

REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON COLLEGE GOVERNANCE

(Andrea Harren-Dechenne '90, Barbara Heron, Prof. Tadahisa Kuroda [Chairperson], Lisa Levy '89, Dean Robbie Nayman, Lawrence Ries, Prof. Paul Walter, and Prof. Joanna Zangrando.)

March 6 1989

INTRODUCTION

SHORT HISTORY OF GOVERNANCE AT SKIDMORE COLLEGE

I. The 1950's

II. The 1960's

III. The 1970's

IV. CGA Constitutional Reform

V. Conclusions

RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX A: Charge to the Task Force

APPENDIX B: Composition of Community Council

INTRODUCTION

The faculty Committee on Appointments, Promotions, Tenure, and Sabbaticals [CAPTS], recommended the formation of The Task Force on Faculty Governance in November of 1986. This action resulted from a growing dissatisfaction on the part of many faculty with the inordinate demands made by the 36 committees

then in existence on which faculty served. Service on such committees consumed time and energy and diverted faculty attention from teaching and professional growth, which are other important ways that the faculty serves the College and the students. Many with experience in faculty governance were also dismayed by the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the proliferating committee structure.

In the years of financial uncertainty in the early and mid 1970's when the College implemented a more rigorous policy for re-appointment and tenure, many junior faculty were led to believe that service on faculty committees was a prerequisite for continued service. Senior faculty sought to get these candidates through the process by encouraging them to run for committees, stepping aside and deciding themselves not to run, and voting for untenured rather than senior faculty in committee elections. As a result, junior faculty filled the ranks of important committees, such as the Curriculum Committee and the Committee on Educational Policy and Planning. In 1984 at the time of the decision to terminate the nursing program, a very controversial decision to say the least, all six faculty members on CEPP were untenured. This pattern reinforced the tendency to place faculty in their first or second years at the College on committees like Community Council. Although it is true that senior faculty do not consider Community Council a major assignment and do not seek appointment to it,

they also realize that junior faculty are closer in age to the students and to the undergraduate experience than many tenured faculty and hence are well suited for Community Council.

Young faculty in the 1970's and early 1980's, especially those who later received tenure, found themselves often serving on several major committees simultaneously. Many who endured these heavy burdens found later that such service received little recognition and did nothing to advance their professional careers. In the mid and later 1980's, many faculty believed they saw a discernible shift in the interpretation of the criteria for continued service: service to the college community, as evidenced by participation on committees, counted for somewhat less and professional accomplishments, as evidenced by publications, for rather more. These changes carried all kinds of implications for the existing faculty governance structure, and CAPTS and the Task Force took these into account.

The Faculty asked the Task Force to look into the composition, procedures, and functions of the faculty meeting; the composition, mode of selection, and utility of the various college committees; and the relationship between these committees and the administration (See Report of the Task Force on Governance, March 14, 1988).

The Task Force members consisted of Professors Ralph Ciano, Erwin L. Levine, Mary C. Lynn, Darnell Rucker, and Joanna Zangrando. In performing their assigned duties, they spent much of the spring and summer of 1987 meeting with members of the administration--including the Provost, Dean of Faculty, Dean of Student Affairs and some of her staff, various faculty committees, including the student representatives, and chairpersons of other faculty committees. In mid September, Prof. Ciano reminded the Task Force "of the need to discuss the proposed co-curricular policy committee with C.G.A. officers and with the Dean of Student Affairs," (Minutes of Meeting #23 of the Task Force on Faculty Governance, September 16, 1987) and Prof. Lynn arranged for a meeting. Prof. Levine and Prof. Lynn met with the Dean of Student Affairs, the C.G.A. President and the Vice President for Academic Affairs in the last week of September, and reported, "Our proposals for an IPC [Institutional Planning Committee] and CCPC were very positively received; ..." (Minutes of Meeting #24 of the Task Force on Faculty Governance, September 30, 1987.)

The Chairperson of the Task Force, Prof. Ralph Ciano, and President Porter attended a Student Senate meeting on the tripartite system on November 2, 1987. Professors Ciano and Rucker agreed to appear to discuss the Task Force's charge and findings. On the appointed day, however, the senate cancelled and never re-scheduled another meeting. The Task Force also held a separate meeting with the Dean of Student Affairs and the Provost about the report, and Prof. Ciano met privately with Dean Hoffmann to discuss the composition of CCPC specifically.

In the spring of 1988, the Task Force presented a report, copies of which were distributed to all faculty and to the C.G.A. President and Vice President for Academic Affairs [their copies carried a notation "for your information"], conducted two open meetings for the faculty and other interested parties, invited and received communications from individuals, and adopted revisions in response to these reactions. The bulk of its report dealt with faculty meetings and faculty committees. The Task Force concluded operations when the faculty meeting accepted a final, revised report in the spring of 1988.

At the monthly faculty meetings when the revised report occupied the agenda, there were some protests from individual faculty members about the elimination of the Library Committee and the sunseting of the Programs Abroad Committee. President Porter raised questions about the burdens falling on the Co-Curricular Policy Committee. Student leaders expressed concerns about the decrease in number of students who would serve on faculty committees if the Task Force report were adopted. There were no other public statements by those in attendance at these meetings indicating trouble spots.

The Task Force recommendations included the creation of a new "faculty" committee, the Co-Curricular Policy Committee, to be included in the Faculty Handbook as part of the faculty governance structure. The CCPC

consists of the President, Dean of Student Affairs, Dean of the Faculty, the C.G.A. President, the C.G.A. Vice President for Co-Curricular Affairs, a student selected by C.G.A. [this clause is an amendment passed at the faculty meeting in response to suggestions from student leaders], the Director of Minority and International Students, and three faculty members elected for staggered three-year terms. It also has access to a staff: Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Director of College Events, and Director of Community Education and Summer Conferences.

The Task Force Report directs the CCPC to be concerned with "the cultural and intellectual atmosphere on campus, with co-curricular and recreational activities, and with broader issues having campus-wide, national, and international import." The new committee should "function as a forum for exploring and elevating the quality of life at Skidmore and ... set policy for the co-curriculum and for the shaping and scheduling of extracurricular events." The CCPC subsumes part of the work previously performed by the College Events Committee, Community Council, and the Schedule and Calendar Committee (See the Report of the Task Force on Governance for additional information).

The Task Force members saw this new committee having the potential for effectiveness which existing committees, including Community Council, had not demonstrated. They saw faculty acceptance of the CCPC as a commitment from the faculty to involve themselves in a serious and sustained manner in issues of special interest to students. Their rationale stated, "Just as we have a committee devoted to educational planning and policy, so it behooves the faculty to support a committee devoted to co-curricular planning and policy in recognition of the importance of co-curricular experiences in students' lives and the classroom benefits to be derived from nourishing a rich cultural and intellectual community." They also believed that those who had been consulted agreed with the substance of these points.

What has emerged in the aftermath of the faculty acceptance of the Task Force report is a controversy centering on but not confined to Community Council. Recognizing that the faculty could not on its own abolish Community Council, established under Article IV of the C.G.A. constitution, the Task Force proposed submitting a constitutional amendment to effect the change [no formal proposal has yet been put forward]. There was no assurance that such an amendment, if proposed, would in fact pass, and the possibility remained that Community Council might continue to function as a C.G.A. body while the CCPC began its life in the faculty governance system. The Task Force report made recommendations bearing on two other agencies recognized as C.G.A. entities © the Honor Code Commission and the Orientation Committee. The report proposed removing faculty from the Commission and turning the Honor Code entirely over to students; and it supported the elimination of the Orientation Committee as recommended originally by C.G.A., a decision arrived at and acted upon prior to the creation of the Task Force and without a faculty vote.

