spring of 2022. Results were analyzed by the Office of Institutional Research in the fall of 2022. Results were shared with Cabinet, Student Affairs leadership team and the faculty Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP). The presentation is available to the college community on the [Institutional Research webpage](#).

93% of Skidmore Seniors participated in 1 or more High Impact Practices

HEDS Alumni Survey

The [HEDS Alumni Survey](#) was administered in the spring of 2022. Skidmore College typically participates in the survey every 5 years with the last participation being in 2017. Results will be shared with the Office of Institutional Research in the fall of 2023 and analyzed in the spring of 2024.

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The HEDS Alumni Survey, available in an undergraduate and an advanced degree version, asks alumni about the quality and impact of their educational experiences, including cocurricular activities such as internships, study abroad, and community service.

The survey also asks alumni to evaluate the impact of their education on their postgraduate critical thinking, problem-solving, and other learning outcomes. Finally, they are asked about postgraduate employment, college satisfaction, and college debt.

The HEDS Alumni Survey asks alumni to report on five dimensions of their experience:

- *Good Teaching and High-Quality Interactions with Faculty*
- *Challenging Assignments and High Faculty Expectations*
- *Interactions with Diversity*
- *Growth on Intellectual Outcomes*
- *Growth on Civic Outcomes*

Annual Assessment Reporting- Utilizing theSpring

As we continued to implement the revised Institutional Assessment Plan, it became clear we needed a streamlined approach to collecting and storing assessment reports submitted by academic departments and administrative units, which previously had been done exclusively via email with tracking spreadsheets. The Assessment/Institutional Effectiveness team decided to use resources that were already available to us rather than investing in assessment-specific software. As a result, we built a site within the learning management system, known internally as theSpring. This had the advantage of being technology with which faculty were already familiar. 2022-2023 Assessment/IE reports were submitted to theSpring through the academic site or the institutional effectiveness site respectively. This procedure allows the opportunity to utilize a systemized submission process with no need for additional tracking or forwarding emails, and provides the ability to give feedback and create archival space. Additionally, Assessment Repositories were created on Box.com to allow each department to archive assessment artifacts and project information, centralizing department and program assessment work to simplify the process as personnel changes.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Summary of department/program assessments

Assessment activities in academic departments and programs of their student learning goals continued this past academic year with 35 of the 38 academic departments/programs submitting a report. Of those, five were self-studies and two were accreditation reports/self-studies. Of the departments and programs submitting assessment reports, 61% did direct assessment while 74% did indirect assessment of student learning. Assessment work coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic has been especially challenging for smaller departments and especially interdisciplinary programs where faculty members are stretched thin. Faculty Director of Assessment (FDA) Sheppard has been working with such departments and programs to think about how to integrate assessment into the work already being done, so it isn't an extra lift but is built into the culture and workload. Some of the reports indicated there was a negative impact on student development with the COVID-19 pandemic emergency situation that included a number of courses using atypical formats for Skidmore (online, hybrid, and hyflex) during the 2020-2021 and, to a lesser extent, 2021-

2022 academic years on-top of the added stress during that time period (see below regarding Information Literacy assessment review). Assessments over the next few years will monitor if this was a temporary impact or if we are observing a longer-term trend.

Revision of academic assessment cycle

Academic department and programs in recent years have been expected to submit an assessment report every year, a triennial report as implied every three years, and a self-study with external review every ten years. The reports were not leveraged to inform one another in an integrative and effective manner. Triennial reports in particular were not being used in a manner that justified the effort put into writing them. In addition, informal practice was for a department or program conducting a self-study to be exempt from submitting an assessment report. FDA Sheppard with the Office of the Dean of Faculty developed a ten-year review cycle that they sought feedback on from chairs and program directors. The ten-year academic review cycle eliminates the triennial reports and replaces them with a single mid-point report five years after the last self-study. As part of the mid-point reports, departments and programs are expected to respond to their last self-study and external review, review and reflect on their annual assessment work over the previous four years, and to use that to develop an assessment plan for the next four years leading into their next self-study. In addition, the cycle builds into the self-studies a similar review and reflection of the assessment work and assessment plan for the subsequent four years. Year 5 of the cycle when a mid-point report is submitted and year 10 when the self-study is submitted no separate assessment report is expected. The goal is to make assessment of student learning more effective and meaningful in academic departments and programs by making sure it is part of department/program review while also decreasing the net number of reports generated and better aligning those that are generated. The ten-year assessment cycle is now codified into the Chair and Program Director Handbook for the 2023-2024 academic year and going forward.

