

**INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 14, 2007**

PRESENT: President Philip Glotzbach, Chair; Professor Mark Huibregtse, Vice Chair; Mary Lou Bates, Ann Henderson, Susan Kress, Pat Oles, Muriel Poston, Jeff Segrave, Justin Sipher, Sue Van Hook, Michael West; Mehmet Odekon, Barbara McDonough; Mary Cogan; Barbara Krause (Secretary).

VISITOR: Sören Holst, STINT Fellow, Stockholm, Sweden (Visiting Professor).

ABSENT: Michael Casey, Deb Hall, Sue Bender, Jonathan Brestoff, Adam Cupples.

**1. Review of Minutes**

Minutes from the meeting of November 16, 2007 were approved with the following correction: Under item two, introductory paragraph, penultimate sentence, revise to read as follows: "The report has been distributed to the entire campus community at this point; Susan Kress, Jeff Segrave, John Anzalone, and Jim Kennelly plan to meet with CEPP and will hold at least two open sessions to discuss the report."

**2. Task Force on Case Center and Ladd Hall**

Dean of Student Affairs Pat Oles presented this item of discussion. He had distributed previously, for the group's review, a memorandum from him and a letter from the Student Government Association related to this topic. (See Attachments 1 and 2 to these minutes.) The issue he raised is as follows:

A proposal has been made to create a small office outside of the Faculty/Staff Lounge at a relatively modest cost (perhaps \$25,000 total). The creation of this space, along with several related moves, would allow the College to make significant progress on student concerns related to the Intercultural Center (ICC). Students feel a sense of urgency about this matter. On the other hand, President Glotzbach has appointed a Task Force to consider the long-term usage of Case Center and Ladd Hall. The question, then, is whether the immediate construction of the proposed office would conflict with the work of the Case-Ladd Task Force or whether the office construction would be viewed negatively by the larger community. The Case-Ladd Task Force supports construction of the proposed office, as does the IGUTF (whom Dean Oles met with earlier in the morning). Dean Oles now seeks feedback from the IPPC.

One member asked about the timeframe for completion of the Case-Ladd Task Force's work. Dean Oles indicated that the timeframe would depend on what recommendations are made.

Dean Oles noted that two student groups have made significant concessions in order to move this project forward. First, the Student Government Association would be moving to a significantly smaller space. SGA, however, is willing to make this move in light of the College's and SGA's commitment to Goal II of the *Strategic Plan* (Intercultural and Global Understanding). A second "loser" would be students who use the Class of '01 Lounge as quiet study space. He noted that there could be some in the community who might criticize the loss of this study space for what is not a direct academic purpose.

After carefully considering the advantages and possible disadvantages, the IPPC unanimously supported moving forward with the work outlined in Dean Oles' memorandum. Dean Oles encouraged members of the Task Force to express their support for this decision later in the spring, if other members of the community become critical of the renovation.

### **3. Retiree Health Care Update**

Vice President Mike West reported that the Budget and Finance Subcommittee of IPPC reached agreement at its meeting the previous week on the "bookends" for the retiree health care discussion. Specifically, the Subcommittee agreed that employees working on or before September 1, 1999 would be grandparented. Employees who are "new to the College" would not receive this benefit; however, the College would make a 1% contribution for each employee to a tax deferred plan. The College also would provide financial counseling to all employees.

Mr. West noted that this proposal has the full support of the Subcommittee (although he did note that the student representative had not been able to attend the previous meeting). It was noted that this proposal would result in very little immediate savings; however, there would be a significant positive impact at 15 years and out.

President Glotzbach invited any member of the IPPC to express concerns or questions. There were no comments or questions, and the group's consensus is to support these two decision points. It was noted that serious discussions must still take place regarding employees in the middle group. The administration does not intend to take the "bookends" to the Board of Trustees separately but will submit one integrated proposal to the Board of Trustees in May.

