

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
April 20, 2020

PRESENT: Cerri Banks; Joerg Bibow; Grace Burton, Vice Chair; Sean Campbell; Abby Ciccarone '22; Greg Gerbi; Philip A. Glotzbach, Chair; Michelle Hubbs; Carolyn Lundy; Martin Mbugua; Jennifer Mueller; Kendrah Murphy; Donna Ng; Michael Orr; Joe Porter; David Robakidze '20; Levi Rogers; Joseph Stankovich; Dwane Sterling; Amy Tweedy; Peter von Allmen; and Joshua C. Woodfork.

ABSENT: None.

The special session IPPC meeting was held via Zoom and called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Chair President Glotzbach.

1. Important COVID-19 updates and decisions.

A special session of the IPPC was called to discuss important COVID-19 updates, decisions, and forthcoming actions. Prior to opening discussion of this topic, President Glotzbach asked if there were any questions or comments regarding an article shared about academic planning for summer and fall learning. He also reminded the IPPC of the recent message sent to all employees regarding the suspension of summer operations. The President explained that this was not an easy decision and noted the loss summer revenue. He explained that he had been in touch with the Board and that President's Cabinet weighed all options, concluding that safety concerns trumped other factors. No questions from IPPC were brought forth concerning the article or the summer operations communication.

The main topic of the special meeting centered on discussing forthcoming actions related to budget management in response to the COVID-19 crisis. President Glotzbach reminded IPPC about the loss revenue from room and board refunds this semester, the lack of summer operations, and the dip in the College's endowment. He also remarked on the uncertainty of student population, including enrolling the Class of 2024 as well as our returning students arriving back in the Fall.

President Glotzbach reviewed key points in the draft memo, including: a hiring and promotion freeze; the General Salary Adjustment; vacation carryover; managing operating budgets; and a halt on construction projects except for the Center for Integrated Sciences (CIS), the Annex, and the Center in Case. This means that the Athletics Facilities project and the Greenberg Child Care Center relocation have been postponed until further notice. In addition to these actions, starting May 1, Skidmore will begin temporarily furloughing employees.

President opened up the floor for an open discussion of a draft memo to be sent to staff and faculty concerning COVID-19 updates and decisions. President Glotzbach asked for comments, questions, and advice regarding the draft. Vice President for Strategic Planning & Institutional Diversity Joshua Woodfork commented that the administration recognizes how incredibly sensitive the topic of furloughs is to everyone. He reminded IPPC that we are seeing the same

scenarios play out at other institutions across the county. Vice President for Finance and Administration Donna Ng added that everyone must keep in mind the difference between layoffs and furloughs. Layoffs are when one is terminated as an employee, while a furloughed employee is still considered an employee, the furlough is temporary in nature, and it may include the continuation of benefits.

VP Ng noted that we are working to continue healthcare coverage of furloughed employees. She commented that the College's furloughs are based on the fact that without students or summer guests on campus, there is not enough work at this time. Furloughed employees are eligible for unemployment and should be eligible for additional funds from the stimulus CARES ACT. However, that being said, VP Ng stressed that we cannot guarantee that employees on a full or partial furlough will be able to be made "whole" with employment benefits and the stimulus package funds, though we are mindful as trying to work towards that goal. VP Ng was clear that furlough decisions will be made based upon the work at the College at this time and not on the employee. In addition, she added that employees can be furloughed at different percentages, that we do not have to furlough everyone at 100 percent. Director of Community Services Programs Michelle Hubbs shared a familial example of someone who was furloughed and has gained more income weekly under the CARES Act.

Furloughs are set to end on July 31. President Glotzbach added that at this time we cannot guarantee that all furloughed employees will be brought back, but we are planning that they would do so. When we find out more information regarding the opening of New York State, testing, and enrollments, we will be able to update our community. For now, after the message is distributed to employees, VP Ng will work with Human Resources and other President's Cabinet members to review their areas. Cabinet members will charge supervisors/managers to work with Human Resources to assist furloughed employees. Human Resources will open a telephone "hotline" and separate email address to assist our employees with questions and information regarding being furloughed. Furloughs will include non-exempt, exempt, and union employees. We are implementing these changes now so that we can better position ourselves financially for the upcoming fall semester.

Associate Professor Greg Gerbi questioned the validity of a change to the vacation carryover for 2021 within the budget planning. VP Donna Ng replied that vacation carryover is an expense and that it has to be listed on the preceding fiscal year budget as a liability. VP Ng further stated that we are announcing this change now for June 2021 so that employees can plan ahead. She stated that the College wants everyone to take their allocated vacation time, but to take earned vacation in the fiscal year that is accrued.

The IPPC commented that the administration needs to ensure that all the appropriate groups across the campus are involved in academic planning for the 2020-2021 academic year. Dean of the Faculty & Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr agreed that this needs to happen. President Glotzbach has charged Dean Orr to form a working group to focus on our academic plans. Dean Orr explained that this group will map out all the different scenarios for the fall and caucus with existing committees needed to do this important and sensitive work. His first step will include being in touch with the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) to populate the working group with faculty representation.

During this time of rapid change, members of IPPC stressed that we need to be as transparent as possible. Associate Professor Greg Gerbi emphasized that, after several breaches, a level of trust needs to be reestablished. Dean of Students & Vice President for Student Affairs Cerri Banks commented that the administration has been doing their absolute best to work in real time, respond appropriately to the fluid and changing landscape, and communicate those changes to the community in an open and honest format. Professor Gerbi noted that although employees appreciate steps the College has taken thus far, there is concern that actions outlined in the draft memo represent a departure that was communicated during our last IPPC meeting, specifically that all employees would be fully employed until May 31. President Glotzbach apologized for this departure and added that decisions are being made in response to the ever-changing COVID-19 environment that includes the CARES Act and the funds available for furloughed employees, which now are available and that were not available at an earlier time. The President stated that we are trying to limit the damage now that the summer shortfall is causing.

Professor and Chair of the Economics Department Joerg Bibow provided some context regarding the relief that the government is attempting to provide and suggested that it would be irresponsible for the College not to pursue these programs. IPPC members emphasized that details in the messaging matter and asked for the following places to be further clarified, including: the part on freezing promotions and what this means for faculty members this and next year; clearer language surrounding the differences between layoffs and furloughs; presenting the budget figures in a linear format for easier clarification.

President Glotzbach thanked all members of IPPC and stated that all their comments, questions, and suggestions were very helpful. VP Woodfork reviewed the consultation that the administration has pursued, including holding meetings with: the full Board of Trustees; the Extended Cabinet (deans/directors one level down from Cabinet); and forthcoming meetings with Department Chairs and Program Directors, the Faculty Executive Committee (including the two incoming members serving next year); the Board of Trustees' Executive Committee. The President's Cabinet will then review all of the feedback and issue the memo by Wednesday, April 22, 2020. It will also appear in the *Skidmore Weekly Bulletin* and be posted on the COVID-19 and President's webpage. In addition, a Community Meeting for all employees will be scheduled for next week.

Meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

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