General Education

Developed assessment timeline

FDA Sheppard worked with CEPP to develop an assessment timeline through academic year 2026-2027 for the new general education curriculum that took effect with the entering class of 2020 (first full graduating class will be 2024). The FDA consulted with the relevant program directors (FYE, Bridge Experience, QR, and Writing) in developing the plan. The timeline enables planning for the assessment work in advance and to make sure all aspects of the curriculum are assessed in a timely manner.

General Education Bridge Experience

Over Academic Years 2021-2023, students in Bridge Experience courses were surveyed on how well they thought the Bridge Experience courses met the learning expectations of the requirement. Overall, the response from students has been positive with regard to the Bridge Experience courses. A supermajority (85% overall) agreed (35%) or strongly agreed (50%) that their Bridge Experience courses centered around the main themes of the requirement (power and justice have shaped the experiences of people with a variety of identities in the United States and how these people have responded to the reality of inequality in their lives). There is also strong agreement that the courses have helped them understand diversity in the United States (77% agree or strongly agree, 41% strongly) and to connect the material to the world beyond the classroom (88% agree or strongly agree, 61% strongly). In terms of the projects, just over three-fourths of students (38% strongly) thought the practice/application component contributed to their understanding of the course subject matter. The open response was equally positive about the courses. However, there were occasionally comments that the practice/application portion of certain courses were not living up to

expectations. While some of it may be due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it also might indicate unevenness in faculty experience and expertise in implementing public facing projects. There were rare comments about select faculty members needing to be better prepared to teach on power and justice. The results suggest faculty members new to such pedagogies or topics could be better supported in designing and delivering Bridge Experience courses. The new Bridge Experience Director, Associate Professor Ron Seyb, is working on developing a faculty survey to determine the best way to support faculty in delivering the requirement. He is also starting to collect student work from the projects for two reasons: 1) to directly assess student learning (collecting for two years before assessing) and 2) to have a repository of example projects for faculty development.

QR Placement

The QR Director Smriti Tiwari with the QR Review Team continued assessment of the QR Placement Diagnostic. QR Director Tiwari replicated previous work looking at placement score and high grades in AQR courses (A- or above) with additional cohorts and got similar results as before consistent with the Placement Diagnostic working as designed. In addition, Director Tiwari examined WDFU(Cr)C- grade rates in AQR courses for first-year students directly placed at the AQR level compared to the WDFU(Cr)C- rates for the same students in all their other courses at Skidmore. The hypothesis was that if there was over-placement into AQR courses, the WDFU(Cr)C- rates would be higher in the AQR courses. However, the rates were lower in the AQR courses suggesting students are not being over-placed. The results were consistent with that conclusion even for those students with placement scores near the cut-off between FQR and AQR placement.

There is evidence that a small number of students are under-placing into MA 100 due to not taking the QR Placement Diagnostic seriously. Most incoming students take the QR Placement Diagnostic in May before they matriculate to Skidmore while they are still completing high school. As they are taking the Diagnostic while they are still busy finishing high school and before they fully understand the implications of the QR placement, under-placement is likely due to the situation rather than the placement questions. Given that, the QR Director is offering first-year students placed into MA 100 the opportunity to take an in-person QR test during orientation to determine if their QR placements should be revised to FQR, starting in the Fall of 2023. Longer term solutions are being examined (*e.g.*, developing and validating questions to enable students to the QR Placement Diagnostic a second time online). For first-year students in London in the Fall who place at the MA 100 level, the QR Director will provide an opportunity to take the in-person test once they are back on campus at the start of the Spring semester.

