

The Development of the Transition and Transformation Initiative

Strategic Plan: Engaged Liberal Learning: The Plan for Skidmore College, 2005 – 2015 (Excerpt)

Goal I — Student Engagement and Academic Achievement

We will challenge every Skidmore student to achieve academic excellence through full engagement with our rich and rigorous educational experience.

- Increase our effectiveness in helping our graduates plan and prepare for their post-Skidmore lives.
 - Expand collaboration among our academic departments, career services office and alumni affairs to provide students with information, guidance, and support in exploring career options related to various majors. Encourage departments to share best practices related to such activities.
 - Enhance our capacity to mentor students earlier in their careers regarding graduate and professional school options. Improve mentoring related to post-graduate fellowship opportunities.
 - Develop ways to engage alumni, parents, Trustees, and friends more effectively in career-related mentoring.

Skidmore College Goals for Student Learning and Development (unanimously endorsed by the faculty December 4, 2009)

III Personal and Social Values

- Examine one's own values and their use as ethical criteria in thought and action
- Interrogate one's own values in relation to those of others, across social and cultural differences
- Develop practical competencies for managing a personal, professional and community life
- Apply learning to find solutions for social, civic and scientific problems

Fall 2009, the mid-point of the Strategic Plan, Town Hall Meetings are held on campus and around the country. Over 200 members of the Skidmore community participate in the on-campus Town Hall Meetings, including 62 faculty members.

Fall 2009, a small working group begins meeting to discuss the role of a liberal arts college in the post-baccalaureate lives of our student—an emerging theme from the Town Hall Meetings. Group includes Michael Casey, Muriel Poston, Michael Profita, Michael Sposili, Michael Ennis-McMillan and Rochelle Calhoun.

Fall 2009, IPPC charges a sub-committee, “the Synthesis Group” to review and synthesize the notes from the Town Hall Meetings. The Synthesis Group begins meeting and identifies seven emerging themes: Curricular Issues, Transitions-Preparing for Life after Skidmore, Sustainability, Institutional Synergies/Collaborations, Community Building, Financial Stewardship and Institutional Identity.

Spring 2010, IPPC Synthesis Group issues a preliminary report on 2/11/10. Community members are invited to provide feedback. The Town Hall Meeting process is documented on a website allowing opportunity for community feedback. The final report on the Town Hall Meetings is issued on 4/26/10.

Spring 2010, IPPC begins review of the Strategic Renewal document written by President Glotzbach. Strategic Renewal identifies four strategic themes from the Town Hall Meetings: Transition and Transformation, Continuing Curricular Development, Sustainability and Leverage, and Stewardship. Others of the earlier seven emerging themes (including, notably, Institutional Identity) are addressed substantially throughout the Strategic Renewal document.

“I have directed various Cabinet members to undertake immediately a number of administrative initiatives aimed at addressing issues we have identified over the preceding months as having special urgency – issues reflected in the preceding discussion. For example, we have begun a comprehensive project relating to our students’ transition from college to the working world, led by an administrative working group.” Strategic Renewal, 2010

Spring 2010, Strategic Renewal document is issued on May 17, 2010. The Strategic Renewal document will become the preface for the 2010-2011 Strategic Action Agenda.

Spring 2010, Strategic Renewal document is discussed at Academic Staff Retreat

Spring 2010, Post-baccalaureate working group, now Transition And Transformation Working Group, hosts luncheon for faculty to brainstorm about how they are using the idea of experiential learning in their classes. Attending (along with working group): Charlene Grant, Deb Hall, Bob Turner, Karen Arcerio, Karen Kellogg, Paul Calhoun, David Karp, Kim Marsella, Chris Kopec, and Bernie Possidente. Some faculty concerns and observations included the need to expand connections with alumni, need to find a way to include a broader section of the faculty in connecting experiential learning with the classroom and the need for administrative support to be more effective (works best in the areas where it is included in someone’s job).

Summer 2010, Cabinet Retreat begins shaping 2010-2011 Strategic Action Agenda.

- ✓ ***Increase our effectiveness in helping our graduates plan and prepare for their post-Skidmore lives.***

16. Constitute and charge working group to develop plan for comprehensive post-baccalaureate experience.

- Faculty-student research opportunities.

- Develop plan for increasing the number and support for High Impact Experiences that enhance post-baccalaureate opportunities (e.g., undergraduate research, internships, etc.)
- Develop coordinated fundraising plan to established funded internships (Sophomore Experience).
- Enhance support for faculty advising regarding High Impact Experiences.
- Alumni networking.
- Support for national fellowship applicants.
- Develop programming options to support future increase in pre-orientation program participation.
- Establish restructured Center for Career Development; search for and hire new director.
- Seek expanded capacity to support pre-professional advising and advising regarding High Impact Experiences.
- By December 1, 2010, develop budget plan for new initiatives.
- Create coordinated fundraising plan to support the creation of High Impact Experiences for all students.

Administrative responsibility: Dean of the Faculty, Acting Dean of the Faculty, Dean of Student Affairs, Vice President for Advancement.

Summer 2010, Transition and Transformation Working Group expands to include Corey Freeman-Gallant (replacing Michael Ennis-McMillan) and Paty Rubio as Acting Dean of the Faculty.

Fall 2010, Transition and Transformation Working Group expands to include Mary Lou Bates and Barbara Krause.

Fall 2010 Strategic Action Agenda endorsed unanimously by IPPC on 9/24/10. Strategic Action Agenda reviewed by the Board of Trustees at the October Board meeting. Strategic Action Agenda issued in October following Board meeting.