### **4. Budget Process**

President Glotzbach began by providing a brief context for the budget discussions. He noted that on several fronts, the College is doing very well financially. Moody's Investment Services has recently upgraded the College's bond rating, and the College has done very well in its recent comprehensive Campaign. The Campaign now stands at \$141 million after just three years. Notwithstanding this success, President Glotzbach noted that the College has made important but costly strategic decisions in recent years that will limit the College's

capacity to take on additional new initiatives at this time. Those two decisions – to increase student financial aid in order enroll a more diverse and stronger student body, and the decision to improve the competitiveness of the College’s compensation (especially faculty compensation) – have produced very positive gains for the College. It is also the case, however, that those strategic decisions limit the College’s capability to take on new initiatives.

Vice President West then outlined the budget process. He noted that there are several new IPPC members who have not been through this process in the past. Mr. West noted that the College has an operating budget of nearly \$120 million (net of financial aid). The major budget parameters are tuition, room, and board (i.e. the comprehensive fee), the size of the compensation pool, financial aid, and new initiatives. The Cabinet is just beginning budget discussions. Mr. West noted that difficult decisions will need to be made regarding financial aid and its potential impact on progress the College has made regarding diversity. The budget discussions will be brought to IPPC after the first of the year.

## **5. Other Reports and Updates**

*Admissions:* Dean Mary Lou Bates reported that the Early Decision I round has been very successful. Applications were up by 23%, and the median SAT of applicants was up 10 points. The median SAT of accepted Early Decision I candidates was up 20 points. The number of admitted Early Decision I candidates stands at 199, which is approximately one-third of the entering class. This group has a very high yield and will require less financial aid than last year’s Early Decision I group.

*Incident Weather/Exam Schedule:* It was noted that a significant winter storm is expected for late Sunday night and into Monday morning. Monday is the first day of exams, and Vice President for Academic Affairs Susan Kress indicated that she would encourage departments to consider how to deal with possible cancellations. She will work with the Dean of the Faculty and the Registrar to be proactive. One suggestion was that faculty with exams scheduled on Monday could be encouraged to e-mail their students to encourage them to return to campus early, in order to minimize the possible number of requests for rescheduled examinations.

*Skidmore Cares:* President Glotzbach noted that once again, the Skidmore Cares component of the Holiday Open House was very successful. Over 1400 food items were collected. This number exceeded the need of the previously designated recipients, and the food items will be distributed to numerous organizations within the City of Saratoga Springs. The “gently used books” effort was also successful, with hundreds of books being collected for distribution.

*Minutes prepared by Barbara Krause, Secretary. Please notify of any changes.*

**Attachment 1**

**From:** poles@skidmore.edu  
**Subject:** FW: Discussion Introduction  
**Date:** December 5, 2007 5:19:09 PM EST  
**To:** igutf@skidmore.edu

Hello Friends,

I write in advance of our meeting next Friday to outline the issues I hope to discuss with you at the meeting.

In the spring of 2007 in an open letter to the Dean of Student Affairs, students articulated a number of requests for program and facilities improvements that they considered necessary in order to improve the experience minority students have at the College and to strengthen programs related to Goal Two of The Strategic Plan. I agreed to several efforts as well as a schedule for completing those efforts. I am happy to report substantial progress on all of them, including most significantly for purposes of this discussion, a plan for expanding the Intercultural Center (ICC) to include space dedicated to informal gathering, a home base for students from traditionally under represented groups, including international students.

The plan grows out of summer and semester long conversations with representatives of student cultural groups, SGA and Skidmore News and benefits from the help of the Vice President of Financial Affairs as well as staff in Student Affairs and Facilities. The plan involves construction of one new office in Case Center and new room assignments for the Skidmore News, SGA Executive Committee, and Michelle Hubbs, Coordinator of Community Service. It also involves relocating the '01 Lounge to the second floor. Every office and program involved in the move has agreed to a tradeoff in service of increasing the space allocated to the intercultural center. In this regard, the plan is a testimony to SGA's commitment to the resolutions passed in support of the memo to administration from students, the good will of the Skidmore News, and administrative effort on the part of many. If we move forward, we believe we can do this work during winter break.

Meanwhile, as you may know, I have been asked to organize a task force charged with developing a long term plan for Case Center and Ladd Hall that takes into account how this building advances the Strategic Plan, interacts with the Library, Dining Hall and responds to other changes in facilities and programs.

The dilemma I now face is managing the apparent inconsistency between undertaking the plan to expand the ICC while also initiating discussions that could lead to an altogether different mission for Case Center.