Information Literacy

Since the 2018-2019 academic year, 15 departments and programs have assessed information literacy, an expectation in the major for the new general education curriculum. As the first graduating class under the new requirements is the class of 2024, the assessments over this period represent a baseline to compare to in subsequent years. FDA reviewed these assessments to determine if there were reoccurring themes emerging. Generally, students demonstrated good development of the information literacy skills to find appropriate sources. There were some areas for improvement with regards to field specific citation styles and formatting as well as fully engaging with sources to develop an argument and place research questions and results into a broader context. As a number of assessments were during or right after the first two-years of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is unclear if these challenges were systematic in the curriculum to be addressed or due the unevenness in learning experienced during that stressful period of time for students, faculty, and staff alike. Subsequent assessments of information literacy are planned to help differentiate between the two. The summary will be presented to the Committee on Educational Policies and Procedures (CEPP) as well as the Scribner Library to discuss further to determine if additional action steps are warranted. A similar

review of oral communication assessments will occur at the end of the 2023-2024 academic year as part of the General Education Assessment Plan.

CLTL Survey

The students working for the CLTL developed a survey on inclusive teaching strategies and practices to inform future CLTL programming and initiatives as well as policy changes as needed on campus. The survey was administered online to students, faculty, and staff in April of 2023. The key themes are being summarized before bringing the results to the wider community. Preliminary analysis revealed students: see a lack of representation of BIPOC and other minoritized identities in the classroom and faculty/staff settings; a lack of cultural competencies, awareness, understanding, and responsiveness on campus that leads to harms the desire for transparent expectations for both students and faculty; seeing flexibility in course design, teaching, and deadlines as key for inclusion and accessibility; the need to feel comfortable in the classroom for BIPOC students at a PWI; and empathy towards staff and faculty by/from students, staff, and faculty as being important. The faculty survey results highlighted that too much emphasis on student ratings during key personnel moments (e.g., reappointment, renewal, re-hiring, tenure, promotion) hinders innovative teaching; the importance of transparency; input is valued regardless of rank and taken seriously; and the importance of not misnaming or misgendering by other faculty and staff. Staff members communicated the importance of having conversations and discussions around gender and sexual expression, diversity, religion, and identity; the importance of inclusive language in and out of the classroom; importance of health communication and being heard coupled to responsiveness to what is being said; updating college software; incorporating accessibility into DEI initiatives; more interactions between faculty, staff, and students; translators for incoming members of the community (students, faculty, and staff); respect and community between faculty and staff and towards one another; and valued and rewarded equitably in comparison to others.

Working Group on Inclusive and Accessible Teaching and Learning

As part of the HHMI Inclusive Excellence 3 Initiative grant, the Inclusive and Accessible Teaching and Learning Group surveyed the community to gather faculty and student views as to the qualities of a good learning environment, with an emphasis on inclusion and accessibility, and the teaching to achieve that environment. In addition, the Working Group met with student focus groups as well as Governance Committees (ATC, PC, CAFR, and CEPP) around the same topic. In addition, the Working Group read multiple campus documents and webpages to catalog what we communicate to ourselves and the outside world regarding teaching and learning, and how that fits into the literature on good teaching and learning environments. They also surveyed what peer and aspirant institutions communicate. The Working Group synthesized what they learned over the summer to develop guiding principles regarding what we collectively value in good teaching and learning environments that accordingly are inclusive and accessible. The Working Group is finalizing the draft of the guiding principles to take back to the wider community for feedback. The guiding principles will then be used to assess how well our practices and policies for evaluating teaching and learning environments on campus match our principles to determine if revisions are necessary especially in light of the published literature.

Probation/Waiver and Four-Year Graduation Assessment

Associate Dean of Faculty Arnush and FDA Sheppard presented the results of the probation/waiver and four-year graduation study to representatives from the Office Academic Advising (OAA), Athletics, Student Academic Services (SAS), the Opportunity Program (OP), Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Admissions, FYE, and the Center for Leadership, Teaching, and Learning (CLTL) along with academic department chairs and program directors. With a smaller group of representatives from OAA, SAS, OP, FYE, and CLTL, ADOF Arnush and FDA Sheppard discussed interventions including a course for students to develop their academic skills. Incoming and returning ADOF Freeman-Gallant is following-up on that work to implement the course and coordinate with SAS and OAA to better serve students along with programing for first-generation students.