Some student leaders, including the C.G.A. President and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, believed that they had not been adequately consulted by the Task Force on Faculty Governance about reductions in student representatives to faculty committees and that a faculty-appointed Task Force had no jurisdiction over Community Council. These students felt that reductions in the number of their positions on faculty committees, though proportional to similar reductions in faculty and administration membership and resulting from the elimination of entire committees rather than a limitation on the number of students on any continuing committee, restricted opportunities for students to gain valuable experience from committee service. It is interesting to note by contrast that the faculty and the Task Force agreed that these very same committees were ineffective or inefficient or both, and that the costs of service on them outweighed the benefits. Student leaders expressed frustrations as well with the operation of faculty committees, which they believed did not always take student representatives seriously and sometimes scheduled meetings when students had classes. They claimed that all of these matters were community issues and required full review by Community Council before any action could be taken. Underlying all of these perceptions was the frustration felt by many, if not all, student leaders and senators that student positions were frequently either ignored, taken for granted, or discounted.

At its final meeting in the 1987-88 academic year, C.G.A.'s Community Council voted to establish a Task Force on Governance [referred to as the Task Force on College Governance to distinguish it from the previous Task Force on Faculty Governance]. In the fall of 1988 President David Porter appointed eight persons to this group: Andrea Harren-Dechenne '90, a member of the Honor Code Commission, and Lisa Levy '89, C.G.A. Vice President for Academic Affairs; Barbara Heron, Manager of the Skidmore Shop, and Robbie Nayman, Dean of Student Affairs; Lawrence Ries, Assistant Director of the University Without Walls; and Professors Tadahisa Kuroda [Chairperson], Paul Walter, and Joanna Zangrando. The President asked the Task Force to propose ways of resolving the controversy, to review the workings of the tripartite system, and to prepare a document or make recommendations to describe the working relationships of the students, faculty, and administration. (Appendix A for the President's charge to the Task Force.)

The Task Force has taken into account the views of students expressed at a Student Life Forum with the Board of Trustees, a Trustees' Student Life Committee Meeting, and a C.G.A. Senate meeting in the fall of 1988 and reviewed suggestions by all Task Force members, including the two student representatives. It has examined published materials in the Skidmore College Archives and a number of other documents, which are cited in footnotes; sought and received written and oral communications from former Dean of the College Norma Macrury, former Dean of Students Claire Olds, and current Assistant Dean of Student Affairs Anita Burnham Steigerwald; shared earlier drafts of its historical account with Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs David Marcell and the Dean of Faculty Eric Weller and invited them to comment, correct, and amend; and accepted oral and written materials from retired and current faculty familiar with the operations of the College in the 1950's, 1960's, and the early 1970's.

Statements and assumptions made by many parties during the current controversy revealed so much confusion about governance at Skidmore College that the Task Force on College Governance decided to prepare a brief history as a first step toward clarifying issues. In so doing, it has aimed for a timely rather than an exhaustive account. Task Force recommendations follow the segment on history and flow directly out of that history. ([Return to the beginning of the Report](#))

A SHORT HISTORY OF GOVERNANCE AT SKIDMORE COLLEGE

I. The 1950's.

A striking feature of the constitutions for the College Government Association since World War II has been the continuity of its structure. The text of the 1949-50 Student Handbook provides the following:

Article I. Name.

The name of this organization shall be the Skidmore College Government Association.

Article II. Purpose.

The purpose of the association shall be to establish and maintain the conditions of community life conducive to good scholarship, intelligent citizenship, and individual growth.

Article III. Membership.

All students and all members of the faculty and staff of Skidmore College shall be ipso facto members of the association.

Article IV. Officers and Organization

1. The President of the college shall be the president of the association. The Dean of the college shall be the vice-president. The other officers, elected by the student body, shall be a student president and two student vice-presidents who shall be seniors, and a secretary and treasurer who shall be juniors.
2. There shall be a Legislative Council consisting of the following members:
3. There shall be an Executive Board consisting of the following members:
4. There shall be an Honor Board consisting of the following members:
5. There shall be a Judicial Board consisting of the following members:
6. There shall be a Residence Council
7. There shall be a Day Student Council
8. There shall be a New York University Hospital Council
9. There shall be a Student Officers' Council
10. There shall be a National Students Association Council (Copies of student and faculty handbooks through the years are available in the Skidmore College Archives.)

This structure suggests that in practice the College Government Association functioned primarily as an administration-student organization [not one in which the faculty played a primary role]. The C.G.A. officers consisted of administrators and students, not faculty:

OFFICERS OF COLLEGE GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

President President of the College

Vice President Dean of the College

Student President

First Student Vice-President

Second Student Vice-President

Chairman of National Student Association Council

Student Representative to Alumnae Executive Board

Secretary

Treasurer

The handbooks explained that students were part of a community which governed itself:

The community government unites students and faculty and administration as they work together formulating policies and solving every day problems, learning by practice the democratic principles of individual freedom and initiative coupled with responsibility and cooperation. Active membership in a self-governing community and a share in an honor system that really works are, we believe, the best preparation for citizenship in a democratic society.

The C.G.A. functioned through a legislative council (the forerunner of Community Council), an executive board, an honor board, judicial board, residence council, and so on. The legislative council consisted of 23 members:

The president of the association as chairman

The vice-president of the association

Three members of the faculty elected by the faculty, two members from the resident faculty, one from the non resident faculty

The student president of the association

The student vice-presidents of the association

The secretary of the association

The treasurer of the association

Three seniors elected by the class

Three juniors elected by the class

Three sophomores elected by the class

The chairman of National Students Association Council

The chairman of the Day Student Council

Student representative to Alumnae Executive Board

The editor of "News", ex-officio

The by-laws directed that "The Legislative Council shall discuss and decide upon matters of community policy. Questions may be referred to the council by an administrative officer, by the faculty, or by any department of the College Government Association."

The 1951-52 student handbook claimed,

Our government runs effectively in that students, faculty, and administration work together to make a harmonious community. Because of the cooperation among the three groups, our association is called College Government. This mutual confidence is achieved by the strength of the Honor System which is the core of College Government. The President of the College, the Dean of the College, and elected representatives from the faculty and students comprise the boards. Our executive board and judicial board are made up of purely student representation while the honor board and legislative council are composed of representation from the students, faculty and administration. Within these boards campus policies are formulated and discussed. Through this organization we believe we have achieved a united community at Skidmore.

The student handbooks make clear that the principal duties of the Association revolved around the enforcement of the honor code which extended to academic, library, social and dormitory matters [not to educational policy,

curriculum, and faculty personnel areas; nor to setting tuition fees and balancing the budget]. The participation of the administration and faculty in these concerns made them "community" issues; all issues of community concern did not go to the association or to legislative council for resolution.

These statements and provisions continued with modest changes through the mid 1950's. For example, in 1953-54 legislative council was modified to provide for four faculty members instead of three and for the addition of three freshmen representatives. In 1956-57 the handbook revised its statement about college government [meaning C.G.A.] but continued to emphasize the spirit of cooperative effort and the centrality of the honor code:

The community government unites students, faculty and administration as they work together formulating policies and solving every day problems. They learn by practice the democratic principles of individual freedom and initiative coupled with responsibility and cooperation. Active membership in a self-governing community and a share in an effective honor system, we believe, are the best preparation for citizenship in a democratic society.

It also clarified the statement on the purpose of legislative council:

Legislative Council is the governing body of the College Government Association. Policies are presented, formulated, accepted, or rejected. All non-academic regulations governing students in the community are voted upon in Legislative Council. Suggestions and ideas from the other boards, from groups within the student body or from the administration or faculty are introduced to the Council by its representatives and are approved or rejected after consideration of their value to the community and to College Government. Major matters of policy shall not be voted on at the same meeting at which they are proposed.

Faculty Handbooks since World War II in booklet form indicate that faculty responsibilities have remained fairly constant while faculty governance structure has become much more elaborate in the 1970's and 1980's. The 1947-48 edition, for example, listed the faculty and administrative committees then in existence:

1. Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure
2. Committee on Admissions
3. Curriculum Committee
4. Committee on Educational Research
5. Faculty Advisers
6. Faculty Council
7. Faculty Handbook Editor
8. Committee on Financial Aid
9. Library Committee
10. May Day Committee
11. Schedule Committee
12. Committee on Student Records

Even in this simple alphabetical arrangement, it is evident that the faculty's primary concerns--then as well as today--were with neither the residential nor the co-curricular life of the students but with academic, curriculum, and personnel issues. The handbook also noted the College Government Association groups in which faculty members participated: legislative council, honor board, and residence council.

