



TO: The Skidmore Community

FROM: Charles Joseph and Michael West

DATE: December 1, 2005

RE: Strategic Planning and the Size of the Student Body

President Glotzbach has constituted a subcommittee of the IPPC which we are co-chairing to address what is arguably the most important strategic parameter for the College: the size of the student body. This subcommittee has been charged to build upon the work of previous studies (most recently: the Optimization Report of November 20, 2001) in addressing a series of strategic questions such as:

- What has been the actual size of the student population for the past five years, and what do we project for the next five years if we make no changes in policy or practice?
- Should we, over the next several years, aim to reduce the student body size by approximately 130 students to match our current long-term budget target?
- Should we, over the next several years, revise our current long-term budget target by approximately 130 students to match our current student body size?
- Should we, over the next several years, increase both our long-term budget target and our student body size by 100 students?

These questions are particularly significant because at the same time as we are considering the appropriate size of the student body, we are striving to improve key values and parameters such as: diversity, academic strength, admissions selectivity and yield, gender balance, residence room options and availability, student support services as well as less quantifiable factors such as qualitative effects on perceptions of community.

As we build the budget for this upcoming fiscal year and update our long-range budget forecasts, we need to resolve the question of student body size. The incremental net revenue associated with this decision is very significant, and if we choose, for example, to reflect for budgeting purposes our current enrollments, we can make quicker progress in achieving our strategic goals such as addressing faculty and staff salaries and attending to current recognized challenges from over-enrollment in academic, support and infrastructure areas.

The subcommittee is working closely with academic and administrative offices on this important matter. We have met and /or are scheduled to meet with the Dean of Faculty, Dean of Special Programs, Dean of Student Affairs, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid and others.

We are charged with having our recommendations to the IPPC in January. We plan to develop a website for information on our progress, and for discussion and asking questions.

We invite you to engage in this process with us. Our first open meeting is scheduled for December 15th at 3:30 in the Emerson Auditorium at which time we will update the community on our work, respond to questions and listen to concerns. We plan to issue a draft report in late January, shortly thereafter holding another open meeting to present our report, seek input, and respond to questions. We plan to announce the time and location of this meeting next week.

Members of this subcommittee are: Charles Joseph, Muriel Poston, Paula Newberg, Denise Smith, James Kennelly, Cheryl Jacobs, Ann Henderson, Barbara McDonough, John Chaplin, and Michael West.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact either of the co-chairs of the subcommittee. Thank you.