Sustainability Office

Campus Sustainability Plan Combined (FY21-FY22) annual report

The [annual report](#) was completed providing updates on measures as part of the college-wide Campus Sustainability Plan. Measures and tracks energy, waste, food, lands/grounds, and engagement activities and outcomes. Assesses and evaluates progress on the Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP).

2022 Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Inventoried targeted Scope 1 (direct on-campus), 2 (purchased utilities), and 3 (indirect from upstream and downstream activities) emissions (e.g. fuels, electricity, purchased goods, waste generation, commuting, ad business travel) to assess status and trends. See [website](#) for further information.

Additional minor assessments/evaluations:

- A waste audit of three landfill dumpsters was completed in April 2023.
- Two Sustainable Workplace Operations Program (SWOP) lunch workshops were conducted, with completion of program scorecard by all attendees (roughly 17 departments/offices were represented).
- End of year Sustainability Office feedback form for student staff.
- Tree Campus USA annual tracking and reporting submission detailing lands and grounds-based education and operational activities

Library

Student Textbook Affordability Survey

In September 2022, the library staff administered a Student Textbook Affordability Survey to Skidmore students as part of an 11-campus study to understand the impact that course material costs have on students and ascertain what can be done to mitigate against negative impacts. Results will be shared in September 2023, likely with a presentation to SGA and targeted outreach to faculty via liaison librarians.

The student participation rate was very low (5%) so aggregated data will be more informative. Those aggregated results suggest the following key takeaways, quoted from the survey administrators' report:

1. First-year students, first generation students, and Pell Grant recipients suffer the largest consequences from textbook costs.
2. As students become "savvier", the methods they use to acquire course materials expand, including extra-legal activities.
3. \$50 is the cutoff for what students view as affordable.

4. While some individual faculty are addressing book costs, institutional-level actions are needed to accelerate student impact.¹

Institutional Research (IR)

In addition to the numerous assessment efforts for which the IR provides support, The IR office engaged in multiple assessment related projects during the academic year.

Occasional Papers

The office published two occasional papers. The first, entitled “[Common Application Gender Identity and Personal Pronouns of Enrolling Students](#)” presents the newly available gender and pronoun data collected by the Common App for entering 2023 first-years. The second paper entitled “[W Grades Taken by Skidmore Students](#)” provides a history of “W” grades taken from 1985 to 2021, how many students take in their career, the outcome for those taking more than two “W” grades, the predictors of “W” grades, and the effect of “W” grades on degree completion. This study was completed to assist the College as it considered removing the 2 “W” grade limit.

Recommendations for Identity and Inclusiveness Questions

Created a source for Skidmore community members wishing to add demographic and identity questions to surveys of students, faculty, and staff. [Recommendations for Identity and Inclusiveness Questions](#) provide a rationale for ensuring that we ask consistent and inclusive questions as well as some best practices when doing survey work. Areas included are: gender identity, pronouns, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disability status, and religious identity. A Qualtrics upload file is also provided so users can easily upload the questions to their survey. This document will need to be reviewed as best practices change and the College considers if it wants to collect some of these items

Self-Service Report: Course Section Offerings

A self-service [Course Section Offerings and Enrollments Report](#) that allows chairs, program directors, and select administrators the ability to obtain the last 10 years of course sections with many details was created. Output includes aggregated tables for both course counts and the sum of enrollments and/or a list of courses for a selected period. This will help departments/programs with self-studies, annual reporting, and exploratory analyses.

ADVANCEMENT

With the close of FY '23, the Advancement team, led by Carey Anne Zucca, Collyer Vice President for Advancement, is pleased to complete the year having successfully met the dollar goals for the Skidmore Fund and our overall fundraising target (see below). Throughout the year, we continued with our efforts to introduce President Conner to individual prospects, donors, and regional groups; raised \$13.61 in support of the McCaffery-Wagman Tennis and Wellness Center; executed a myriad of virtual and in-person events here on campus and in various geographic regions; completed a comprehensive alumni survey; advanced efforts

¹ “Fall 2022 Student Textbook Survey Results” by Wilfong, Wertzberger, Elmquist, and Conforte, used under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#).

for greater engagement and fundraising in support of DEI; enhanced donor stewardship; initiated efforts to implement a new CRM, Blackbaud NXT, in the first quarter of 2024 and launched MarketSmart – an automated marketing system which surveyed and helped to identify 278 major gift donors.

