

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 5, 2019

PRESENT: Mary Lou Bates; Marta Brunner; Grace Burton; Sean Campbell (by phone); Lisa Hobbs; Bill Duffy; Greg Gerbi; Philip A. Glotzbach, Chair; Tim Harper, Vice Chair; Katie Hauser; Michelle Hubbs; Carolyn Lundy; Crystal Moore; Martin Mbugua; Jennifer Mueller; Donna Ng; Michael Orr; Levi Rogers; Abdul Shokur '21; Joseph Stankovich; Amy Tweedy; Joshua C. Woodfork.

ABSENT: Cerri A. Banks; Max Fleischman '19.

The meeting was called to order at 10:33 a.m. by President Glotzbach.

1. Approval of Minutes from March 22, 2019

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without change.

2. Enrollment Update

Vice President and Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Mary Lou Bates gave an update on enrollment and the Class of 2023. This year, the College has admitted more students, including more with lower grants, but we are still meeting full demonstrated need. This is our first year with the Slate admissions system, which gives applicants a portal so they can see what documents Skidmore requires and whether they have been received. All students are notified of their decision in their portal. Accepted students then receive an acceptance packet in the mail; waitlist and denied students no longer get a hard copy letter, which saves postage. Skidmore posted its admissions decisions on Tuesday, March 12th, about a week ahead of most of our peers. Currently the College has enrolled about half of its original target via Early Decision. We admitted approximately 2,900 for regular decision versus 2,400 last year. The enrollment goal for September is a total of 711 students, with 675 on campus and 36 in London.

3. Presidential Transition Update

Vice President for Strategic Planning and Diversity Joshua Woodfork thanked all who participated in the open forums held by presidential search consultants Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates on April 2nd. He reported that the staff forum was well attended. The search consultants are now looking at better ways to engage with students, and at a possible May meeting between the full search committee and campus community. He reminded the committee that the presidential search website is active, and that it offers the opportunity to provide nominations and communicate anonymously with the consultants.

4. Draft Language for Smoking Policy Implementation

As Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs Cerri Banks was absent, this item was postponed.

5. CEPP 2020-2021 Academic Calendar

College Librarian Marta Brunner reported that the Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP) has approved the 2020–2021 academic calendar that was previously circulated

to IPPC, and noted that it had been necessary to schedule classes on Yom Kippur, because of the number of hours needed. CEPP is now considering a policy proposal on religious holidays that would involve letting students make their own arrangements for religious holidays with their instructors and classes, rather than having the College cancel classes. The proposal has not yet been drafted but will be shared with IPPC when it is ready.

Q: Is this a policy that should go out institutionally?

A: We'll craft the student-focused one first and bring it to IPPC.

Q: What was the outcome of the survey re: Friday study days?

A: We got some good feedback; we may change the study day scheduled for the Friday before Halloween to an earlier Friday. Dates may change in 2019, but not the total number of contact hours.

6. Swing Space Recommendation: Campus Sustainability Subcommittee (CSS) Memo

Director of Sustainability Programs and Assessment Levi Rogers reported that after several meetings to gather and review members' perspectives, the Campus Sustainability Subcommittee (CSS) arrived at a consensus on reasonable recommendations for the CIS swing space building (SSB) and delivered them in a memo to IPPC, as requested. By way of clarification, he stated that while some members of the committee participated in the recent demonstration over the swing space building, they did so as individuals, not as representatives of CSS, and that the memo presents CSS's position. He thanked VP Ng for giving a presentation to the committee. The core questions of the memo outline the committee's concerns about the swing space and the decision-making process. He emphasized that the CSS fully supports CIS and does not want to be perceived as a barrier, but that they have substantial concerns regarding the proposed swing space building as well as the decision-making process that led to it.

President Glotzbach responded that it is essential to consider the CIS project as a whole, as it is the most sustainable building project Skidmore has ever done. He stated that the design of the CIS, which was created with input from the science faculty, is very efficient and increases the geothermal square footage on campus to 45%. He reminded the group that the original plan for CIS construction called for the use of construction trailers, noting that this was possibly the least sustainable option. When the accelerated completion plan was developed, the Administration realized that more people would be displaced sooner, requiring twice as many trailers at double the cost. Originally, the SSB was costed at approximately the same amount originally allocated for trailers, but the advantage is that the College will end up with a building, as opposed to outlaying those funds for rental trailers that will be returned. If SSB were to be built like other campus buildings, it would cost considerably more.

President Glotzbach went on to emphasize that SSB does not represent "the first step in the destruction of the North Woods," as claimed by some who oppose it. He said the 2007 *Campus Master Plan*, which provides the basis for the site choice, distinguishes between the North Woods (as a managed and preserved space) and developable campus land, and that this land was identified as a place where the College could expand, if necessary. It is not managed in the same way as the North Woods. Furthermore, the swing space building will have a very small footprint. Finally, there is timing to consider: Cabinet will make a decision on proceeding with the SSB on Monday (April 8). He stressed that it is essential to move forward to avoid further

escalation in building costs of CIS, which has a finite budget and a very tight time-line. He then turned the floor over to VP Ng.

