

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 18, 2016
10:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Cerri A. Banks; Erica Bastress-Dukehart; Beau Breslin; Paul Calhoun; Michael Casey; Julia Elstein; Tim Harper, Vice Chair; Lisa Hobbs; Mark Hofmann; James Kennelly; Kris Leggiero; Eric Morser; Dorothy Parsons; Levi Rogers; Denise Smith; Joseph Stankovich; Mike West; and Joshua C. Woodfork.

ABSENT: Mary Lou Bates; Bill Duffy; Cynthia Evans; Philip A. Glotzbach, Chair; and Debra Townsend.

Called to order at 10:30 AM.

1. Welcome and Approval of Meeting Minutes, November 4, 2016

On behalf of the IPPC, Tim Harper, Vice Chair, recognized and thanked former CEPP Chair April Bernard for her contributions to the committee. He introduced current CEPP Chair Erica Bastress-Dukehart and welcomed her to the IPPC.

Tim called for any questions regarding the November minutes.

IPPC **approved** the Minutes from the November 4, 2016 meeting.

2. Admissions Update

On behalf of Vice President and Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Mary Lou W. Bates, Joshua Woodfork, Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity, reported that although there will continue to be some flux in and out, we are running 4% (15 apps) ahead of last year's record number of Early Decision (ED) I apps. ED Round II apps are due on January 15, 2017 and it is still too early to know where we will end up with total EDs applicants. Regular decision applications are also due January 15. As was mentioned at our last IPPC meeting, the Class of 2021 is projected at 620 students on campus, instead of the originally planned 640 students, with a target of 36 students in London.

3. Sharing and Discussion of Peer Aspirant Groups

Joseph Stankovich, Director of Institutional Research, reviewed four documents that were forwarded to the committee in advance of the meeting regarding peer and aspirant institutions.

The first document, "Developing a New Skidmore Peer and Aspirant List" from the 2003 college committee provides background and rationale which included review of both qualitative and quantitative data, and geographic considerations.

Joe reported that in early 2006, due to the availability of a rich data set, he individually took another look the peer institutions, as described in the document, "A Data-Driven Model for

Examining the Validity of Skidmore's Peer Institution Set." He pointed out the other documents included in the reference materials included articles from the *Chronicle*: "Who Does Your College Think Its Peers Are?" and "In Selecting Peers for Comparison's Sake, Colleges Look Upward."

Joe indicated that overall, the current list is working well for campus offices, with the exception of possibly Admissions, who may require comparison data that differs a bit with the standard comparison data used by the other divisions/offices. He suggested that the committee may want to review the list again in either a full review, or a smaller adjustment such as including Hobart and Williams Smith Colleges (a missing NY 6 Consortium school) and consider the usefulness of possibly replacing Sarah Lawrence College or Bard College, as some data for the latter has not been available in the past and both schools are different from Skidmore in a few ways.

Tim Harper thanked Joe for pulling together this data and opened the floor for discussion. Committee comments included:

- List should be reviewed every 10 years (+/-) to take into consideration new factors (i.e. the NY 6 Consortium did not exist during the prior review and should be a factor).
- It is important to keep in mind that comparison data from peer schools is used as a reference in making important college decisions and should not be tweaked to accommodate one specific audience.
- It is important to keep a look at aspirant schools, so we can review who is "falling off" and why, and who is "taking off" and why.
- When reviewing, the committee should be mindful of looking at schools who are "resource similar." Available resources (endowments for students) are an important factor.
- Committee needs to recognize that while this work is important and worth the effort, they need to be cognizant of how much effort this will require from the IR Office and other members of the community.
- Committee should be aware that if a "tweak" involves the removal of one or two comparison schools, this will have an important impact what is currently considered "median" in various respective categories (for example, removing lowest ranking school for faculty salaries, may bump Skidmore from median to higher than average).

The committee agreed to continue to consider this issue into the spring, and if warranted, it might become a potential summer project. Next steps included:

- FEC should be consulted/informed of this potential review.
- Joshua will work with Joe to develop a timeline and next steps.

4. Thoughts/Comments Regarding Campus Climate

Beau Breslin, Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs, reported on the current planning for December 2nd workshops. He acknowledged that prompted by recent events and recurring patterns, this is a moment in which we need to take time to reflect on our campus community and look at the root of our systemic problems and what we can do to address these issues.

He reported that classed will be held December 2nd, and that the college has arranged for two external experts to present interactive workshops on campus. The sessions are primarily geared toward faculty; however, interested staff members are welcome to attend. The presenters, Sarah Willie-LeBreton (Swarthmore College) and Susan Pliner (Hobart and William Smith Colleges) will hold morning and afternoon sessions so participants may attend one.

a. Diversity and Inclusion at Skidmore College Statement

Cerri Banks, Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs, asked to begin this discussion with a statement on the role of a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO). She indicated that with all of the recent discussions around diversity and the role of the CDO, that President's Cabinet is really looking at institutional and systemic issues in their efforts to build the capacity to address these issues across divisions and the campus community at large, as it is not the responsibility of one person or one committee to solve all of the college's diversity and inclusion issues.

