

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
December 17, 2010

PRESENT: Acting President Susan Kress, Chair; Hugh Foley, Vice Chair; Mary Lou Bates, Rochelle Calhoun, Winston Grady-Willis, Ann Henderson, Mark Huibregtse, Bob Turner, Muriel Poston, Paty Rubio, Justin Sipher, Michael West, Adrienne Zuerner, Anne Petruzzelli, Gail Cummings-Danson, Denise Smith, and Barbara Krause (Secretary).

ABSENT: Michael Casey, Jeff Segrave, Alexandra Stark, and Jonathan Zeidan.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the December 3, 2010 meeting were approved with minor changes.

2. Faculty Parental Leave Policy

In the context of reviewing the minutes of the December 3rd meeting, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs Muriel Poston asked for clarification regarding the status of the Faculty Parental Leave Policy. At the previous meeting, some IPPC members had expressed concern about endorsing the policy without more information about the budgetary implications that would follow if it were implemented, and the draft minutes indicated that the proposed policy would come back to IPPC in the context of budget discussions.

Acting VPAA Poston provided projected costs based on experience over the past three years. She also reminded IPPC members of the important impetus behind the policy – namely, to avoid disruption to classroom teaching during the instructional period that detracts from students' educational experience. She also noted that, pursuant to the *Faculty Handbook*, IPPC must endorse any amendment to Article IV (Benefits, where the new policy would appear) before the change could be considered by the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) for presentation to the faculty. Acting President Susan Kress asked whether IPPC was prepared at this point to endorse the proposed Faculty Parental Leave Policy.

A lengthy discussion ensued during which members questioned whether the policy should be approved before knowing how the funding for it would be considered relative to other budgetary priorities, and what the status of the policy would be if it were endorsed by IPPC and the funding for it were not included in the budget. It was noted that Skidmore's *Faculty Handbook* is somewhat unusual in requiring a vote of the faculty to approve changes to College-provided benefits. Finally, it was noted that there are legal concerns about certain wording of the current parental leave policy.

Following this discussion, **IPPC voted to recommend the Faculty Parental Leave Policy, with implementation contingent upon its being funded.** A copy of the recommended policy

appears in Attachment A to these minutes. It was noted that IPPC would not forward its recommendation to FEC until after IPPC approves the budget in early February.

3. Scribner Village Replacement Approvals

Acting President Kress asked Vice President for Finance and Administration Michael West to report on developments related to the Scribner Village Replacement project. Mr. West reported that the design phase of the project has been completed and that the required City of Saratoga Springs Planning Board and environmental approvals have been secured. In a special teleconference meeting of the Board of Trustees on December 16th, the Trustees approved issuance of a bond and related financing authorizations to support the project, and the Trustees authorized the College to proceed with construction of the Northwoods Village addition and the replacement of Scribner Village. Mr. West reported that preliminary site work will begin over the winter break.

Acting President Kress expressed her appreciation to Vice President West and Dean of Student Affairs Rochelle Calhoun for their stewarding of this important project.

4. ADA Advisory Group

Dean of Student Affairs Rochelle Calhoun summarized a study that had been secured to review the College's compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). The recommendations, shared previously with the Cabinet, included clarification of the roles of College officials who have responsibility for various elements of the ADA; and creation of an advisory group that would help educate the community, advise the College on how to meet the needs of disabled persons on campus (students, faculty, staff, and visitors), and advise the College on any legal compliance issues.

A document describing the group's proposed mission, charge, and composition was distributed in advance of the meeting. Dean Calhoun noted that since that document was prepared, she has received suggestions to add a student member as well as a faculty member whose scholarly interests align with this work. In the case of the faculty member, two such individuals have expressed interest in serving on the proposed Advisory Group.

Questions and comments included the following:

- In response to a question about how the group would function, Dean Calhoun indicated that the first priority will be for group members to educate themselves and then the broader campus community about the needs of persons with disabilities and the legal and compliance requirements of the ADA, and to develop and institutional plan for addressing those issues. She expects that the group will need to meet at least monthly, perhaps for a year or so, to complete this work; and that thereafter, the group might meet annually to ensure that ongoing issues are being identified and addressed.
- Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Mary Lou Bates noted the importance of good lines of communication between her area and the Advisory Group.

- The focus of the group is not just on facilities, but also on accessibility issues more broadly.
- A concern was expressed about the size of the group. It was suggested that once some of the initial work has been completed, it might make sense to reduce the membership.
- Membership of the group may be the individuals listed or their designees.
- In response to a question, it was noted that non-compliance with the ADA could result in fines and/or orders for remedial action being levied against the College. It was further noted that certain individuals at the College are responsible by virtue of their positions for ensuring compliance; it will not be the responsibility of the Advisory Group to have that function.