It is not difficult to see why these two efforts may appear inconsistent with one another. The construction of a new office and rearranging various room assignments in Case involves expense (the new office will cost approximately \$15,000) and may deepen the claims the ICC, Skidmore News, and others feel they have on a location in Case Center at precisely the moment when the building's mission is being re-examined. Would the various efforts required to expand the ICC undermine the credibility of the newly formed Case Ladd Task Force? In other words, is it possible to undertake both of these efforts simultaneously?

The answer to this question is in many respects a function of how well informed the community is and whether there is support for doing something responsive to student concerns *while* undertaking the more comprehensive study. I am inclined to think we can do one without undermining the other, but I would like to hear from you and other groups around the campus.

The charge to the Case Ladd Task Force makes it clear that the institution is studying the mission of Case Center. The Case Ladd study is just beginning; it will involve consultations with numerous constituencies, and it will take time to complete. Depending on the nature of the conclusions and recommendations, it may take

year(s) to implement any proposed changes. One implication of this study is that no program or office currently in Case Center will remain in Case Center if that program does not belong in the building in light of any new mission.

If we invest in expanding the ICC and the Task Force recommends changes that require additional change, the investments will have a very short life and may be regretted. On the other hand, if we do not move forward with an expansion of the ICC, we will miss an opportunity to meet the needs students have expressed for an expanded ICC and fail to capitalize on the shared sense of purpose and commitment the students have expressed.

The problem therefore has two dimensions. One problem relates to the impact an expansion of the ICC might have on the confidence the community has in the newly formed Case Center Ladd Hall Task Force. The other problem relates to the wisdom of investing resources in these changes if they are not enduring.

I am asking for your advice about managing the apparent inconsistency between the proposed expansion and initiating the Case Center Ladd Hall study because I believe it is wise to do both and necessary that the community have a full understanding of and support both. I am looking forward to our discussion.

Take care, Pat

**Attachment 2**

**Message to Dean Pat Oles from SGA representatives re: ICC in Case Center**

**From:** Frederick Braunstein

**Sent:** Thursday, December 06, 2007 5:56 PM

**To:** Devin Sugameli; Kubra Komek; Michelle Mani; Sadiatu Kamara; Kenny Flores; Adrian Texidor; Greta Spoering; Shaylen Roberts; Tiffany Islar; Erin Frymire; Michal Adut; Jonathan Brestoff;

Michael Thomas (Student); Daniel Tejada; Vanessa Weber; Olivia Duong; Pat Oles; Alyssa Franklin

**Cc:** Kavita Gadani; Elizabeth Gronquist; Darnell Sessoms; Alexandra Stark; Emma Blumer

**Subject:** ICC

Dear Dean Oles,

First, before we start, we promise this letter does not contain an invitation to an open forum on

diversity! Instead, we would simply like to express our appreciation for the quick pace of conversations around the Intercultural Center expansion in recent weeks and also respond to concerns that this issue will interrupt, contradict or in anyway diminish the workings of the Case-Ladd Taskforce.

The current proposal is to (1) expand the Intercultural Center into the Skidmore News Office, (2) move the Skidmore News Office to the Class of '01 Lounge, (3) establish a comparable studying space to the '01 Lounge in the SGA Executive Committee Office and perhaps other spaces, (4) move the SGA Executive Committee Office to the Case Information Desk/Volunteer Services, (5) construct a new office for Volunteer Services outside of the Faculty-Staff Club. This is the product of *years* of conversation and is a compromise that is enthusiastically endorsed by all involved parties.

Student concerns with the Intercultural Center are by no means a recent phenomenon. At least as early as the fall of 2004, student groups had begun brainstorming ideas about how to improve the space. Under the leadership of Kathy Simpson in Multicultural Student Affairs, student leaders drafted an *Intercultural Cooperation Proposal* in the fall of 2005 that detailed among other issues, a concern about the structure of the ICC. That document was formally presented to Associate Dean Steigerwald and endorsed by Student Government Association in the spring of 2006.