Joshua Woodfork asked the committee to turn their attention to the document titled, "Diversity and Inclusion at Skidmore College" [see Appendix]. He indicated the statement had been worked on by CIGU during the 2011-2012 academic year, and then discussed by IPPC during the 2012-2013 academic year, culminating in IPPC voting without objection to express support for the statement on December 14, 2012. At that time, IPPC encouraged its use in appropriate ways. The statement was subsequently distributed to students and posted on CIGU's webpage, HR's webpage, and later on Skidmore's Diversity webpage. He suggested that in moments like these, it is important to consider what our values are and reaffirm our values. This statement of values can be used as a reference to address behavior that does not meet our agreed upon values and principals.

Cerri added that in an educational setting, it is especially important to consider nuances, such as when language is used as an attack (or inappropriately) versus when it is used appropriately in an educational setting.

Michael Casey, Collyer Vice President for Advancement, advised that the committee not neglect the extended community and articulate this message outside of our immediate campus community to the wider communities of Saratoga Springs, our alumni, and parent communities. He suggested that the Alumni Board might be asked to advise about messaging.

Cerri advised that literature will tell us the goal is to build a capacity for diversity, and as such the College needs to consider how each division will look at building strategic action items around diversity to build this institutional capacity for diversity. She suggested that this goal should be addressed on the President's Cabinet's agenda.

Joshua recognized that different divisions have different needs. He has asked each member of Cabinet to identify three things they could do in the Spring 2017 semester around diversity and inclusion. He suggested that as we work on diversity initiatives, we also need to keep in mind the overall workload of each division and set realistic expectations. He compared the effort to

the College's work on sustainability, which has become part of our values and the fabric of what we do.

Erica Bastress-Dukehart, Chair, Committee on Education Policies and Planning (CEPP), suggested that before we address any of the specific issues, we need to reestablish trust. Currently, a lack of trust exists among some and without it all efforts might be met with resistance.

Tim called for a motion on the affirmation of the Diversity Statement presented by Joshua.

By a motion made and seconded, the IPPC unanimously reaffirmed the “Diversity and Inclusion at Skidmore College” statement.

Joshua indicated that he will ask CIGU to reaffirm as well. He informed the committee that he would like to send this out to the community either at the end of this semester or at the beginning of next semester. This communication might also include information about the role of the CDO and what he is doing related to the diversity initiatives. He indicated that he would like to hold another session of the staff reading group. Joshua acknowledged the continued challenges related to diversity and inclusion on our campus and nationally. He asked that we view these as opportunities, recognizing the significant work needed to change culture, policies, and practices.

5. Revision to IPPC Calendar for December 2016

Tim Harper reported that according to the original IPPC meeting calendar, the committee was scheduled to meet on December 2nd and December 16th. Because of scheduling conflicts, including the December 2nd workshops, those two dates have been combined into one IPPC meeting that will be held on December 9th.

Joshua reminded the committee that the remaining IPPC meetings for the academic year will be held in Murray-Aikins Dining Hall, room four.

6. Call for Agenda Items

Tim Harper reviewed the list of upcoming agenda items.

7. Other

Mike West, Vice President for Finance and Administration, reported that both motions approved by the IPPC during their last meeting regarding the Horse Show budget were also approved by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

He further reported that discussions have started on the IPPC Subcommittee on Budget and Finance regarding budget parameters and a longstanding policy on the spending rate methodology and the amount we spend. The Investment Committee is questioning the assumed

7% total return. In addition, they are considering changing the current budgeting standard which uses a three-year weighted average, and instead moving to 12 quarters. This would impact budget projections, and if implemented may be phased in over three years.

He reported that the Investment Committee will make recommendations on budget parameters to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees for approval during their next meeting in February 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Please notify the President's Office of any changes to these minutes.

Appendix

Diversity and Inclusion at Skidmore College

Skidmore College is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive community in which members develop their abilities to *live in a complex and interconnected world*. Consistent with our educational mission, we strive to be a community that respects individual identities based on varying sociocultural characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, national origin, first language, religious and spiritual tradition, age, ability, socioeconomic status, and learning style. We aspire to help create a socially just world that honors the dignity and worth of each individual, and we seek to build a community centered on mutual respect and openness to ideas—one in which individuals value cultural and intellectual diversity and share the responsibility for creating a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment. We recognize that our community is at its best when all members participate fully in the spirited and challenging conversations that are at the center of the College's educational mission.