A member asked whether the Advisory Group would be considered an all-College governance committee and, therefore, whether establishment of the group would require an amendment to Part Three of the *Faculty Handbook*. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Advisory Group would be viewed as an ad hoc group that will work for a limited time as described above, decide what work needs to be done on a longer-term basis, and then make a recommendation as to whether it should be established (and with what membership) as a standing all-College committee.

IPPC voted to endorse creation of the ADA Advisory Group as set forth in Attachment B. Dean Calhoun will confer with FEC regarding faculty representation on the group.

5. Budget Planning FY '12

Vice President for Finance and Administration Michael West reviewed briefly the materials that had been distributed at the December 3rd IPPC meeting. Responding to a question asked at that time, he reported that if Skidmore's comprehensive fee increase last year had been 3.5% and all others had remained as reported, Skidmore's place on the "50 Most Expensive Colleges and Universities in America" list would have been #22. (With the 1.9% increase actually implemented, Skidmore fell to #48.) Mr. West and others noted the significant compression among the comprehensive fees reported on this list.

Vice President West reported that IPPC's Budget and Finance Subcommittee had met and had good discussions related to the major budget parameters. Some members of the subcommittee requested that his office model comprehensive fee increases higher than those initially proposed. Those scenarios are indicated on the revised "FY12 Comprehensive Fee Scenarios" document that Mr. West distributed.

Mr. West also reported that the Consumer Price Index through November has risen at 1.1% for the year. This figure is somewhat less than anticipated and may put pressure on colleges to hold comprehensive fee increases at a lower level. He further noted that Cabinet and the IPPC Budget and Finance Subcommittee currently are projecting funding for new initiatives in the range of \$400,000.

Questions and comments included the following:

- With regard to the College's "discount rate" for financial aid, it was noted that keeping that figure below 35% is viewed by some (including some Trustees) to be important, since a higher percentage means less revenue to support the College's educational mission. On the other hand, allocating more money to financial aid (and thus increasing the discount rate) has played a crucial role in achieving other strategic priorities – e.g., increasing the strength of entering classes, including diversity.
- In response to a question about merit aid, Dean Bates stated that Skidmore has maintained a strong philosophical commitment to need-based aid. The increased willingness of our peers to consider merit aid, however, has caused Admissions to pay attention to these trends. Some members expressed a desire to return to a more in-depth conversation on this topic. Acting President Kress suggested that such a conversation should be deferred until President Glotzbach returns from his sabbatical.
- A member recommended the book *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game* (Michael Lewis) as providing helpful insights on how to allocate spending in a context of constrained resources.
- There was further discussion about the advantages of a higher comprehensive fee increase, which would allow more funding to support strategic priorities, including educational programming and compensation for faculty and staff.
- Others suggested, however, that the College cannot sustain a model of constant growth for new initiatives without, at the same time, deciding what programs or activities we will curtail or eliminate. One member expressed a preference for a more modest comprehensive fee increase and closer examination of where we can do less.

Budget conversations will continue at the next IPPC meeting in February.

6. Optimization

Acting President Kress returned to the Optimization planning conversation by offering a brief history of the work undertaken in the spring of 2006. The work is described in detail in a report dated 28 April 2006 that was distributed to IPPC members earlier this fall. She reminded IPPC that three questions had been asked in 2006: (1) should the College return to the then-budgeted enrollment target of 2150 Net Fiscal Enrollment (NFE) (that question was answered in the negative); (2) should the College increase its budgeted enrollment to 2280 NFE, reflecting the enrollment at that time (that question was answered in the affirmative); and (3) should the College increase its budgeted enrollment to 2380 NFE (that question was not decided in 2006).

Acting President Kress asked that IPPC concentrate its discussion at this meeting on how to focus the study now being planned, the process for accomplishing that work, and the timeline. She began by reporting that as Cabinet has begun its conversations, members had come to think that differences in enrollment levels along the lines considered in 2006 – say, for purposes of discussion, a difference of 2300 vs. 2500 – was less a strategic discussion of what type of college we would be at those levels than a question about our strategic priorities and the resource base to support them. In other words, assuming adequate resources to support the desired program, the difference between an enrollment of 2300 vs. 2500 is not a strategic differentiator. IPPC members indicated support for that characterization.

Acting President Kress then turned to the process and asked whether there were certain conversations that IPPC might wish to have as a “committee of the whole” before deciding whether or how to charge a smaller group. For example, might IPPC as a whole wish to understand and consider in a more focused way the implications of applicant-pool demographics, how to support strategic priorities (e.g., science, or the “Transition and Transformation” initiative described in President Glotzbach’s *Strategic Renewal* document), and the College’s desired allocation of faculty lines between tenure and tenure-track vs. contingent?