VP Ng stated that, based on their memo, CSS's top priority is changing SBB from a one-story to a two-story building will cost about \$1 million more. Since the SSB was reduced from 40,000 square feet to 32,000 square feet, the savings of \$500,000 from the reduced square footage will offset the \$1 million resulting in an estimated net cost increase of \$500,000, noting that it could end up being more or less. This would bring the total cost of the SSB from \$4.7 million to \$5.2 million. As to whether it is possible to cover this additional cost, she said that there is a CIS budget contingency for unforeseen costs over the next four years of construction and that, as Chief Financial Officer, she feels comfortable with this level of expenditure. She noted that this will potentially limit contingency funds allowing flexibility to address unforeseen future project cost issues going forward, but not to the point where she is concerned, and that this information had been shared with the science chairs.

Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr added that he called a meeting of the science chairs on Wednesday morning April 3rd to seek their input regarding the design of the SSB as either a one-story or two-story structure. He had informed them of the possible consequences of a two-story design (i.e., who will go where), with some adjacencies being altered and spaces becoming a bit smaller to fit stairwells and an elevator while maintaining the same footprint. He stated that he and VP Ng presented the competing interests as best they could and touched on the unknown elements of using contingency funds, including possible constraints further down the road. An informal poll of the room showed seven votes in favor of the two-story option and none for the single story, with others choosing not to vote. Some faculty who were unable to attend emailed support for the single story, and one for the two-story option. Dean Orr said that he is inclined to support the two-story building.

Discussion followed. Institutional Effectiveness Specialist Amy Tweedy urged caution in communicating about the swing space, saying that it will be a *campus* swing space, so perhaps shouldn't be linked so firmly to the CIS project. Associate Professor and Chair of Physics Greg Gerbi noted that while the entire cost of the SSB is being applied to CIS, the SSB will be used by everyone for 30 years. President Glotzbach countered that SSB is only necessary because of the CIS project, and thus is costed into that project. If the College had wanted to build an independent building, it would have been done differently. He called the SSB an ancillary benefit of CIS, and reiterated that the money for it is in the CIS budget. VP Ng agreed, adding that while we are considering how to use the building after 2024, its later use is not the primary goal. Carolyn Lundy asked if some of the other items listed in the CSS memo could be incorporated into the building later. VP Ng replied that adding items such as solar panels or a green roof would require a different structure, and would increase the cost. Vice Chair Tim Harper asked for clarification on whether the increased cost includes our general sustainable building practices; VP Ng replied that it does.

Associate Professor of Spanish and Chair of Theatre Grace Burton asked whether going to a two-story building would change the costs of retrofitting, and Dean Orr noted that the science faculty had also raised this question. VP Ng replied that it was probably neutral, but also said that if, for

example, the SSB were to be used as residence hall swing space, having two floors allows for different uses on each floor.

College Librarian Brunner expressed appreciation for the “voice of conscience” from the CSS. She noted that sustainability was deliberately included in the “Strategic Action Agenda” and *Strategic Plan* not because it was the path of least resistance, and that it is worth the effort if the College is truly committed to sustainability.

Vice Chair Harper asked if anyone wanted to make the case for the one-story option, but no voices emerged.

Director Rogers addressed student perspectives, saying that some students have questioned the College’s commitment to sustainability. His approach is to remind students of the good work being done, and to be clear that compromise is needed for any major project to be accomplished.

In response to a question on the amount that will be tapped for the two-story building as a percentage of the entire contingency budget, VP Ng stated that it represents approximately 10%; the contingency budget is \$5 million. She also said that she and Dean Banks had met with students and answered questions on sustainability related to the SSB, and that the students seemed happy with the meeting and the degree of transparency. Student Government Association (SGA) Vice President for Financial Affairs Abdul Shokur ’21 added that a student resolution opposing SSB had been brought to SGA, but that it was voted down. Vice President for Communications and Marketing Martin Mbugua, while acknowledging the value of discussions with students, asked if Director Rogers, as chair of the sustainability subcommittee, is able to advocate for the CIS project, and what message is being conveyed? Director Rogers reiterated that he tells students that there are real constraints, but the subcommittee will do what it can to make the building sustainable, and that he advises them to view this as an opportunity for future projects and not overreact to one decision. VP Ng mentioned reminding students that CIS itself is a very sustainable building.

Director of Institutional Research Joseph Stankovich asked how does SSB affect our sustainability rankings, and does one story versus two have an impact? Director Rogers replied that, as new square footage, the swing space building will have an effect. Actual consumption and the new rating are yet to be calculated, but other benefits—such as windows in all offices—may outweigh the disadvantages. He concluded by saying that once the SSB decision is made, College leadership should be very clear in communicating its commitment to sustainability.

With no further comments, a motion to approve the two-story option for the SSB was made by Director Rogers and seconded by College Librarian Brunner. **The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.**

7. Call for Agenda Items

As for new agenda items, VP Woodfork referred the group to the minutes of the last IPPC meeting, and to the carryover item from last academic year: review of the College’s peer and aspirant group. He said that the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU) would like to move forward on a specific proposal and plan for the social justice space in Case

Center. He asked for any additional items; there were none at that time. President Glotzbach encouraged committee members to email any items that may come to mind later, and VP Woodfork mentioned discussing the Strategic Action Agenda (SAA) for next year.

Brief discussion followed about the need to revise the schedule for the remaining IPPC meetings, specifically the fact that neither President Glotzbach nor VP Woodfork would be able to attend the May 10th meeting. It was decided to send a Doodle poll with options for moving the May 10th meeting to May 3rd and extending the time of both the April 26th and May 3rd meetings. President Glotzbach thanked everyone in advance for their input.

8. Other Business

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:54 AM.

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