

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 6, 2009

PRESENT: President Philip Glotzbach, Chair; Professor Adrienne Zuerner, Vice Chair; Mary Lou Bates, Rochelle Calhoun, Michael Casey, Winston Grady-Willis, Ann Henderson, Susan Kress, Kim Marsella, Erica Bastress-Dukehart, Muriel Poston, Jeff Segrave, Michael West, Mary Cogan, Tim Harper, Raina Bretan, James Welsh, Hugh Foley, Anne Petruzzelli, and Barbara Krause (Secretary).

ABSENT: Justin Sipher.

GUEST: Sarah Goodwin.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the October 16, 2009 meeting were approved with one minor correction.

2. Report from Board of Trustees Meeting

President Glotzbach reported on meetings held by the Board of Trustees the previous week. Among the items discussed by the Board were the following:

- The Trustees conducted a Town Hall Meeting exercise during its opening session. Asked first what core values the College must preserve, Trustees identified maintaining the centrality of the faculty-student relationship as most important. Other important values that were articulated included maintaining a safe environment (both physically, on campus and in Saratoga Springs; and psychologically, in the context of permitting students to take risks) and retaining Skidmore's historic focus on "mind and hand." Asked what the College should do "more of," Trustees indicated their support for enhanced career services – not only in terms of job placement, but as support for students' transition to their post-Skidmore lives. Other concepts receiving Trustee support included "Creative Thought Matters" across the broadest range, including agility in thinking and the ability to make connections across various disciplines. With respect to the question of what to do "less of," Trustees suggested decreasing under-subscribed courses and programs and exploring collaborations with other institutions (i.e., leveraging academic resources), as well as decreasing faculty time in shared governance.
- The Board also received an update on Scribner Village. Vice President Mike West and Dean of Student Affairs Rochelle Calhoun reported on a revised concept currently being developed by the architects. The revised concept moves away from a single building with a single program, which was costly to build on a very difficult site and had numerous other problems. The revised concept would develop several different types of residential options, allowing the College to reduce the density for first-year students on central

campus and build additional apartment-style housing within the current footprint of Scribner Village; the revised concept also keeps health and wellness options on the table. The Associate Dean of the Faculty has been involved with Student Affairs in these discussions. At an appropriate time, the planning group will seek further input from the campus community, including students.

- The Board of Trustees received the recommendation regarding a replacement Student Information System that was presented to IPPC at its October 16 meeting. The Board supported the recommendation.
- In other items, the Board approved early release of budgetary funds to support the Penfield Hall renovation and the Saisselin Art Building renovation (the latter project will be funded in part with money from the State of New York). The Board also approved an articulation agreement with the New York University School of Nursing.

3. Report from Community Meetings

President Glotzbach reported on community meetings held on November 3 and 4, 2009. At those meetings, he provided an update on the Board meetings and reviewed the framework for Town Hall Meeting sessions to be held on campus in the coming weeks. President Glotzbach will make a similar presentation to the Faculty Meeting later in the day on November 6.

4. Update on Budget

Vice President West presented revised budget projections for FY '10, reviewed the revised forecast for FY '11, and led a preliminary discussion of the College's comprehensive fee projections.

With respect to FY '10, Mr. West noted that improvements to the endowment based on improved market performance allow the College to project a modest surplus at this time, without needing to use over-enrollment funds to balance the Operating Budget. That would allow over-enrollment funds to be used for residence hall renovations, as planned prior to last year's economic challenges.

With respect to the FY '11 budget, Mr. West noted that projections for endowment takeout are favorable at this time, based on the improved market conditions. Short-term investment earnings, however, remain very low. He also noted that the rate of increase of the comprehensive fee as projected last spring is likely greater than what the College will be able to implement. He noted that each percentage point of the comprehensive fee equals approximately \$1 million. The current budget estimates and forecasts still are dependent on finding \$3.25 Million savings in personnel or other ongoing cost reductions. Mr. West reported that he had conveyed to the Board that the improved budget forecasts are based in significant part on savings that have been achieved as the result of efforts across the campus. He noted, however, that current budget

planning continues to call for no general salary adjustment in FY '11, a budgetary situation that is not sustainable over time.

In response to a question, Mr. West noted that the Board shares the serious concern about Skidmore's ability to raise its comprehensive fee at rates similar to prior years' increases. Budget conversations will continue with the Cabinet throughout the semester and into early 2010. Those discussions also will take place at IPPC (both within the Budget and Finance Subcommittee and with the full Committee), and ultimately will require approval by the Board of Trustees in May.