One member expressed the desire that as the College considers enrollment levels, we talk more broadly about the resources (human and programmatic, as well as facilities) that define the educational experience we offer to our students – rather than simply on the facilities. The member noted that all of those resources are important but suggested that we revisit the balance, focusing more on the interactions we offer to students (the human resources) than simply on facilities. Acting President Kress reminded IPPC members that when the budgeted NFE was increased to 2280 in 2006, a significant amount of those additional revenues was devoted to enhancing salaries (especially faculty salaries).

Another member asked what the effect would be on Admissions if the budgeted NFE is increased. Dean Bates responded that declining numbers of college-aged students will present a challenge, and Vice President West noted that the challenge will have a cumulative effect going forward.

A member suggested that with more schools competing for fewer students, it will be important (although difficult) to determine what factors most strongly influence the decision-making of high school students. The member suggested that what he hears students speak about most often are the transformative educational opportunities they experience. Another member suggested that facilities also are important in this decision-making process.

In response to a question about how a larger budgeted enrollment target would affect the discount rate, Dean Bates responded that it simply is easier to enroll a strong academic class, including the strength reflected by diversity across many dimensions, if the College has more financial aid to offer.

A member asked that economic profile be considered as we look at demographics. Dean Bates noted, again, the influence of merit aid on some applicants’ decision-making, and that even affluent families may choose a school that offers more merit aid. This is especially true for many better-endowed colleges whose prestige is perceived to be greater than Skidmore.

A concern was expressed about the amount of time that would be required if IPPC were to take on the work suggested (one member asked whether additional meeting time would need to be scheduled), and whether IPPC’s working as a “committee of the whole” would pre-empt the work of the smaller group later on. While that concern was noted, Acting President Kress also suggested that a smaller group should not pre-empt the work of IPPC as a whole.

Acting President Kress suggested that there might be three or four major areas that IPPC could review, including student demographics, faculty needs, and strategic priorities. Once those

issues are better understood, IPPC might be prepared to frame the question(s) that will permit the group to consider our optimal enrollment. She asked whether IPPC members would support moving forward in this way, with the understanding that we do not yet know what the charge to the next group might be. Without objection, IPPC expressed its willingness to move forward as suggested by Acting President Kress.

7. Farewell

Acting President Kress noted that this was the final IPPC meeting for Ann Henderson, Registrar and Director of Institutional Research, and she expressed profound thanks to Ms. Henderson for her many years of dedicated and excellent service to Skidmore. IPPC members offered sustained and warm applause as they bade Ms. Henderson farewell.

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

ATTACHMENT A FACULTY PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

Skidmore College is committed to supporting faculty members by providing them with clear and reasonable options for managing their professional and parental responsibilities. The college's parental leave policy for faculty giving birth or adopting a child during the instructional period is built on two main tenets: first, that eligible members of the faculty are granted up to an 8-week paid leave in the period surrounding the birth or adoption of a child, and that no academic or administrative work be expected of them during this period; second, that faculty members be able to take a paid parental leave for the remainder of the semester and return to work without experiencing a full loss of income within a year of birth or adoption.

In formulating its parental leave policy, the college affirms for its faculty, and indirectly for its students, a commitment to parents who seek to lead full professional, intellectual, and personal lives. A primary goal of the policy is to allow both the faculty member and the college the opportunity to maintain the integrity of the classroom and avoid placing undue burden on the individual or the department.

All provisions and applications of this policy are meant to be consistent with state and federal law, including the Family and Medical Leave Act. In accordance with college policy, absence under the Faculty Parental Leave Policy will also be designated as time absent under the Family and Medical Leave Act. **Please note that the reference to “the instructional period” refers to one week prior to the date students begin classes for the semester and ends on the date of the final exam for the semester.** Returning Faculty members are paid for the fall semester over 13 pay periods beginning with the fiscal year (June). The following 13 pay periods are for the spring semester.

Faculty applying for leave under this policy will complete a Faculty Application for Parental Leave. Faculty who will be absent from the college due to giving birth will also be responsible for completing a Notice and Proof of Disability Claim Form and forwarding the claim form to their physician for completion. The physician will return the form to Human Resources. Completion of these forms will allow paid and unpaid leave under this policy as outlined below under Faculty Parental Leave Eligibility. Faculty who apply for a one course reduction with no salary reduction will also be responsible for completing the Faculty Affidavit of Parental Leave form attesting to the birth or adoption of a child.