Fundraising Goals/Results & Quick Updates on Key Advancement Initiatives for FY '23

| | FY '23 Goal | FY '23 Final |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| New Gifts & Commitments | \$35M | \$35.9 |
| Cash | \$25.5M | \$29.9M |
| Skidmore Fund | \$8.0M | \$8.020M |
| Alumni Participation (includes donors to all designations) | 20% | 20% |

- In total, President Conner has been in front of more than 3,200 alumni, parents, families, and friends in broad-based programs and 250 donors and prospects through in-person and virtual gatherings.
- Our fundraising priorities included The Skidmore Fund; the McCaffery-Wagman Tennis and Wellness Center; creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship (CIE); scholarships and financial aid; support for the student experience; and diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Advanced the effort to reach \$10M+ in annual giving through the Skidmore Fund by 2028, with the \$8.020 million raised in FY '23.
- Raised \$13.61 of our \$22M goal in support for the McCaffery-Wagman Tennis and Wellness Center Project.
- Since June 1, 2022, we secured 29 gifts and commitments of \$100K+ totaling \$18.15M, supporting Skidmore Fund, The McCaffery-Wagman Tennis and Wellness Center, creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship (CIE), the Tang, student experiences, and financial aid & scholarship.
- Continued with the planned transition to a new CRM in the first quarter of 2024.

The Skidmore Fund (SF)

For the first time, the Skidmore Fund surpassed the \$8M mark, meeting the goal, and ultimately raising \$8.020M. The Fund is currently on pace to meet the objective of reaching the \$10M level in the next 5-6 years, although significant growth will be required each year. Much of the Skidmore Fund success in FY23 can be attributable to our repositioning of the Fund’s importance, enhanced messaging, solicitation of gifts at \$2,500+, a continued focus on asking all donors to systematically and regularly increase their gifts, as well as the tenacity of the entire Advancement team to achieve their goals despite not being fully staffed for a portion of the year.

McCaffery-Wagman Tennis and Wellness Center

In support of the College’s effort to advance this important project that will demonstrate Skidmore’s care and commitment to the physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being of our students, we worked to secure \$13.61M toward our total fundraising goal of \$22M. As part of this total, members of the

Wachenheim, Wagman, and McCaffery families offered the lead gift to name the Center and launch the project. Designed for the diverse needs of our student body, this facility will be a place that will meet them wherever they are, supporting them when they face challenges and as they embrace opportunities.

DEI Fundraising and Engagement

Throughout this year, Advancement has focused on multiple initiatives to increase and enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion within various programs, including a focus on fundraising with both individuals and broad-based audiences. In April, we completed our third-annual crowdfunding campaign which raised just over \$104K from members of the constituency, surpassing the \$100K goal. A special fundraising focus in FY23 included raising \$50K for the Opportunity Program in celebration of the 50th anniversary of graduates from this program that accompanied the year-long programmatic effort to engage alumni around this important and meaningful anniversary.

Advancement Operations & Prospect Development

Throughout this past year, we've made significant progress toward making the transition from ThankQ, our current CRM to Blackbaud NXT. The transition to Blackbaud was necessitated following notification that ThankQ would no longer be providing customer support to its North American clients. We remain excited about the transition to Blackbaud which provides robust customer support and enhanced reporting capabilities. We intend to go "live" with the new platform in the first quarter of 2024.

Alumni Relations & College Events (ARCE)

In anticipation of the College's next campaign, we completed efforts to administer a survey to our alumni to learn more about their insights, opinions and perceptions of Skidmore. We undertook this effort with the assistance of **Washburn & McGoldrick**, an international higher education consulting firm. The results have already helped to guide the College's strategic planning and alumni engagement efforts to maintain Skidmore's position as an increasingly prominent nationally-recognized institution.

In early June, we welcomed classes ending in 3s & 8s back to campus for their respective class reunion celebrations. In total, 719 alumni in reunion classes returned to campus along with over 250 guests.