Faculty perceptions of legislative council are suggested in the 1952-53 handbook, which described its function:

To discuss and decide upon matters of community policy. Questions may be referred to the Council by an administrative officer, by the faculty, or by any department of College Government. Any changes in the constitution, any new policies applying to non-academic regulations, are brought to the Council for decision.

In 1953-54 the faculty handbook modified this text:

Legislative Council is the governing body of the College Government Association. All non-academic regulations governing students are voted upon by it. Suggestions and ideas from administrative, faculty, and student groups are introduced to the Council by its representatives.

The 1958-59 edition listed committees of the faculty in two categories, elected and appointed. The elected committees were (1) Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, (2) Committee on Admissions, (3) Curriculum Committee, (4) Faculty Council, (5) Library Committee, and (6) Committee on Student Records. The appointed ones were on (1) financial aid, (2) graduate study, and (3) public relations. The handbook proceeded to a review of C.G.A. groups, and said of legislative council's function: "To encourage conditions conducive to academic accomplishment and healthful group morale in the halls of residence." The faculty handbooks concurred with the student handbooks; both saw legislative council as a forum for non-academic issues.

The administrative structure throughout this period was uncomplicated with the President [Henry T. Moore 1925-57] at the top and the Dean of the College second in charge. The Dean of the College [Norma Macrury 1949-1970] combined responsibilities later subdivided among several Deans and the Provost. In the 1950's and until 1961 the Dean of the College served as Dean of the Faculty. The Dean of Students reported to the Dean of the College. Hence academic, co-curricular, and residential responsibilities converged in this one powerful office. The Dean of the College provided the principal administration contact for C.G.A., Legislative Council, and student leaders, while simultaneously she served as the nominal leader of the faculty. The faculty itself boasted strong minded, tenured, senior members who served in positions of department chairs for years and years. ([Return to the beginning of the Report](#))

II. The 1960's.

Sometime during 1958-59 College Government Association decided on a change from legislative council to Community Council. The 1959-60 student handbook contained a C.G.A. constitution that began with a preamble which had not been there before but has been there ever since:

We, the faculty, administration, and students of Skidmore College operating under the authority granted by the trustees believe that cooperation and mutual understanding of the policies and programs of a college community are essential to the pursuit and attainment of knowledge and truth. To achieve these goals, we unite in the formation of the Skidmore College Government Association. The Association is based upon the honesty and integrity of all members of the community.

It continued with a definition of the first Community Council, which had a modest composition:

The President as Chairman

The Vice President

The Dean of Students

The student President

The three student Vice Presidents

Four faculty members

One representative from the junior class and one

representative from the sophomore class.

The constitution stipulated that

The Community Council shall discuss and legislate upon matters of community policy, that is those matters which are the responsibility of both the faculty and administration as well as students. Questions of community policy may be referred to the Council by any administrative officer, the faculty, the Executive Board, or the Student Senate. The Council has the authority to appoint ad hoc committees and to refer any matter to the faculty, administration, or the Executive Board.

This revised C.G.A. constitution provided a new amending procedure. Any constituent unit could make a recommendation, and Community Council would study the change. The proposal then required "the ... approval by the faculty at a meeting." Only then would the student body have the opportunity to vote on the proposal. [This provision disappeared from the C.G.A. constitution by the 1970-71 edition.] There is no evidence, however, that the administration and the faculty contemplated that changes in administrative structure or faculty governance required the approval of the student body, C.G.A., or Community Council, though consultation with student leaders might be appropriate in some instances. Indeed, both administrative organization and faculty committees grew and changed throughout this period without the formal and prior approval of Community Council. Only changes in the C.G.A. constitution had to follow this process.

When C.G.A. considered changing its principal governing agent from legislative council to Community Council, the faculty handbook treated the latter as a continuation of the former; it simply noted that legislative council's function and membership were in the process of revision. After 1959 the faculty handbooks reviewed in somewhat more detail than the student handbooks the function of Community Council:

To discuss and legislate upon those college policies which are the collective responsibility of the faculty, administration, and student body. To act as a court of petition for the students with regard to college regulations. When necessary, to advise the community on any off-campus issues that are of special concern to the College. Questions of community policy may be referred to the council by any administrative officer, the faculty, the executive board, or the student senate. The council has the authority to appoint ad hoc committees and to refer any matter to the faculty, administration, or the executive board.

By 1966 the faculty handbook regularly described the committees of the faculty and then the C.G.A. organizations in which faculty participated. Its section on the College Government Association stated,

The College Government Association of Skidmore College is by long tradition a community organization. Members of the faculty, members of the administrative staff, and all students of the College are ipso facto active members of the Association.

Elected faculty representatives sit on Community Council, Academic Integrity Board and the Board of Review, lending academic guidance to the determination and administration of all Association policies.

Problems of a purely academic nature are referred directly to the faculty from all branches of the Association.

The Constitution of College Government Association, approved by faculty vote [no longer true], is printed in full in the Student Handbook.

The administrative structure began to make the adjustment from the relatively brief tenure of President Val Wilson [1957-64] to that of Joseph Palamountain [1964-1987]. In 1961 President Wilson brought to Skidmore Edwin M. Moseley as Dean of the Faculty, and thereby separated this office from that of the Dean of the College and allowed him to give undivided attention to the development of the faculty. President Palamountain in 1967-68 moved to have the title of Provost added to that of the Dean of Faculty, enhancing the authority of Edwin Moseley. When Norma Macrury retired in the later 1960's, the office of Dean of the College came to an end. (Letter of Edwin M. Moseley to the Faculty, August 7, 1970 explains the new arrangement without a Dean of the College.)

Student leaders worked most often with the Dean of Students, while the faculty worked most closely with the Dean of the Faculty, who happened to be the Provost also. Under Dean Moseley's leadership the faculty grew in numbers and new Ph.D.s and other highly qualified professionals began careers which continue to impact on Skidmore today. ([Return to the beginning of the Report](#))

III. The 1970's.

At the end of the 1960's and in the early 1970's when college campuses everywhere felt the impact of social and political movements, Skidmore students pressed for more of a voice in college life. Housemothers and parietals gave way to student control over much of residential life. C.G.A. eventually gained power over the student activity fees, which were deposited directly into an account which it managed, and it refined and developed procedures for effective distribution and accounting of funds during the later 1970's. Thus in terms of residential and co-curricular life, students made important gains.

Concurrently, the faculty took steps--partially in response to student activism against the war in Vietnam and to black student occupation of the administration building--to reach out to students. As early as 1968 the faculty added students to the Committee on Educational Policy and Planning. Later students were added to other faculty committees, but these committees remained faculty and not C.G.A. committees, and the faculty determined the number of students who served on each committee.

In 1970-71 the committee on academic standing had no student representatives but enjoyed two starting in 1971-72. The admissions committee started with four students but in 1971-72 included no more than two. When new committees like financial planning came into existence, they typically provided for student representation. When curriculum committee grew from four faculty serving two-year terms to six serving for three years, student representation stayed unchanged at two. Faculty Council and CAPTS have never had student representation; they have never had administrative representation either. Meanwhile, the faculty, which had previously admitted designated student leaders to its meeting on an *ex gratia*, ad hoc basis, regularized the process and invited selected student officers on a continuing basis to attend faculty meetings. On all of these measures, a vote at a faculty meeting established the new policies; Community Council could exhort the faculty and encourage these changes, but had no formal authority to vote on them.

The faculty committees and the faculty meeting supported a variety of changes in the later 1960's and early 1970's which responded to perceived student needs, educational concerns, and financial pressures. The 4-1-4 calendar was adopted in 1967; a developmental year for the non-traditional University Without Walls in the spring of 1970; concentrations related to a major in 1970; the self-determined major in 1971; the pass/fail option, the incomplete, and self-scheduled final examinations in the spring of 1971; and coeducation in 1971.