Despite significant turnover in Multicultural Student Affairs/Student Diversity Programs, as well as substantial debate within the community about the best solution for the ICC, our desire to improve the space has nevertheless remained constant. Consequently, our spring 2007 letter to the Dean of Student Affairs listed the Intercultural Center expansion as chief among our recommendations. That document was subsequently unanimously endorsed by Student Government Association in the spring of 2007.

It is time to act. We were all very enthusiastic by Diversity Programs and Skidmore News meeting with Facilities Services to plan the new spaces; we were also extremely encouraged when the move was announced at Project Unity. This is because this type of informal gathering space is critical for students who aren't in the majority at Skidmore. It satisfies a desire for social safe space that the ICC cannot ever meet because its programming mission fundamentally prevents the ICC from serving both roles. This is neither something that can be put off any longer nor is it something that should have taken this long to achieve. The vast majority of our peer and aspirant colleges have already recognized this need and created these types of spaces.

The Case-Ladd taskforce is charged with reviewing the building in the long-term and this proposed move is actually a benefit to the taskforce's planning. This type of space is undeniably one that the taskforce will need to consider in its future plans. There is no better way to fully comprehend and test student need and interest in this type of space than by creating one right now. The whole move, rather than being seen as an impediment to progress, should be instead viewed as a "case study" in order to better plan for the future. In short, long term planning doesn't mean inaction in the present; rather, short-term change should be used to inform long-term planning.

Additionally, we are sympathetic to the need to involve the entire Skidmore community in this conversation. Despite the fact that there have been numerous opportunities for community involvement in this discussion over the past few years, we do want to acknowledge that moving Skidmore News to the Class of '01 Lounge does present a challenge since that room currently serves as an important studying space. Consequently, in order to alleviate that concern, we propose that studying space be immediately expanded in Case Center. Not only should a quiet studying space be created in the current Executive Committee Office after their move to the Information Desk; but also,

we propose exploring the possibility that the Honors Forum Lounge, the Writing Center or both be open 24 hours and equipped with sufficient computers. We further propose that the computers on the second floor of Case be networked to a public printer on that floor. If this were to happen in addition to the SGA move, studying space would actually be significantly *increased* in the building.

All of this could feasibly happen over winter break. We feel that this is a fair solution: one which addresses pressing student concerns and also one that takes into account the need for long term planning.

Furthermore, we understand that planning may involve another eventual move and a partial loss of investment in these spaces. However, let's be realistic: in five years no one is going to regret the creation of a new office outside the Faculty-Staff club. At the very most, the college may lose part of its investment in the new Intercultural Center Space as well as the new Skidmore News Office if substantial changes are made in future years. These potential losses are minimal and represent money well spent since it will be used to increase the quality of life of our students as proposed in Goal II of the Strategic Plan. This is also the case given the fact that the proposed move will also inevitably better inform our decisions for long-term planning and could, consequently, result in substantial *savings* for the college.

Ultimately, as we expressed last semester, as much as creative thought matters, actions matter more. Let's not allow conversations on this issue to any longer delay progress.

Sincerely,

Frederick Braunstein '08,  
*Vice President for Diversity Affairs, Student Government Association*

Jonathan Brestoff '08,  
*President, Student Government Association*

Emma Blumer '10, Kavita Gadani '10, Elizabeth Gronquist '11 & Alexandra Stark '11,  
*The Student Government Association Committee on Diversity Affairs*

Alyssa Franklin '09 & Vanessa Weber '09,  
*Co-Editors-in-Chief, Skidmore News*

Devin Sugameli '08,  
*President, Asian Cultural Awareness*

Michelle Mani '09 & Kubra Komek '10  
*Co-Presidents, Hayat*

Michal Adut '09,  
*President, Hillel*

Daniel Tejada '09,  
*President, Hip Hop Alliance*

Michael Thomas '09,

*Vice President, Hip Hop Alliance*

Sadiatu Kamara '10,  
*President, International Student Union*

Erin Frymire '09,  
*President, Newman Club*

Kenny Flores '08,  
*President, Raices*

Darnell Sessoms '09,  
*Respect Matters Campaign/Diversity Affairs Committee Liaison*

Greta Spoering '08,  
*President, Skidmore Pride Alliance*

Shaylen Roberts '08,  
*President, Students Organized Against Racism*

Tiffany Islar '08,  
*President, Ujima*