As previously noted, we continued to introduce President Conner to alumni, parents, families and friends through a combination of virtual and in-person events this year and he engaged with members of the constituency in various geographic regions. These included:

- Canandaigua, NY (July 10, 2022) to highlight the \$5M commitment the Sands Family Foundation made in support of Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship.
- Hyannis Port, MA (July 14, 2022)
- Fairfield, CT (September 21, 2022)
- Boston, MA (November 2, 2022)
- Los Angeles, CA (March 12, 2023)
- San Francisco, CA (March 15, 2023)
- Board Chair Jon Achenbaum '77, Alumni Association President Rob Resnick '88 and Alumna Trustee, Wendy Wilson '96 served as co-hosts for President Conner's 3rd Annual State of the College Address, in a virtual format (June 27, 2023).

ADMISSIONS/FINANCIAL AID

Student Employment Updates

The Financial Aid Office continued assessing the effects of the recently revised student employment guidelines. This reflective work included a review of the goals of the program and feedback from student employees and supervisors to determine the effect on the community. As a result, the office created a proposal in collaboration with Financial Services leadership that was reviewed by President's cabinet. The recommendation increased the maximum student academic year earnings to \$4,000. This increase addressed both students' financial needs and departmental staffing needs and had minimal impact on the student employment budget line. The proposal was supported by IPPC in May 2023.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Oracle Cloud Implementation & Assessment

After significant planning, design and production, Skidmore rolled out an upgraded Oracle Cloud system for financial and human resources functions in January 2021. This new Oracle product has changed virtually every business process at Skidmore College, including but not limited to; general ledger and reporting, chart of accounts, procurement, accounts payable, expense reporting, payroll, timekeeping and labor, benefits, recruitment, onboarding, and general HR functions. In addition to affecting Finance and HR staff, this new system has had wide ranging implications for our entire community - from automated workflow to paperless transactions to a new way of doing things in almost every business process. The new system was discussed at several employee Community Meetings and weekly progress updates were provided in the Skidmore Weekly Bulletin. A training website was developed with supporting materials for all key topics using written instructions, manuals, videos and live Zoom demonstrations and discussions. For a period of time Finance and Human Resources staff also hosted daily open office hours. The first 30 minutes of each session generally included open Q&A, with the second 30 minutes reserved for specific transactional support. Zoom breakout rooms were also used to facilitate screen sharing. After going live, we also hosted a series of community feedback sessions and used this as an opportunity to enhance the user experience in areas, including but not limited to; updating training documentation, implementing an absence module, improving reports available to the community, and working through any systems issues that were brought to our attention. Providing the best possible user experience is an iterative process and work is ongoing as of Fall 2023.

Staff Meetings Assessment

In an effort to improve communication with staff, the format of monthly staff meetings was reviewed. Partnering with the President and the Office of Communications and Marketing, the Office of Human Resources solicited input from Skidmore staff on the effectiveness of monthly Staff Meetings. At the October 2022 meeting, input was compiled from small group discussions and an online feedback form was shared via email and in Skidmore Weekly Bulletin. Major themes implemented at the following meeting included: sharing the schedule and agenda in advance and providing staff with the opportunity to propose agenda items utilizing the HR website and an online submission form; additional time for Q&A including access to share questions from those joining via Zoom; hearing directly from President Conner; more frequent information from Human Resources; introduction of new staff members; and, presentations from

staff/departments/divisions as well as faculty and students (alternated at monthly meetings). Ongoing opportunity to provide feedback on meetings, ask a question or suggest an agenda item is highlighted on the [Staff Meeting](#) website.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

Professional Development

An assessment training was offered in February 2023 for all Student Affairs leaders. This workshop was led by the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Director of Student Academic Services and the Institutional Effectiveness Specialist. The workshop included an overview of types and methodologies of assessment, as well as time to brainstorm assessment projects individual departments. Over 15 members of Student Affairs participated.