Mr. West distributed a document indicating a change in the number of employees at Skidmore between FY 2000 and FY 2009. It was noted that this document, without context, could be very misleading. For example, increases in Advancement staffing were related to the comprehensive campaign, increases in Student Affairs reflected Skidmore's effort to catch up in areas where it was historically understaffed, and increases in the area of Academic Affairs reflect the College's effort to enhance faculty and academic support staff positions. There are additional, similar factors with respect to these and the other categories that are very difficult to capture on this type of summary document.

In response to a question, Mr. West noted that the document was generated at the request of a faculty member. Pending further conversation and discussion at IPPC, President Glotzbach asked that IPPC members treat the document as confidential and not to circulate it at this time.

6. Assessment: Goals for Student Learning and Development

Professor Erica Bastress-Dukehart reported on two changes that have been made to the Goals for Student Learning and Development document. Both changes appear in Part IV of the document, "Transformation." The revised language reads as follows:

- "Embrace intellectual integrity, humility, and courage" (Part IV, bullet two)
- "Develop an enduring passion for learning" (Part IV, bullet four)

Professor Sarah Goodwin reported that there have been extensive discussions between CEPP and the Assessment Steering Committee, with the process being both rich and collaborative.

One IPPC member suggested that although the document reflects admirable aspirations, much of what is articulated is not easily assessable. Professor Goodwin noted that the Assessment Steering Committee's approach has been to ensure that the goals have integrity and to trust that faculty members will then be able to identify the appropriate evidence to determine what progress has been made. The document reflects the complexity that is at the heart of a liberal arts education. She also noted that the goals articulated in this document are not new – they are the product of previous working groups at the College, and the current document brings that former work together into a coherent framework.

Regarding the previously discussed language of “intellectual humility,” Professor Bastress-Dukehart noted that several faculty members hold the strong belief that “humility” does not capture accurately what they hope their students will achieve. Accordingly, CEPP requested that the Assessment Steering Group include additional concepts (integrity and courage) to better express the transformation that many faculty members feel is important.

Following this discussion, President Glotzbach asked whether IPPC wished to endorse the revised document. **IPPC members voted unanimously to endorse the revised Goals for Student Learning and Development.**

Professor Bastress-Dukehart noted that Professor Goodwin deserves enormous credit for advancing the assessment work to this point. President Glotzbach also noted that this is an important moment as we articulate what it is that we want Skidmore students to learn and develop during their time at the College.

Professor Goodwin, in turn, asked that the following be conveyed:

Shepherding the Goals through our many discussions, both in public and on our committees, has been a real challenge, and Professor Bastress-Dukehart deserves all of our thanks for keeping the consensus together and addressing everyone's questions and concerns. Because of her hard work, these Goals really do emerge from an inclusive, thoughtful process.

Also, I'm grateful that IPPC was able to take the time to endorse the Goals and was also flexible enough to accept the changes. It's important for us to have that broad institutional endorsement as well as the faculty endorsement, especially given the scope of these Goals.

7. SGA Organizational Structure

SGA President Raina Bretan distributed an organizational chart describing the structure of the “Student Government Association.” She noted that the SGA actually includes all students, while the SGA Senate (currently 25 members) is the SGA’s primary legislative body and the SGA Executive Committee (currently 8 members) is responsible for administration of the SGA.

It was suggested that it would be helpful to add names and perhaps pictures to the organizational chart and to distribute the document more broadly to all-College committees. It was noted that the faculty is considering reducing its representation on various governance committees; given that student membership on some committees is not fully subscribed, is SGA looking a streamlining student representation on College governance committees? Ms. Bretan stated that although SGA has a good willingness-to-serve process, it does not always generate enough interest to fill all student vacancies. SGA Senate is working to better publicize the committee service options and the nature of the work. Ms. Bretan reported that student committee members who do engage in this work have a real sense of involvement in the community.

Finally, Ms. Bretan noted that voting on the Pavilion Corporation question continues. Recent efforts to encourage student voting have been effective, and she is optimistic that the matter can be resolved in the near future.

7. Town Hall Meeting Update

Barbara Krause reported on current planning for the campus Town Hall Meetings which will take place during the second and third weeks in November. As reported previously to IPPC, Cabinet members will serve as moderators, and members of the faculty and staff will serve as facilitators at small table discussions. Students have been invited to participate in these meetings; student registration at this point, however, has been slow, and Ms. Bretan will send out an e-mail reminding students of the sign-up deadline. Ms. Bretan and Dean Calhoun also are planning at least one additional Town Hall Meeting specifically for students.

8. Special Programs Update

Dean of Special Programs Jeff Segrave reported that the Office of Special Programs restructuring has been implemented. The new structure and list of individuals in new positions has been distributed to the campus. He expressed his appreciation to the staff members in Special Programs for their strong work during this difficult time. Dean Segrave also expressed his optimism and excitement about the new structure, which he believes will allow Special Programs to flourish in new ways.

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