

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 18, 2008

PRESENT: President Philip Glotzbach, Chair; Professor Mark Huibregtse, Vice Chair; Ann Henderson, Susan Kress, Pat Oles, Muriel Poston, Jeff Segrave, Justin Sipher, Sue VanHook, Michael West; Mary Cogan, Sue Bender, Jonathan Brestoff, Rob Hill; Barbara Krause (Secretary).

Guests: Eliza Wright; Mike Hall.

ABSENT: Mary Lou Bates, Michael Casey, Deb Hall, Mehmet Odekon, and Barbara McDonough.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the meeting of April 4, 2008 were approved as distributed.

2. Student Employee Handbook

Jon Brestoff and Eliza Wright (one of the students on the *Student Employee Handbook* drafting group) were present to describe the *Student Employee Handbook* and to answer any questions. President Glotzbach commented that this was an exemplary case of collaboration on an important issue—namely, how the College relates to student employees. Vice President West echoed his appreciation for the effort, including the good work of Human Resources.

Mr. Brestoff noted that the student body approved the *Student Employee Handbook* by an overwhelming vote (nearly 75% in favor). Mr. Brestoff further noted that approval of the handbook will require modification of student work agreements (language will be inserted to confirm that both the student and the supervisor have seen the handbook and agree to abide by it).

The group then discussed various options for distributing the *Student Employee Handbook*. Some members felt that an e-mail notification with a link to a web site was adequate. Others suggested that there should be hard copies provided to department chairs and others who might hire students. The matter will be referred to Dean Mary Lou Bates, to whom the Student Employment Office ultimately reports.

It was noted that the handbook will be helpful for any office that employs students. In that regard, it was suggested that a reference might be added to the *Employee Handbook*, indicating that those who supervise students have an obligation to review the *Student Employee Handbook*.

Ms. Wright indicated her appreciation for the opportunity to participate in this project. She believes that the handbook is needed and that she learned a great deal by participating in the process.

In light of the fact that the handbook specifies a role for IPPC regarding future amendments, the President called for a vote. **IPPC voted unanimously to approve the *Student Employee Handbook* as previously distributed.**

Jonathan Brestoff expressed his appreciation for this vote. He noted that this process began in response to student complaints and that SGA, after working with the students, concluded that many of the complaints were overly aggressive. He stated that, in his opinion, Dining Services staff has been very cooperative and fully supportive of the effort to address the underlying concerns that did have merit. President Glotzbach thanked Mr. Brestoff for his responsible leadership on this issue.

3. Capital Budget

Vice President West indicated that there have been no changes to the Capital Budget as previously distributed, except to note that Wilmarth Hall (not McClellan, as indicated in a previously distributed document) was scheduled for renovations this year. Mr. West reminded the group that the Budget and Finance Subcommittee of IPPC recommends the Capital Budget and that the President's Cabinet supports it.

Following a brief discussion, the **IPPC voted to endorse the Capital Budget for '08-'09** in the amount of \$9.2 million and to forward that budget to the Board of Trustees with a recommendation for approval.

4. Retiree Health Care

Vice President West reported that the Budget and Finance Subcommittee met the previous week and again the previous day. The Subcommittee now formally recommends the following:

1. That new hires beginning employment on or after September 3, 2008, no longer receive the current retiree health care benefit. Instead, those hires would be eligible to receive a 1% tax-deferred contribution from the College, which may be used to support medical care costs in retirement.
2. That effective January 1, 2009, the College implement several key changes in the prescription drug coverage benefit (including the requirement for those in HMO plans at age 65 to move to the College PPO plan). This proposal would apply only to prescription drug coverage; there would be no change in benefits for hospitalization, physician care, medical instruments, or otherwise.
3. That the College eliminate (at least for the foreseeable future) the second scheduled 5% and third scheduled 5% increases in the cost-sharing formula for all current employees, which had been approved previously.

Mr. West noted that the Budget and Finance Subcommittee believes that the proposal is fair to all Skidmore employees (past and present), honors our commitments from previous years, and is both sustainable and financially responsible into the future.