By the middle of the seventies, anxieties over admissions prospects for a growing student body and budgetary worries prompted trustee initiatives to bring greater professional managerial talents to administer the business side of College affairs, retrench financially, and introduce a more rigorous personnel policy for faculty. (See "Self-Evaluation Report to the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, "Introduction: Skidmore College, 1976-88," for a review of the difficulties facing Skidmore at this time.) Discussions over the new policies for reappointment and tenure, adopted in 1972-73 and thereafter frequently refined, soon spilled over to debates over enrollments and student evaluations of faculty. (See Faculty Council, "Report on The Tenure Process," December 10, 1976.) In the end, the faculty agreed to have such evaluations not only at the departmental level [in the past a matter left to individual departments to administer or not to administer] but also at the college level, so that student opinion about faculty performance as teachers could be fully taken into account. The C.G.A. supported the movement to establish college-wide, standardized evaluation of faculty, and did so as a pressure group acting upon the faculty, administration, and trustees. (Memorandum of Abby Armstrong, The Student Evaluations Committee of the Student Senate to All Faculty Members, April 7, 1977.)

Since the mid 1970's students have had the opportunity to submit both departmental and all-college evaluations, and these evaluations have carried substantial weight in determining teaching effectiveness, one of the principal criteria [along with professional accomplishment and service to the College] for reappointment and tenure of faculty. Department chairpersons must also demonstrate the future needs of their departments for the particular abilities of the candidates, and enrollment patterns may figure into their calculations. Academic administrators may also take such statistics into account in their decisions on reappointment and tenure. Individual students may not carry much influence in faculty personnel decisions, but these changes from the 1970's insured that collectively they have a heavy impact.

With the 1970 edition, the faculty handbooks ceased being booklets and became annual editions, printed in large page format without a cover. Until 1977 they included a long list of committees, some of which were C.G.A. committees. Hence the alphabetical list started with Academic Integrity Board, Academic Standing, Admissions, Board of Review, CAPTS, CAFR, CEPP, Community Council Curriculum Committee, and so on. In part to avoid confusion, the handbooks after 1977 returned to the practice of the 1950's and 1960's, listing first faculty committees and then College Government Association Committees. In doing so, the handbooks noted with regard to the latter that "Faculty are also full members of the College Government Association, an organization concerned with the quality of student life on campus," probably an accurate reflection of what faculty believed to be the role of C.G.A.

For faculty governance, the major uproar of the decade occurred in the fall of 1974, when the faculty received the report of the Faculty Investigating Committee [F.I.C.] to look into charges that President Palamountain and Provost and Dean of Faculty Edwin M. Moseley had violated principles of faculty governance. At issue were allegations that (1) the President had violated procedures in the "Faculty Handbook" concerning the granting of tenure; (2) the President recommended re-appointments in two cases after being informed by CAPTS that "Faculty Handbook" procedures for re-appointment had not been adequately followed; (3) the administration had increasingly made recommendations regarding faculty status to the board of trustees during the last four years that have reversed the faculty's judgments of its peers, contrary to the recognition that matters of faculty status are primarily the responsibility of the faculty, as reaffirmed by the A.A.U.P. in its 1966 "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities; (4) the administration failed to communicate adequately with the faculty in matters of educational policy and planning; (5) the President violated the academic integrity of the physical education department; (6) the President and the Provost had engaged in questionable managerial and personnel practices as the executive officers of Skidmore College. (See Report of the Faculty Investigating Committee, November 1974.)

The faculty refused to pass a motion to censure the President, but adopted an alternative which "severely disapproved" his actions. The faculty re-asserted its claims to primary responsibilities over academic and faculty personnel matters, and those claims were on the whole made good. As in most instances when academic policy, educational planning, reappointment and tenure, and faculty governance were concerned, the faculty

deliberated, adopted resolutions, and submitted recommendations to the administration. The axis ran from faculty to administration and vice versa. C.G.A. and Community Council were not principal parties.

The administrative structure became more complicated in the 1970's. When Edwin Moseley retired as Provost and Dean of the Faculty in 1975-76, the College, influenced by the 1974 F.I.C. report and the growing complexity of its operations, decided that the responsibilities of the two positions were too much for any one person to assume. (President Palamountain explained why he believed a separate office of Provost was necessary. He pointed to recommendations by the 1967 Middle States visitation team:

...there is serious need of one or more new staff positions at the highest administrative level. Various suggestions were made about this, but the decision as to the function of new staff members is the business of the Trustees and the Administration. The President and the Dean of the Faculty certainly need assistants. Perhaps an executive vice president position would help. An officer whose sole function was institutional research and the formation of plans for the consideration of the President and the Board might also be considered.

The College responded with the additions of an Assistant Dean of the Faculty and an Assistant to the Provost [neither of which positions lasted more than a few years]. "Still the pressures on the single person serving as the Dean of the Faculty and Provost proved great." President Palamountain noted that the Faculty Investigating Committee in 1974 also urged additional administrative support. He felt pressures to complete the physical construction of the campus and to perform fund raising tasks. (See letter of President Joseph C. Palamountain, Jr. to John J. Thomas, President, Skidmore Chapter, American Association of University Professors, June 20, 1977.)

It was in these circumstances that the faculty in May of 1977 adopted a resolution that the chairperson of CAPTS shall call a meeting of faculty members of key committees to discuss the state of college affairs and to assess present relations between the faculty and administration. This procedure became fixed in succeeding years. (Addendum to Minutes of the Faculty Meeting, May 10, 1977.)

As a result, two offices came into being where there had been one, and David Marcell became the Provost (1977-present) (Memo to Faculty and Administrative Staff from President Palamountain on the appointment of Professor Marcell as Provost, June 20, 1977.) and Eric J. Weller the Dean of the Faculty (1976-present). Later to make clear that the Provost stood in rank equivalent to the Vice President for Business and the Vice President for Development, the office became known as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and all three Vice Presidents reported to the President. In this arrangement, all Deans reported to the Provost.

The successful evolution of the University Without Walls and other programs, including the summer school, conferences, and institutes, led to the creation of the position of Dean of Special Programs, first held by Mark Gelber and now by Donald McCormack, with a growing staff. The Dean of Students, Claire Olds (1964-77) [succeeded by Frances Hoffmann (1978-88) and now Robbie Nayman (1988-present)], became the Dean of Student Affairs with two assistant/associate Deans to provide support in areas of academic advising [Jon Ramsey] and student life [Anita Burnham Steigerwald]. (There had been a short lived office called the Dean of Studies, established in 1970, to work with the academic advising of students, the office of the Registrar, and with a variety of other academic planning duties. (See letter of Edwin M. Moseley to the faculty, August 7, 1970.) Eric J. Weller served in this capacity before assuming the post of Dean of Faculty. Some of the duties of Dean of Studies became the responsibilities of the Dean of Student Affairs.) The Dean of the Faculty acquired an associate Dean [David Seligman]. The Dean of Student Affairs served the needs of students in residential, co-curricular, advising and counselling matters, while the Dean of Faculty served the academic, educational, and professional concerns of the faculty. The Dean of Student Affairs and the Dean of Faculty [along with the Dean of Special Programs, Director of Admissions, Registrar, etc.] reported to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. For everyday matters, however, faculty dealt directly with the Dean of Faculty and students with the Dean of Student Affairs, neither with the Provost. In practice, therefore, the faculty operated

under the rules of the faculty handbook and conformed to the administrative structure which made the Dean of Faculty their spokesperson in the administration, while students operated under the rules of the C.G.A. constitution and conformed to a structure which made the Dean of Student Affairs their spokesperson.