Athletics

The Athletics department was hard at work during the 2022-2023 academic year assessing athletic space, equipment, staffing and coaching needs for the McCaffery-Wagman Building project that begins construction during the 2023-2024 academic year. In addition, the athletics program undertook two additional assessment projects and continued offering DEI training based on previous assessments. In a review of Athletics Department programming in support of their mission, participation in physical activity classes, intramural program and fitness classes were assessed. The results will help inform programmatic options in the new McCaffery-Wagman center. The results also prompted a continued effort to promote and advertise each activity with students, faculty and staff to increase participation. The other project focused on an assessment of the number of athletes and associated teams that qualified for the Thoroughbred Society which recognizes athletes with a 3.67 or higher term GPA. Finally, based on previously identified need for training, the Athletics Department continued its DEI focused programming. This year's training was titled, "Experience Matters: A Conversation Around Active Allyship for the LGBTQ+ Community." Over 400 community members attended the program that included a panel of students, alumnae, faculty, coaches and the Executive Director of Pride Center Capital. An additional 50-75 participated in the live stream.

Career Development Center

The Career Development Center (CDC) engaged several assessment projects and continued monitoring data begun in previous years.

SEF Equity Audit

Per previous practice, the office conducted an equity audit of the Summer Experience Fund. Consistent with previous audits, the percentages are overall consistent with the overall student population.

Skidmore Student Summer Plans

In addition, student experiences were added to determine trends. Note that the pandemic influenced student opportunities in previous summers.

| Skidmore Student Experiences- Summer 2023 | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|------|
| Type of Experience | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 |
| Internship or Research | 58% | 46% | 45% | 26% |
| Paid work unrelated to career goals | 32% | 30% | 18% | 12% |
| Taking at least one class | 14% | 11% | 9% | 10% |
| Volunteer position | 10% | 6% | 4% | 5% |
| Unsure of summer plans | 14% | 24% | 23% | 47% |

First Destinations Survey

The CDC continued its commitment to student participation in the First Destinations Survey. For the Class of 2022, Skidmore students saw consistent outcomes with peer schools within the Liberal Arts Career Network (LACN). See [website](#) for further detail.

Alumni Career Advising

According to [College Board, Education Pays 2023](#), Figure 2.2B, the age at which cumulative earnings of college graduates exceeds those of high school graduates is 34. (This is for 4 years of average public and private non-profit 4-year published price). In order to better provide insight on the ROI of a Skidmore education, we plan to expand our study of post-grad outcomes, and integrated this responsibility into the AD on the CDC Team.

Mentoring Program Survey

We are in the second year of a pilot program which was originally designed to engage students who weren't otherwise connected to the Career Development Center. Through a longitudinal assessment conducted in 2019, we were able to see that students with "low" GPAs were the least connected to our services. With that in mind, we received funding from an external donor, launched the mentoring program, and eagerly accepted referrals from key colleagues across campus who worked with the target population. We weren't able to reach our initial goal through those referrals, so we opened it up to any junior interested in having a mentor. Given that the program originally was connected to academic performance, we connected students by major the first year, and focused on connecting young alums with students – as they may be more relatable.

Upon feedback received from the first year of implementation, we shifted the matching criteria to be focused on career goal, rather than major, and delayed the onset of the program from September to November. Matches were prioritized by career interests, rather than length of time since graduation or a common major.

In the assessment of the 2022-2023 program, we continued to receive feedback about the matching process, indicating that there is still some work to do in creating those pairs. We researched technology that would allow students to place weight on particular facets of the mentor's profile such as identity, post-grad career plans, or major. Unfortunately, the cost was too high, so we are continuing to look into manual options that would allow us to better create pairs.

Moving forward, in addition to reviewing other recommendations from the May 2023 assessment, along with the structure of the program and the matching process; we are going to connect with peer institutions who have a similar program to explore their best practices. The tool will also be updated to include quantifiable measures.

Health and Wellness

The department created and administered a Health Services and Counseling Center Satisfaction survey that was administered in the Spring of 2023. We assessed how knowledgeable students are about the supports available through Health Services and the Counseling Center, how comfortable they are accessing the support and how satisfied they are with the clinical services. We also looked at the intersection of various social identities with students' responses.