Vice Chair Mark Huibregtse, speaking as a member of the Subcommittee, expressed his appreciation for the process and commended Mr. West for an open, transparent process. Other members of the Subcommittee also praised Mr. West's ability to translate complex information; they cautioned, however, that it will be important to make such translations again for the larger community.

Other comments and questions included the following:

- The College will have an ethical obligation to educate new employees about the College's retirement planning offerings and to encourage all employees to think long-term about financial planning.
- The fact that the current recommendation treats all current employees substantially the same (i.e., eliminates the "middle group" between the previously identified bookends), is an important value.

President Glotzbach noted that this was another excellent example of collaborative work on an important issue that might have been divisive.

Following this discussion, **IPPC voted unanimously to endorse the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee.** Mr. West expressed appreciation to members of his staff who did excellent work on this matter: Kathy Carter, Kelly Patton-Ostrander, Barbara Beck, Mike Hall, and Mike Thomas. He also expressed appreciation to Vice President Michael Casey and members of his staff for assistance in preparing communications regarding the recommendation.

Open meetings have been scheduled to present the recommendation to the entire community. Those dates have been announced, and IPPC members are encouraged to attend.

5. Citizenship (Goal III) Task Force

Dean of Student Affairs reported that the Citizenship (Goal III) Task Force represents yet another positive instance of collaboration—among others, between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs—and that the proposed Task Force reflects a multi-pronged effort to advance the objectives of Goal III of the *Strategic Plan* (Responsible Citizenship). He then opened the floor to discussion regarding the draft charge, which was distributed in advance of the meeting.

IPPC members were generally supportive of the concept. There was concern, however, that the charge had not been distributed until earlier in the week. Accordingly, the group decided to allow the proposal to "lay over" for a decision at the next meeting. Comments made during the discussion include the following:

- What would the process be for appointing student members (SGA willingness-to serve?).
- FEC may have concerns about the number of faculty proposed for the membership.

- It was suggested that at least one member of the faculty should be a representative from CEPP.
- It was noted that SGA has a civic engagement fund, and it might be beneficial if the SGA and the proposed Task Force could co-sponsor certain events.

It was noted that the proposed Task Force is modeled on the current Intercultural and Global Understanding Task Force, and a member asked whether there were any cautionary lessons to be taken from that Task Force. Suggestions included maintaining the discipline to move from broad philosophical questions to actual initiative, attempting to identify at the beginning specific baseline information in order to assess progress resulting from the group's work, and communicating more frequently and effectively with the community at large regarding the Task Force's work.

IPPC will take up the proposed Task Force at its next meeting on May 2nd.

6. Report on IGUTF Successor Group

President Glotzbach reported that at its meeting this morning, the IGUTF approved the addition of an at-large appointment by the Dean of Student Affairs. He further noted that the representative from the Office of Opportunity Programs will be the "Director or his/her designee." IPPC reaffirmed its endorsement of this proposal as approved at the previous meeting.

7. IPPC Vice Chair '08-'09

Professor Huibregtse reported that Roy Rotheim has been elected to succeed him on IPPC. There is no nomination as yet to indicate which faculty member will be nominated to serve as Vice Chair of IPPC during the next academic year.

8. Other Reports

Campus Environment Committee: Sue Van Hook reported on various activities associated with Earth Day Week. She also noted that the final speaker associated with Focus the Nation will be on campus this week, that two summer stewards have been hired for the North Woods, and that CEC will submit its annual report at the next meeting. President Glotzbach noted that Professor Van Hook would be stepping down from the Campus Environment Committee at the end of this year. He acknowledged her tremendous efforts on behalf of campus environmental issues and thanked her for her work.

Student Representation on IPPC: Mr. Brestoff suggested that greater student representation on IPPC would be beneficial. He noted that the number of students is relatively small and that it can be overwhelming for students to participate on such a committee, especially at the beginning. Rob Hill suggested that including a representative from among the head residents would be beneficial. It was further suggested that the SGA Vice President for Budget and Finance should sit on the Budget and

Finance Subcommittee. Mr. Brestoff agreed to return to SGA with this matter and to forward a proposal.

Incorporation of SGA Table Knocking: Mr. Brestoff noted that during this meeting, IPPC had embraced the SGA's enthusiasm for table knocking as a means of demonstrating approval. This observation was met with enthusiastic table knocking.

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