The growth of the administration, in part a reflection of increases in student population, faculty development, demands for fund raising and improved alumni relations, and requirements of reform legislation and new policies at state and federal levels, created complexities which continue to the present time. A case in point is the University Without Walls. Established with the approval of state authorities which treat it as an additional academic department of the College, the U.W.W. in many respects operates as a distinctive school on the same campus. The U.W.W. has some students who attend regular classes here and reside in dormitories, but many more of its students are non residential, adults beyond the 17-22 age group; some are inmates at Great Meadow Correctional Facility and at Washington Correctional Facility in Comstock, New York . The U.W.W. has its own admissions committee and registrar. Its staff include people with advanced degrees, some of whom teach part-time at Skidmore, and who perform functions, such as curriculum planning and advising for U.W.W. students, which parallel those of Skidmore faculty. The U.W.W. staff finds itself therefore in an anomalous position, partially a department at the College and partially outside, partially administration and partly faculty. Its students, for the most part, fall outside of the C.G.A. in spite of the constitutional provisions that all students are members of the association. Only those who reside on the campus and pay student activity fees can vote or hold offices in the C.G.A. ([Return to the beginning of the Report](#))

IV. C.G.A. Constitutional Reform.

In 1971 and again in 1978 student leaders in Community Council pressed for major revisions of the C.G.A. constitution. The 1971-72 Student Handbook referred to the C.G.A. constitution as an "interim constitution." Community Council discussed student leaders' initiatives for change--initiatives that reached back to 1968, and authorized a constitutional convention, composed mainly of students, to prepare a less cumbersome document than the one in existence since 1959. Once formed, the convention moved to consider wholesale changes in the way the entire College functioned: in essence, they believed a new C.G.A. should become the College government. Activist student leaders thought that a more powerful C.G.A. would overcome problems associated with student apathy and make the student interest potent. The further they proceeded, the more they came to realize that without the administration and the faculty brought into the proceedings, the more hopeless became the prospect for a massive overhaul of the constitution of the C.G.A. Community Council then appointed a subcommittee to review the work of the convention. (See Minutes of Community Council, February 24, 1972.)

The difficulties of agreeing on a method for adopting changes which affected administrative organization and faculty governance posed an insuperable obstacle to a revamped C.G.A. constitution which would become the College constitution, and these difficulties remain to the present day. When the convention closed its doors, nothing major had come from it. The interim constitution continued in force until 1978--and beyond.

During this period, the Community Council did make reports to the faculty meeting about its activities and in particular about the progress of the constitutional convention. In more recent times, the council has not continued this practice. It should be noted, however, that Community Council can get on the agenda of any faculty meeting and the President of the College, as presiding officer of the meeting, can recognize council members. There has been no change in policy or procedure in this regard.

The Student Handbook for 1978©79 included no constitution at all because once again there was interest in effecting a major overhaul. In December of 1976 Community Council brought a motion to the floor of the faculty meeting asking for the creation of a constitutional commission. It explained that

There exist at Skidmore two distinct forms of government, one governing the students, the other the faculty. At the present time the faculty and the student handbooks have overlapping but different systems of governance. The responsibility of this commission will be to investigate the

possibility of a consistent form of government for the Skidmore College Community. (Community Council Memo to the Faculty, December 3, 1976, Motion to be presented at the next faculty meeting. Note that the Faculty Handbooks until 1977 added to the confusion by placing alphabetically all faculty and C.G.A. committees on one list.)

Community Council proposed the creation of a constitutional commission consisting of six members: three students [one appointed by the C.G.A. President and two others elected at large to serve two year terms], two faculty members elected or appointed by Faculty Council, and one administrator appointed by the administration. The faculty agreed. In January of 1977 President Palamountain asked the constitutional commission to examine what were seen as "inconsistencies within the College Government Association." In a report in the spring of 1977, the commission chairperson, Laura Burke, identified the principal flaws in the system:

1. The C.G.A. constitution did not explain how students, faculty, and administration were united and how the association worked. "It is understood that the tri-par-tite [sic] system will be used, but this is not specifically stated. The Constitution is lacking a definite statement that as an association we are working within a tri-par-tite system." While each part of the college worked, "there is no feeling for how the parts fit together to form a cohesive unit."
2. "The Association appears to include only the President and the Vice-President of the College, and the students." The faculty handbook did not mention the C.G.A. "The fact that the section is labelled Faculty Governance illustrates the breakdown of the tri-par-tite system."
3. There were problems with the judicial process involving the Board of Review, Academic Integrity Board, and the Social Integrity Board.
4. The faculty did not participate in the entire system. "They are operating without information from the major parts of the tri-par-tite system."
5. The commission realized that the "main dissatisfaction lies within the student body." The significant changes that are required "would affect the faculty too," but "the faculty seem content with the system as it is...."
6. Committee descriptions were unclear.

The Commission then submitted a list of recommendations, many of them emphasizing the existence of a "tri-par-tite system," the philosophy of which is that the "three parts interact equally on community affairs." It believed that "legislation that affects the whole community must be passed by each of the three groups and Community Council." (Constitutional Commission, Report to Community Council, Spring, 1977.)

The commission's analysis and recommendations revealed confusion about the history and practice of governance at Skidmore. President Palamountain used to describe that governance as akin to the English constitutional system and very unlike the French. He meant that precedents, established procedures, and habits--as difficult to grasp as they sometimes are--informed historical memory and shaped the actual operation of governance, and this "common law" approach allowed for flexibility, development, and creative leadership. On the other hand, the French in the late 18th and 19th centuries wrote clean, consistent, logical constitutions which were straitjackets which proved unworkable in practice and had to be re-written with each new crisis--or so it seemed.

An understanding of Skidmore's history would have led to major questions about the principal assumptions of the commission report. The commission interpreted the word community to be all-inclusive, extending to anything that took place on the Skidmore campus or without which affected students, faculty, and administration, and hence almost any issue of consequence became community issues for Community Council

to resolve. The elevation of Community Council above the administrative structure, faculty governance, and C.G.A. Senate as the College's principal legislative and deliberative body did not accord with the origins, purpose, or the practice of Community Council. At a Community Council meeting on March 12, 1979 President Joseph Palamountain, Dean of Faculty Eric Weller, and Dean of Student Affairs Frances Hoffmann raised just such concerns when they asked about

what constitutes matters of community policy and what issues Community Council may legislate upon. For example, if decisions of grading, curriculum and degree requirements rest solely with the faculty, can a representative of the student sector bring faculty legislation of these areas to Community Council for review? Can a monetary decision made by administration be brought to Community Council for review? In the recent past, Community Council has legislated on such issues as parking, pets, smoking and on-campus advertising. The terms "community policy" and "legislation" must be decided upon before the role of Community Council can clearly be defined." (Minutes of Community Council, March 12, 1979. It is not clear whether community council answered the questions raised here and, if so, whether later community councils on which the same President and Deans served have agreed with those answers.)

The constitutional commission saw the faculty in particular as uninvolved in C.G.A. matters and hence undermining what it perceived as "the tripartite system." An historical review raises questions about the very existence of an all-college tripartite system. Instead there has been an evolving administrative structure responsible for the financial and intellectual well-being of the institution and a faculty governance system with specific obligations in areas of curriculum, academic policy, and personnel. It has been primarily the student area--residential life, honor code, co-curricular matters--where something called tripartite governance has existed, for example in Community Council. Even here, however, the principal players have been students and those administrators associated with the President and the Dean of Student Affairs. Legislative council and Community Council have been forums called into session by the President of the College and used in whatever way the President wanted to use them--to defuse tensions, to allow time for discussion and reconsideration of issues, to disseminate information, to serve as a pressure group, to be active or inactive, and so on.

From time to time throughout the 1970's and 1980's specific terms of the C.G.A. constitution changed, of course, but they changed in matters of detail, not substance. For example, membership on Community Council grew steadily from its original composition to its present size. (See Appendix B.) In 1977-78, 1978-79, 1979-80, and 1980-81 matters of immediate and pressing nature, such as social space, athletic programs, and student activity fees dominated the agenda of new student leaders. Each C.G.A. administration faced the real constraints imposed by the graduation of seniors and the annual election of a new group of officers. In spite of all the discussion over constitutional reform, the 1980-81 Student Handbook published the former constitution basically intact.