In the event a faculty member chooses to return to the classroom mid-semester, it is required that the faculty member's physician complete and return a Physician's Release for Work form to Human Resources indicating the faculty member may return to full employment and specifying whether there are any restrictions. The Chair, in conjunction with the Dean of Faculty, will determine if restrictions can be accommodated. The Chair, in conjunction with the Dean of Faculty, may also offer the faculty member special project work for the remainder of the semester, if available.

Though individual decisions about replacing a faculty member in the classroom remain at the discretion of the Dean of Faculty, it is presumed the college shall replace faculty members who are on parental leave.

Administrators holding faculty rank are not eligible for this policy.

Faculty Parental Leave Eligibility Full-time Faculty Member for At Least One Continuous Year

1. Faculty member who has taught at the College in a full-time position for at least one continuous year; birth or adoption during instructional period: Eligible for paid leave for the entire semester. This pay will combine 8 weeks full disability pay for (or equivalent for adoptions) and full pay under this policy for the remainder of the semester before and after disability period.
2. Faculty member who has taught at the College in a full-time position for at least one continuous year; birth or adoption during the last week of classes: Eligible for either a one course teaching reduction with no salary reduction for semester during or after the birth; **Or**

A combination of 8 weeks of full disability pay (or equivalent for adoptions) followed by unpaid leave for the semester following birth or adoption.

3. Faculty member who has taught at the College in a full-time position for at least one continuous year; birth or adoption during non-instructional period: Eligible for partial paid leave for semester; this pay will combine 8 weeks full disability pay (equivalent for adoption) and remainder of semester prior to and after the disability period unpaid leave (salary for fall term begins the previous June; salary for spring term begins early December); Or

Eligible for a one course teaching reduction with no salary reduction for term before or after the birth or adoption.

Full-time Faculty Member for Less Than One Continuous Year

1. Faculty member who has taught at the College in a full-time position for less than one year; birth or adoption during instructional period: Eligible for partial paid leave for entire semester. This pay will combine 8 weeks of disability at partial pay based on NYS Disability benefits rate (equivalent for adoptions), and remainder of the semester prior to and after the disability period at half-pay for the semester (salary for fall semester begins the previous June; salary for spring term begins early December).
2. Faculty member who has taught at the College in a full-time position for less than one year; birth or adoption during non-instructional period: Eligible for partial paid leave for entire semester. This pay will combine 8 weeks of disability at partial pay based on NYS Disability benefits rate (or equivalent for adoptions) and remainder of semester prior to and after the disability period unpaid leave (salary for fall semester begins the previous June; salary for spring term begins early December).

Full-time Faculty Member Who is Considered the Non Birth Parent

Faculty member who has taught at College in full-time position for at least one continuous year and is considered the non-birth parent: Eligible to apply for one course reduction the term before, during, or after the birth or adoption with no salary reduction if the birthing parent (primary care giver for adoptions) does not teach at the college.

The following links are provided:

Faculty Application for Parental Leave: need to design

Notice and Proof of Disability Claim Form:

<http://cms.skidmore.edu/hr/forms/upload/DisabilityyeareportingForm.pdf>

Physician's Release for Work form: need to design

Faculty Affidavit of Parental Leave: need to design

Family Medical Leave Act:

<http://cms.skidmore.edu/hr/benefits/upload/FamilyMedicalLeavePolicy.pdf>

The College reserves the right to change, revise, or terminate this policy at their sole discretion.

ATTACHMENT B ADA ADVISORY GROUP

Mission & Charge

The mission of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory Group is to create an accessible campus community where individuals with disabilities have equal opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of the campus environment. The ADA Advisory Group is a collaborative group of administrators, faculty who are charged with advising the President and his Cabinet on the inclusion of persons with disabilities at Skidmore College. An initial report on the Advisory Group's progress will be due to the President by December, 2011. Specifically, the ADA Advisory Group will work to:

- Promote awareness in the Skidmore College community about issues of access for individuals with disabilities.
- Review results of ADA Audit and ACCESS survey and develop recommendations.
- Support a shared model of disability services by developing a network of liaisons across academic and administrative departments.
- Review administrative policy, procedures and services to ensure compliance.
- Promote an understanding of universal design for learning and facilities.

ADA Advisory Group Membership (proposed)*

Dean of Student Affairs, chair

Coordinator for Students with Disabilities

Dean of the Faculty

Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Director of Campus Life

Associate Director of Residential Life

Director of Facilities Services

Director of Counseling Services/ Health Services

Chief Technology Officer

College Librarian

Associate Dean of the Faculty for Academic Advising

Assistant Director for EEO and Workforce Diversity

Director of Operations, Office of Special Programs

* All positions noted may also serve by naming a designees

Additional Members to be added (see IPPC minutes of 12/17/10)

1 student

1 faculty member (Dean of Student Affairs to confer with FEC)