

CEPP Minutes. 22 February 2002

John Brueggemann (Acting Chair), Pat Fehling, Janet Sorenson, Pat Oles, Mike Meguerdichian, Linda Simon (minutes)

We devoted the meeting to discussing the draft of the Strategic Plan sent to us by Chuck Joseph on 2/21/02. John began by telling us that the purpose of the discussion was to send our response to IPC via Sandy. Because John's response will contain the main points of our discussion, these minutes serve as context for our concerns.

1. We focused first on the opening paragraphs. Linda thought that the "soul of the institution" was not adequately addressed in the document. Janet thought that the document seemed to say that we want to do more of the same in the future, when we are really trying to create a new identity. We agreed that the document should emphasize the idea that we are a community of scholars and propose concrete ways to enrich and support that identity.
2. John cautioned us to think about our audience, and Pat Oles, in response, summarized presentations made to the trustees on Thursday afternoon (Feb. 21), which emphasized the work of the faculty and defended the need for more tenure lines. Dissenting from this view was Dan Hurwitz, who is concerned about Skidmore's current 3% GPA, which he feels is inadequate.
3. We discussed IPC's need to assess the cost of our goals throughout the document.
4. We looked at #3: strengthen the curriculum, and all agreed with Mike that a more accurate heading would be "support the current curriculum and ensure its breadth and depth." We will ask IPC to clarify what it means to strengthen the curriculum.
5. We agreed that the document seems to run out of steam as it gets to the end, and we suggested that facilities and support services be moved from its current two places and given its own category: what, concretely, do we need, and what is the rationale?
6. Mike suggested including alumni as part of the Skidmore community. All felt that the bullets beneath "strengthen the sense of community" did not address concrete ways of achieving that goal. Phrases such as "recognize and reward" have no concrete meaning, and in any case do not seem likely to produce the kind of sharing and communication that the section calls for.

In general, we felt that the document still does not adequately define Skidmore as an intellectual community or the quality of its academic offerings, does not concretely envision the future community we wish to create, and does not concretely offer means of achieving the goals even as they are laid out here.