In 1982-83 Community Council authorized a student--designated "tripartite" Task Force to study student government aspects of the C.G.A. Constitution. Specifically, the Task Force wished to strengthen and clarify the roles of executive officers, Executive Board, Senate, and student committees. Since 1977 some student leaders had begun to confront the possibility of separating student government from college governance. Thus C.G.A. President Maura Curran in April of 1977 had reported a debate between advocates of a C.G.A. and a G.A. In October of 1978 C.G.A. senate placed as a high priority item the re-arrangement of C.G.A. that "will split the student part of C.G.A. from the others. In essence, the students will have more power. In doing this, we are making the system closer to reality, because that's how C.G.A. is operating now." (Maura Curran, Annual Report of the College Government Association, April 15, 1977; Minutes of Senate, October 11, 1978.)

C.G.A. President Edward Dietrich 1982-83 wanted the "tripartite Task Force" to move toward a Student Government Association and to strengthen the student voice within the institution, but the Task Force disagreed with him and sought to keep alive "the spirit of tripartite governance." (Letter of Anita Burnham Steigerwald to Tadahisa Kuroda, January 6, 1989, provides a very useful, capsule summary of C.G.A. presidential

administrations from 1977 to the present. The Task Force is indebted to her for the letter and the many relevant documents she provided.) The key compromise was the content of a new Article III to the C.G.A. constitution [reprinted in full below]. This provision satisfied the Task Force that the principle of tripartite governance would be preserved, and freed the C.G.A. President to proceed in the remaining sections of the constitution with attempts to make the student government component more effective.

The resulting constitution was ratified in the spring of 1984 by vote of the student body and by individual administrators and faculty, if any, who chose to participate in the process. Its terms went into effect in 1985-86. It incorporated much of what had previously been by-laws into the text of the constitution, making the document very lengthy and merging fundamental principles and operating codes. The most interesting changes appear in the preamble and articles III and IV. Note the important additions [upper case letters] to these articles.

Old	New
Preamble. We, the faculty, administration, and students of Skidmore College operating under the authority granted by the trustees believe that cooperation and mutual understanding of the policies and programs of a college community are essential to the pursuit and attainment of knowledge and truth. To achieve these goals, we unite in the formation of the Skidmore College Government Association. The Association is based upon the honesty and integrity of all members of the community.	Preamble. We, the faculty, administration, and students of Skidmore College operating under the authority granted by the trustees believe that cooperation and mutual understanding of the policies and programs of a college community are essential to the pursuit and attainment of knowledge and truth. To achieve these goals, we unite in the formation of the Skidmore College Government Association. The Association is based upon the honesty and integrity of all members of the community. STUDENT LEADERS ARE EXPECTED TO BE EXEMPLARS OF THE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL INTEGRITY TO WHICH THE INSTITUTION IS COMMITTED.

The addition hinted therefore that students were being singled out by the new preamble for attention--consistent with the interest in bolstering student government.

Old	New
I. The name of this organization shall be the Skidmore College Government Association.	I. The name of this organization shall be the Skidmore College Government Association.
II. The purpose of the association shall be to establish and maintain the conditions of community life conducive to good scholarship, intelligent citizenship, and individual growth.	II. The purpose of the association shall be to establish and maintain the conditions of community life conducive to good scholarship, intelligent citizenship, and individual growth.
III. All students and all members of the faculty and staff of Skidmore College shall be ipso facto members of the Association.	III. The students and members of the faculty and administrative staff of Skidmore College are ipso facto members of the Association. THE STUDENTS ARE

GOVERNED BY THE STRUCTURES THAT FOLLOW IN THE DOCUMENT. FACULTY MEMBERS ARE GOVERNED BY THE RULES AND REGULATIONS AS OUTLINED BY THE "FACULTY HANDBOOK". THE ADMINISTRATION IS GOVERNED BY AN

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF STRUCTURE. THE PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE IS EX-OFFICIO PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION, AND AS SUCH, PRESIDES OVER THE THREE BRANCHES OF THE

ASSOCIATION AND SHALL BE REFERRED TO AS PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE IN THIS CONSTITUTION.

The authors of this revision sincerely believed that the language preserved the principle of tripartite governance, but may have furthered confusion instead. They applied the term tripartite to the coexistence of administrative structure, faculty governance, and students under the C.G.A. In fact, these units of governance originated in different circumstances and operated in a formally separate manner, cooperating in specific instances as the President of the College, a task force or faculty committee, or student pressure groups desired. These three units are not elements of a common, "tripartite" system. It is interesting that student leaders themselves declared about the philosophy of C.G.A.: "It is our primary objective to reaffirm the College Government Association's first and foremost mission: student advocacy." (Senate Handbook, 1982-83.) The new article III explicitly bound students to what followed in the document, while recognizing that faculty and administration followed other imperatives.

Article IV, which governs students, described Community Council. It added to the old article IV that "The Community Council shall be responsible for the interpretation of constitutional questions." Student leaders have asked from time to time--and once again in the current controversy--why students must bring their issues to Community Council when other "community" issues are determined by the faculty or by the administration. Those who have sought constitutional revisions in the recent past have usually insisted on a consistent standard by seeking to have the faculty and administration bring such issues--the new curriculum, the Task Force on Faculty Governance report, etc.--to Community Council.

In retrospect it is apparent that when Skidmore in the 1950's and 1960's, like so many other institutions, assumed an "in loco parentis" attitude, the President and the Dean of the College found it useful to have student initiatives on the honor code, dormitory regulations, and co-curricular activities pass their scrutiny; faculty representatives by virtue of their academic standing might provide assistance on judicial boards and on Community Council. Under such tutelage, students could learn to govern life in the residence halls and contribute to policymaking on non academic matters. Students have come a long way since then in achieving greater autonomy in residential and co-curricular life, and the honor code no longer occupies a central place in student life. Yet the procedures of Community Council continue as a reminder of a time long past. Perhaps it is appropriate to rethink the need for Community Council to clear all student decisions. If it is not necessary, then it is time to change the procedure. If it is necessary, then students do not yet have the degree of authority in areas of their primary interest comparable to that of faculty and administration in areas of principal concern to them.

Meanwhile in 1982-83 a faculty handbook in the booklet style returned. Unsatisfied, the faculty sought a revised edition which would be better organized, up to date, accurate, consistent in style, and produced under the supervision of Faculty Council. Since that year, the faculty lived through continual revision, which did not produce a current, authoritative faculty handbook until 1988-89. This handbook has a section on College Government Association Committees, which states:

Faculty members are also full members of the College Government Association (CGA), an organization concerned with the quality of student life on campus. The following CGA Committees are tripartite and include faculty representation."

The faculty continued to see C.G.A. as primarily dealing with "the quality of student life on campus" and the handbook used the term "tripartite" to describe the C.G.A. committees (Community Council, orientation committee, traditions committee, and the honor code commission). It did not apply this term to the committees listed as "committees of the faculty" in the section entitled "Faculty Governance." ([Return to the beginning of the Report](#))

V. Conclusions.

It is evident from this history that a major source of confusion is the use of the term tripartite to describe the governance structure at the College. Tripartite has been used to refer to everything from a spirit of mutual cooperation among students, faculty, and administration to a formal institutional arrangement in which each "estate" holds a veto on others. Tripartite has been used to suggest a single body in which all three constituent parts are represented whether that body is a faculty committee, a C.G.A. committee, or a trustee authorized search committee. There have been occasions when faculty members have used the term to refer to trustees, administrators, and faculty. Such loose usage creates opportunities for misunderstanding and misperception.

The history sketched above shows that students have worked through C.G.A. to acquire substantial influence in areas of residential life and co-curricular activities, and that in this quest for a greater weight in decision-making their interaction has been primarily with the administration. Within that administration the key office has been the Dean of Students--Dean of Student Affairs, particularly since the tenures of Claire Olds and Frances Hoffmann. Concurrently, the faculty has worked through its committee system to acquire and maintain a significant advisory role on matters related to educational policy, curriculum and personnel decisions affecting faculty. The faculty committees report to or are accountable to the faculty meeting, and their recommendations are carried to the administration. The faculty, structured into departments with chairpersons, relate to the administration primarily through the office of Dean of Faculty.

In the current controversy this historic distinction between the areas of primary responsibility for students and those for faculty have been confused [and the special responsibilities of the administration overlooked] by the careless application of the term tripartite governance to mean that students, faculty, and administration have roughly equal collective responsibilities in all areas of college life. That view of tripartitism, whether desirable or not, comes from neither past practice nor from the current C.G.A. constitution; indeed it is a departure from both.