We learned that students most often reported hearing about H/W services in Orientation, which was helpful to know. We also learned that students who visit HS and the CC are by and large quite satisfied with the quality of their visits and their interactions with providers. Students tended to over-estimate wait times for appointments, and they did not realize on-line scheduling was available. They consistently voiced wanting extended access to services (extended hours, concerned re session limits at the CC) and many did not know that the college has started offering tele-therapy in addition to in-person services at the CC.

The results will continue to be analyzed during the 2023-2024 academic year. Action steps currently identified include:

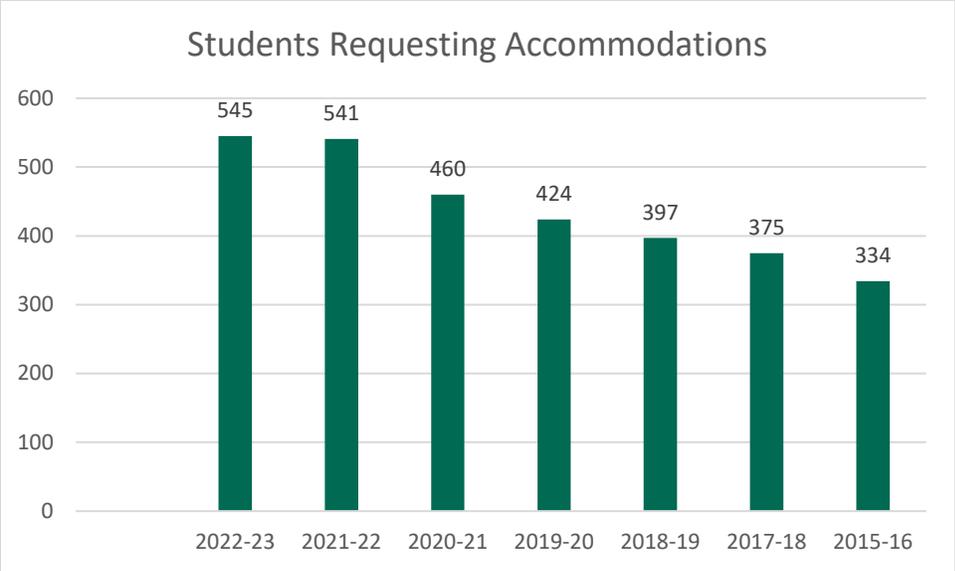
- Distribute copy of survey findings to H/W staff, students and Student Affairs leadership team
- Develop marketing/social norms campaign focused around providing accurate data about services for Fall 2023
- Develop voluntary post-clinical contact survey for both Health Services and Counseling Center by Spring 2024

Office of Residential Life

The Campus Master Plan, completed in 2022, includes recommendations to cultivate a vibrant residential experience. The previous year's assessment by Peterson Rudgers Group further highlighted the opportunity to promote a residential experience. As a result, the creation of the AVP for the Residential Experience position reflects a rethinking of the work of several critical functional areas to create synergies in order to enhance the student experience. In collaboration with consultants, and in partnership with Facilities Services, we have commenced the early stages of research and planning for the future construction of a new residence hall. In the interim, we are soliciting ideas from students, including Student Government Association leadership, about how best to enhance residential common space. We also have leveraged technology to simplify processes such as residence hall check-in and check-out to shift resources towards a residential experience model.

Student Academic Services

The number of students requesting accommodations continues to increase. The largest demand on Accessibility services is in the realm of alternative testing accommodations. As our population has grown so too has the demand on testing space and coordination. SAS had historically relied on what was essentially an email driven system. This resulted in individual notifications and often multiple emails for each exam. Prior to the pandemic in Fall 2019 SAS Administered 1,037 exams. Though we experienced some decline as the pandemic subsided demand has slowly increased. In Spring 2022 we administered 453 exams and Spring 2023 we managed 744.



To help manage this workload we explored several internal and external resources and decided to contract with Accessible Information Management (AIM). This system is a single sign on resource for SAS staff, students and faculty. Through the portal students will be able to access copies of their letters of accommodation and share them with applicable faculty. They will also be able to submit requests for exams. Subsequently, faculty will be able to respond to request and upload test materials for SAS staff to print and administer to students. Our goal is to launch AIM for the Fall 2023 semester and we are on track to do so.