October 1, 2010 “News from Academic Affairs” (Excerpt)

Academic Planning

Academic Staff met in retreat in early September. Invitations to attend were issued as well to the chairs of all major committees and the full membership of the Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP). In the spring, **President Phil Glotzbach** had asked each member of Cabinet to develop a five-year plan, offering criteria against which to measure our choices, and

requesting information about proposed outcomes, resources, and timelines. We made a start on this work at the Academic Staff retreat in May, resumed the discussion in the September retreat, and the conversations will continue in the fall. In the meantime, department chairs and program directors were asked to share the planning documents with their departments and programs. We are working on a number of plans concurrently so as to take advantage of funding opportunities as they arise, but three priorities in particular are capturing attention because they will need significant resources: the question of the composition of the faculty (the relative numbers of tenure-track and non-tenure-track appointments), the science vision (which awaits a report from consultant Art Lidsky), and the Transitions/Transformations project, which emerged strongly from the on- and off-campus Town Hall conversations last year. Some other planning items are listed separately in this bulletin.

Fall 2010 President Glotzbach hosts a conversation for faculty and administrators on Transition and Transformation.

Fall 2010, CEPP determines that it will include Transition and Transformation on its agenda for the year.

Fall 2010, October-Corey Freeman-Gallant suggests the creation of a faculty Transition and Transformation working group to consider educational issues. He consults FEC (see attached e-mail dated October 9, 2010). FEC's minutes from October 13, 2010 reflect a discussion of the e-mail exchange between the FEC chair and Corey Freeman-Gallant (who is identified in FEC minutes as Beau Breslin). FEC minutes record the committee's determination that they did not anticipate any governance issues at that time.

October 2010, Corey Freeman-Gallant recruits faculty to Transition and Transformation faculty working group to discuss experiential learning and the Coordinator for Experiential Learning (CEL) position: Tillman Nechtman, Kim Marsella, Michael Marx, Crystal Moore, Bob Turner and David Howson. Group met several times and exchanged e-mails during the Fall 2010 semester.

December 2010, Cabinet reviews the first draft of the Transition and Transformation document.

December 2010, President Glotzbach is invited by the Mellon Foundation to submit a proposal for a Presidential Leadership Grant.

January 2011, Transition and Transformation Working Group expands to include David Karp and two members from the faculty working group: David Howson and Tillman Nechtman (scheduling conflicts make it hard for either David Howson or Tillman Nechtman to attend meetings).

January 2011, Corey Freeman-Gallant and Rochelle Calhoun present and discuss the Transition and Transformation draft document at CEPP retreat. CEPP decides to partner with Corey and the dean of the faculty office to host chairs and program directors roundtable discussions to get feedback on the document. It was determined that these discussions would culminate in a faculty forum to be held in April. Meetings were scheduled and conducted as follows:

- January 14, 2011 – Chairs and Program Director Meeting, Corey Freeman-Gallant informed the chairs and program directors of the existence of the Transitions and Transformation administrative group and noted that CEPP and Corey would meet with divisional roundtables over the course of the semester to discuss the Transition and Transformation working draft.
- February 18, 2011 – Humanities Roundtable: Corey Freeman-Gallant, Bob Turner and Michael Arnush facilitated a discussion of the working draft.
- February 22, 2011 – Science Planning Group (Natural Science Roundtable): Corey Freeman-Gallant, Bob Turner and Kim Marsella facilitated a discussion of the working draft.
- March 10, 2011 – Social Science Roundtable: Corey Freeman-Gallant and Chris Kopec facilitated a discussion of the working draft.
- April 13, 2011 Arts Roundtable: Corey Freeman-Gallant, Bob Turner, David Howson and Mimi Hellman facilitated a discussion of the working draft.

Spring 2011, The Transition and Transformation draft document is vetted with a number of groups, including: IPPC (March 4, 2011 and April 22, 2011), Student Affairs division, SGA Senate (February 22, 2011) and Academic Council (April 5, 2011), Board of Trustees, Alumni Association Board, Town Hall Meetings. At all meetings there were good questions and support for the initiatives.

February 2011, The Chair of FEC contacts Corey Freeman-Gallant and Rochelle Calhoun to discuss the Board of Trustees meeting on Transition and Transformation. FEC chair suggests that there be a faculty forum and is informed that CEPP has already planned to host a faculty forum in April at the conclusion of the roundtable discussions already in process

February 2011, Draft Presidential Leadership Grant proposal is reviewed by Cabinet.

March 2011, CEPP and FEC meet to discuss concerns about process and to plan the faculty forum.

April 2011, CEPP-FEC forum on Transition and Transformation.

April 2011, Presidential Leadership Grant proposal submitted to Mellon Foundation.

April 2011, CEPP chair and FEC chair meet with acting VPAA and acting dean of the faculty to discuss concerns about process and governance.

June 2011, Presidential Leadership Grant awarded from Mellon Foundation.

October 2011, CEPP forms subcommittee of CEPP faculty to explore aspects of teaching and learning related to Transition and Transformation.

Fall 2011-Spring 2012, Career Services conducts student, alumni, and parent surveys and plans new initiatives as they transform into the Career Development Center.

March 2012, Board of Trustees meeting includes a discussion of Transition and Transformation initiatives and an update on the CEPP subcommittee's work.

Spring 2012, Office of Academic Advising invites all departments and programs to participate in the first competition for SEE-Beyond grants. Grants awarded to 21 students for a range of summer learning experiences including internships, collaborative research, and performance workshops.

May 2012, Presidential Leadership Grant awarded by Mellon Foundation will be used to support student engagement in collaborative research, travel to present at conferences, and internships.

May 2012, CEPP subcommittee on Transition and Transformation invites faculty to participate in questionnaire on aspects of teaching and learning related to this theme. A report will be posted on the CEPP web page; next year's CEPP will determine what steps should be taken in response to the findings.