Another term which should be used with greater precision is "community." The record shows that the term community [as in Community Council] referred to the participation of the administration and the faculty in those issues of residential and co-curricular life which were most central to the C.G.A., not the participation of the C.G.A. in matters of special interest to the administration and faculty. Taken out of historical context, the word "community" has lost any meaning; apparently everything affects the "community," and thus everything falls within the jurisdiction of Community Council. Community Council then becomes the supreme legislature for Skidmore College.

The careless application of the terms tripartite and community lead to additional difficulties. Tripartite suggests that the major lines of division in the college are students, faculty, and administration. But these groups are themselves not homogeneous, and are divided over issues and roles, especially as the College has grown and become more complex. Students consist of residential and non residential students, those who pay student activity fees and those who do not, and U.W.W. students, some in correctional facilities at Comstock. These are differences which did not exist back in the 1950's. The C.G.A. should address this varied student population of the 1980's, for its constitution says that all students are ipso facto members of C.G.A.

The Faculty are divided in many ways, one of the more significant for governance purposes being the division between those who are eligible to attend faculty meetings and serve on faculty committees and those who are not. As recently as 1982-83 only full time teachers, ten named administrators, librarians, part-time faculty [without vote], and staff members invited by the President [without vote], and any administrator appointed to the faculty by the Board could attend meetings. More recently departmental assistants and administrators without faculty rank have been added; they may have access to the floor but cannot vote. Only full-time members of the faculty and faculty holding shared appointments may vote for or serve as faculty representatives on elective or appointive committees. Advisors for the University Without Walls make up one of a number of groups which seek opportunities for participation in faculty governance. They see themselves playing roles that are as much faculty as administrative, but so far they have been denied. There are avenues, however, for review of these kinds of questions, and Faculty Council is the committee to hear proposals for change.

In the administrative structure, it is easy enough to understand the roles of the President, Vice Presidents, and Deans, but a growing number of professional staff who report to Deans and Vice Presidents feel they are excluded from participating in a meaningful way in the governance apparatus and attending meetings where issues are debated and votes taken (as in faculty meetings). They find themselves treated by many on the campus as invisible parts of an "Administration" which in governance terms means the President, Vice Presidents, and the Deans. It is a fact that administrative membership on faculty committees and on C.G.A. committees, unlike student and faculty membership, is always based on office and title, not election. While the faculty and students choose their representatives for these committees directly or indirectly, the same administrators, invariably President, Vice Presidents, and Deans, appear time and time again.

Moreover, the upper echelon administrators either do not provide adequate opportunities for broad participation in staff meetings or those meetings do not serve as occasions for substantive discussion and debate about issues which are college-wide in importance; these issues are reserved for President's staff. In short, the administration is the most centralized of any of the major constituencies at the College. Consequently, there is the perception that the administrative structure does not have sufficient openings for the professional voice of middle and lower level administrators.

To the ranks of these people who feel disenfranchised might be added still others, such as support staff, who number among those who live and work at Skidmore College. Faculty will probably find it astounding that those outside of its ranks believe that faculty meetings are the places where real actions take place. Nonetheless, the faculty collectively has the advantage of stature, continuity, professionalism, and responsibility, which give it the potential for cohesion and influence which exceed that of most other constituencies. But surely the faculty meeting cannot become a community meeting, and, if it did, the faculty would re-create what it considered a faculty meeting.

Before an informed decision can be made about governance at Skidmore, the students, faculty, administration, and others must learn to recognize those responsibilities which by law, tradition, and experience fall distinctly or primarily to one of the constituent parts of the College [trustees, administration, faculty governance, C.G.A., and others] and those which are shared by some or all of them. Those of the latter kind, which include subjects such as affirmative action, employee benefits, and campus environment, deserve a home accessible to the affected constituencies. Such an arrangement might allow the C.G.A., faculty, and administration to continue to function effectively in those areas for which they have primary responsibility and to cooperate by means of

cross representational committees and pressure group politics in areas of mutual interests. ([Return to the beginning of the Report](#))

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The Task Force has assumed that it is a group chosen to advise the President and through him the Community Council, and that it is not a body empowered to make formal recommendations directly to the C.G.A., administration, or the faculty. Accordingly, it makes the following recommendations to the President after a process of group discussion and study of governance history, NOT after extensive consultations with others who will have much to provide in the way of sound advice on these and other matters. The President should direct these recommendations, or so many of them which he finds worthy of further study, to the duly constituted authorities and officers who have jurisdiction over these issues and who will have the responsibilities for engaging in extensive consultations with all interested parties before taking action.

The recommendations are organized to respond to the President's three charges to the Task Force.

I. First Charge to the Task Force

A. College Government Association.

1. Community Council should decide its own fate and determine whether it has a legitimate function which it can effectively perform. It must decide whether it is properly composed, what is meant by the term "community," and what is the extent of its legislative authority. It may ask the faculty to delay the scheduled election of the CCPC so that the council can examine these issues. (In accordance with the suggestion of the Task Force, Community Council requested the faculty at the February 1989 Meeting to authorize a 30-day delay for the election for the Co-Curricular Policy Committee. The faculty agreed to the postponement so that Community Council can review its status, composition, powers, and role.)
2. Student leaders might consider having the Senate submit monthly recommendations and advice about residential and co-curricular life directly to the administration (President, Provost, or Dean of Student Affairs) instead of channeling them to Community Council. Such an arrangement would place student-administration relations parallel to that of faculty-administration relations in academic and educational areas. It would also relieve Community Council of its "legislative" role.
3. Neither the administration nor the faculty claims its own governing apparatus is equivalent to college governance. The administration organizes the administration and the faculty organizes the faculty. The C.G.A. by its very title and by its declaration that all students, faculty, and administrative staff are ipso facto members asserts that it is college government. Swollen claims and limited powers are sure ingredients for misunderstanding and frustration. Perhaps it is time to reconsider the name of the association.
4. Student Affairs staff holds particular responsibility for familiarizing student leaders with the content of the C.G.A. Constitution and the history behind that constitution. The Dean of Student Affairs should take care to see that these elements are regular components of leadership orientation programs.
5. The Dean of Student Affairs should provide copies of the "Faculty Handbook" to C.G.A. officers and members of Senate each year. The Dean should also provide copies of the Faculty Task Force on Governance report to current student members of Community Council.
6. The C.G.A. officers should conduct an annual orientation for faculty who will serve on C.G.A. committees and for Faculty Council.
7. The C.G.A. officers should conduct an annual orientation on the Honor Code and C.G.A. structure at the first faculty meeting in the Fall.

B. Faculty Council.

1. Faculty Council should periodically review the adequacy and effectiveness of student representatives on faculty committees, and assume or delegate to individual committees the responsibilities for conducting an annual orientation for new committee members. In addition, Faculty Council should hold an orientation at the beginning of each academic year on faculty governance for C.G.A. executive officers and Senators. Faculty Council should keep the Dean of Student Affairs apprised of such orientation sessions for student representatives and welcome members of student affairs staff who wish to attend.
2. It should maintain communications with groups like U.W.W. advisors, coaches, and others who want to attend faculty meetings and participate in some way in faculty governance. The University Without Walls staff should discuss how it defines faculty status within U.W.W. and who is full-time and who is part-time faculty. It can then review these criteria with Faculty Council and CAPTS to see if a suitable agreement can be reached, which will allow all faculty at the College to enjoy the privileges associated with full-time and part-time status. When appropriate, Faculty Council should make recommendations about these issues to the faculty.
3. Faculty Council should consider the wisdom and feasibility of removing certain committees, such as the Campus Environment Committee, the Affirmative Action Committee, and the Benefits Committee [and any other committee which addresses issues of concern to various groups on campus and are not the sole or primary responsibility of the faculty] from faculty governance to a place more accessible to others in the college--lower level administrators, part-time faculty, coaches, support staff, for example. Faculty should continue to participate in such committees.
4. Faculty council should make a progress report on these recommendations to the faculty, administration, C.G.A. Senate, and to any existing all-college body, such as a revised Community Council, by December of 1989.

