

Committee on Educational Policy and Planning Annual Report 2002-2003

The Committee on Educational Policy and Planning (CEPP) met 27 times for regularly scheduled meetings and conducted a 2 ½ day retreat at the end of the school year. The Chair also was a member of the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC) and the Governance Advisory Committee (GAC). Several members of CEPP attended the Committee of Committee meetings. Additionally, CEPP convened 1 subcommittee to study the issue of increasing student enrollment.

All of the minutes and relevant CEPP documents are located at the CEPP website (<http://www.skidmore.edu/academics/CEPP/index.html>). A sincere thank you to Hugh Foley for taking on the task of updating the website and archiving all related CEPP materials.

In addition to regular CEPP business there were two policy items that CEPP brought to the faculty (Chemistry and Physics proposal and the Skidmore in Beijing Program proposal). Both proposals were approved by a faculty vote.

Chemistry-Physics Department split- A proposal was submitted to CEPP, with the approval of the DOF office, for the consideration of the creation of a new department (splitting the current Chemistry-Physics Department into separate Chemistry Department and Physics Departments). CEPP deliberated the proposal and after many conversations and iterations of the original proposal, it was brought to the faculty floor for discussion and debate (Motion introduced at the February meeting, vote taken at the March meeting). There were also two informational meetings held for the greater community to meet and ask questions concerning all facets of the proposal. The proposal was passed with a vote from the faculty. A copy of the proposal and motion can be found on the DOF web site. (<http://www.skidmore.edu/administration/dof/campus-only/faculty/2002-03/03-07-03-Att-D.pdf>). The Board of Trustees approved the proposal at their spring meeting.

Skidmore in Beijing Program- The initial discussion concerning the desirability of creating a Skidmore in Beijing Program began during the 2001-2002 CEPP. Following CEPP's approval to move forward on the initial proposal a steering committee was formed. Once the steering committee found an appropriate school and resident director a proposal was submitted to CEPP to formally create a Skidmore in Beijing Program. After much feedback from CEPP, the proposal was brought to the faculty floor (April meeting). The 30 day lay over was suspended (faculty vote) and the faculty approved the proposal.

There were several other issues that were discussed and still remain in planning stages. Below is a short synopsis of the most pressing items that were brought to the CEPP for consideration or discussion.

Academic Vision-This topic was on nearly 75% of CEPP's agendas this year. Due to other work that needed attention, to all college circumstances that took key members and voices away from the committee, this discussion moved slowly and without clear direction for most of the year. It was decided that this topic was so important and central to many of the broad college issues that a separate time for intense, uninterrupted discussions and work should be arranged. Therefore, the committee agreed to a 3 day retreat at the end of the school year. All 2003 regular members attended the retreat. Additionally, David Peterson (who will join for the 2003 fall semester), Ray Rodrigues (invited guest) attended all sessions and Sarah Goodwin and John Brueggemann attended as invited guests for the last day.

The following broad academic issues were researched prior to the retreat: excellence and rigor, internationalization, collaborative learning, advising and mentoring, core curriculum, diversity and information literacy. Reports were made to the committee on each topic followed by in-depth conversation on how each issue related to the larger college academic vision. As a result of these discussions, several overlapping themes emerged; critical thinking, collaboration, citizenship and communication. How these themes will emerge in the academic vision has yet to be resolved. The committee will continue to meet and work on the draft of the academic vision over the course of the summer.

LS 1- CEPP had been notified of changes that would be instituted to the current structure of LS 1. These changes included a name change and a change in the structure and delivery of the course. CEPP will continue to discuss the role of LS 1 in its relationship to the ongoing academic vision discussions.

Distance learning- Currently Skidmore College does not have an official policy on the acceptance of distance learning (DL) courses for transfer credit. Current practice dictates that the College does not knowingly accept DL courses for transfer credit. CEPP work began on this topic during the 2000-2001 academic year. A draft of a DL policy statement was written (2001-2002 CEPP) and the plan is for this document to go to Academic Staff early in the fall and hopefully to the full faculty for discussion.

3+2 MBA Program with RPI- The Management and Business Department brought a request to CEPP to discontinue the agreement with RPI to offer the 3 + 2 MBA program. There was strong evidence and testimony that RPI did not have interest in continuing to offer a quality program. CEPP approved the request and reported the decision to the faculty at the April faculty meeting.

Subcommittee- A formal request from FPPC to IPC came in February to consider the "...impact and benefits of increasing the number of students enrolled at Skidmore by 100, to be added, beginning in FY05, in planned increments of 25 per year." Although there was never any formal discussion of this request during IPC meetings, the request was shared with the CEPP committee (the Chair of CEPP sits on IPC), and it was decided that a CEPP subcommittee would be formed to look at the impact of increasing student enrollment on educational quality and resources. This subcommittee (Gordon Thompson, Chair, Michael Arnush, Pat Fehling, Hugh Foley, Pat Oles) looked at data for enrollments, retention, cohort graduation rates and information from previous study groups on this issue. Due to educational and pedagogical reasons it was concluded that increasing the student enrollment was feasible. The subcommittee felt that instead of admitting an additional 25 students per year for the next 5 years, that enrollments could be increased through a concerted effort to increase cohort graduation rates. Data from the Registrars office indicates that a 5% increase in cohort graduation rate would yield an increase of 30 students per class. (Currently, the cohort graduation rate is approximately 80%, therefore, we graduate 480 of the 600 students that are originally enrolled. If this cohort graduation rate were increased to 85%, we would graduate 510 students, and thereby be adding an additional 30 students per class.) A final copy of this report will be sent to FPPC.

Agenda Items for next year

Academic vision

Assessment

Distance learning

Honors

Growth of international programs

CEPP members for 2002-2003

Michael Arnush (spring semester only)

Catherine Bookhout (student representative)

John Brueggemann (fall semester- as a faculty member, spring semester- representative of the DOF's office at several meetings)

Pat Fehling (chair)

Hugh Foley

Chuck Joseph (DOF/VPAA)

Nick Merrill (student representative)

Pat Oles (Dean of Student Affairs)

Amelia Rauser

Ray Rodrigues (invited guest for the entire year)

Paty Rubio

Gordon Thompson

CEPP members for 2003-2004

Michael Arnush

Hugh Foley

Chuck Joseph (DOF/VPAA)

Frank Gonzalez

Pat Oles (Dean of Student Affairs)

David Peterson (fall 2003)

Paty Rubio

Linda Simon (spring 2004)

Gordon Thompson (chair)