C. The Administration.

1. The administration, which deals with student officers of C.G.A. and the faculty, plays a crucial role as mediators and leaders. They have long years of service which provide them with the unique opportunity to maintain the historical memory of the institution and to bring that perspective to controversies which will arise from time to time. They should not assume that because they know the history and inner workings of governance that everyone else does. This is particularly true of their role on Community Council, where Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Deans with years of collective service sit with four frequently very junior faculty and student representatives whose institutional ties at the time of service is two or three years. These administrators should play an active leadership and teaching role keeping faculty alerted to student concerns and students informed of faculty responsibilities and in so doing make clear their own positions.
2. The upper level administration in the president's staff should also discuss with the professional staff ways by which members of the middle and lower level administration can feel that they are part of a structure and process which value their professional judgments on issues of college-wide importance. Much is said about the need for faculty development, interdisciplinarity, and thinking in college-wide terms, and surely a similar case can be made for middle and lower level administrators. The President's staff should make clear that it encourages the development of administrators at all levels who are familiar with college issues and can help address them.
3. The president's staff should explore with Faculty Council, C.G.A. Senate, a revised Community Council and others the feasibility of creating some kind of college community organization, perhaps an open forum once each term, outside of faculty governance and outside of the College Government Association. Committees such as Affirmative Action, Benefits, and Campus Environment might conduct information sessions or deliver periodic reports to such forums. The Skidmore College Employees Federal Credit Union is one of the few organizations on campus which already brings together the diverse constituencies in the institution. Perhaps it, too, could participate in such community forums. The President should make a progress report to the administrative staff, faculty, C.G.A. Senate, and to any existing all-college body, such as a revised Community Council, by December of 1989.

4. At the beginning of each academic year, the Provost should conduct an orientation on administrative structure and administrative decision-making processes for the benefit of C.G.A. officers and Senators, Faculty Council, and other interested parties.

II. Second Charge to the Task Force

The historical account of governance at Skidmore College reviews some of the relationships among administrative structure, faculty governance, and the C.G.A. It recognizes the coexistence of several governance structures, each with its own area of principal responsibility, and their evolution over time. The Skidmore experience generally accords with the A.A.U.P. Statement of 1966.

III. Third Charge to the Task Force

The American Association of University Professors provides general guidelines, which distinguish the principal duties of trustees, administration, and faculty, and guidelines for student rights. These documents can be made readily available to all interested parties at the College. The historical account above can serve as a basis for understanding how several areas of governance operate at Skidmore College. This account of governance [with or without the recommendations] should be distributed to all members of the faculty [especially Faculty Council-Faculty Governance Committee], C.G.A. executive officers and senators, and members of the administrative staff. The principles in the AAUP documents and the key points in the history may be abstracted, perhaps, and included in future student and faculty orientation material. In the end, however, it is up to those who participate in college affairs to understand the principles behind the various governance structures, share that understanding with those new to the College, and live in accordance with it.

The Task Force observes that there is no easy way that a single document can be drawn up which would become the constitution of Skidmore College. There is no agreed upon procedure for preparing or ratifying an all-college constitution. The sense of urgency which prompts some student leaders to seek a college constitution does not seem to be shared by other constituencies, each of which is nearly sovereign in its own domain and in effect holds a veto. (Jennifer Finn, Lisa Levy, David E. Hummel, Kenny Jo, Debra L. Goldfarb, and Daniel Aronson in "Proposed Model for Skidmore College Government," Independent Study in Government, A Group Project, December 13, 1988 [second edition, February 20, 1989]. take a different view. The authors argue for a common constitution for Skidmore College, containing "articles describing the mission of the college and its governing system," defining "who the members of the institution are," and binding "these members to the document as well as to their respective governing documents." The constitution would contain "the contract to which all members are held (i.e., the Honor Code)." The constitution would also "describe the roles of the Trustees and the President and will refer to the individual documents for descriptions of the different constituencies of the college. It shall describe the all-college committees and their functions, memberships, methods for continuity and the policy by which issues must be dealt with by these committees." The constitution would be "limited to college governance and the ways in which the various constituencies will come together to govern. Each of the three branches will have a document of its own pertaining to rules and regulations to which the constituent bodies must adhere." It is not clear, who determines what is an all-college issue and what is a single constituency issue. The authors are in agreement, however, that both the Co^aCurricular Policy Committee and the Institutional Planning Committee, proposed by the Task Force on Faculty Governance and adopted by the faculty in the spring of 1988, should be placed in the all-college category, not in faculty governance.

As to how such a constitution should be instituted, the authors write,

It may be argued that the creation of such a document would be impossible because of the question of who would engage in such a task. We argue that if Community Council is to be re-evaluated and established as the major college council or committee, then its membership should be trusted as one that is capable of drawing up such a document.

Without a compelling demand for such a document from a variety of constituencies, it would seem premature to prepare one. The historical record of past attempts by the C.G.A. in this direction and the experience of faculty re-writing their own handbook recommend against such an exercise. Finally, there is no authority for this Task Force to serve as a constitutional convention for the College.

Whatever the formal structure, the Task Force believes that the leadership skills of the President, supported by an energetic administration, productive faculty, and active student body, ultimately determine the success or failure of governance at Skidmore College. ([Return to the beginning of the Report](#))

Appendix A

David Porter's Charge to the Task Force.

1. To propose ways of dealing with constitutional issues that result from the passage last year of the Report on the Committee System and Faculty Meetings (in particular, the proposed abolition of Community Council).
2. To review and discuss the workings of the tripartite system as a whole.
3. To prepare a brief document, or to suggest revisions of existing documents, which will define and describe the working relationships of the three constituencies in the tripartite system. At present, while we have a constitution of the CGA and a Faculty Handbook, we do not have a single document which defines the interrelationships of the tripartite system as a whole. ([Return to the beginning of the Report](#))

Appendix B

Composition of Community Council

1963-64

President of the College

Vice President

Assistant Dean

Student President

3 student Vice Presidents

4 faculty

2 students, one junior and one sophomore

1966-67

President of the College

Dean of the College as Vice President

Dean of Faculty

Dean of Students

Student President

3 student Vice Presidents

4 faculty

2 students, one junior and one sophomore

1970-71

President of the College as Chairman

Dean of the College as Vice President

Dean of Faculty

Dean of Students

Student President

2 student Vice Presidents

4 faculty

2 students, one junior and one sophomore

1977-78

President of the College as Chairman

Dean of Studies

Dean of Faculty

Dean of Students

Student President

2 student Vice Presidents

4 faculty

2 students, one junior and one sophomore

1979-80

President of the College as Chairman

Provost

Dean of Faculty

Dean of Students

Student President

2 student Vice Presidents

4 faculty

2 students, one junior and one sophomore

1982-83

President of the College as Chairperson

Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

Dean of Faculty

Dean of Student Affairs

Student President

2 student Vice Presidents

4 faculty

One representative from the junior class, one representative from the freshman class, acting as representatives of the entire student body, who serve a two-year term.

1984-85

The President of the College as Chair

The Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

The Vice President for Business Affairs

The Vice President for Development and Alumni Affairs

The Secretary of the College

The Dean of Faculty

The Dean of Student Affairs

The Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, as a nonvoting Member

The Executive Committee

A Senator appointed by the Executive Committee

The Senior Class President

4 faculty members appointed by Faculty Council for two-year terms, two of whom are appointed each year

1988-89

The President of the College as Chair

The Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

The Vice President for Business Affairs

The Vice President for Development and Alumni Affairs

The Dean of the Faculty

The Dean of Student Affairs

The Assistant Dean of student Affairs, as a nonvoting Member

The Executive Committee [President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Co-curricular Affairs, Vice President for Communications, Vice President for Financial Affairs]

A Senator appointed by the Executive Committee

The Senior Class President

4 Faculty members appointed by Faculty Council for two-year terms, two of whom are appointed each year

[\(Return to the beginning of the Report\)](#)