

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 2, 2020

PRESENT: Cerri Banks; Mary Lou Bates; Joerg Bibow, Vice Chair; Rachael Borthwick '21; Marta Brunner; Marc C. Conner, Chair; Michelle Hubbs; Carolyn Lundy; Martin Mbugua; Donna Ng; Michael Orr; Joe Porter; Levi Rogers; Mark Rye; Casey Schofield; Kurt Smemo; Joseph Stankovich;; Amy Tweedy; Peter von Allmen; and Joshua C. Woodfork.

ABSENT: Dwane Sterling.

GUESTS: None.

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order at 10:32 a.m. by Chair President Conner.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the September 18, 2020 Meeting.

It was noted that the draft meeting minutes from the September 18, 2020 IPPC meeting will be brought forth for approval at the October 23, 2020 IPPC meeting.

2. President's Report

President Conner provided updates on the Racial Justice Initiative, including:

- The President stated that there are currently ongoing searches for two key diversity positions, the director of the Office of Student Diversity Programs (OSDP) and the director of The Center/Deputy chief diversity officer.
- The new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Board committee (DEI) has been created and the committee is preparing for their first meeting. Board of Trustees member Linda Jackson-Chalmers '73 will chair the DEI committee.
- The Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU) Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Working Group will be sharing HEDS Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey 2019 findings on Thursday, October 8, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
- The President spoke briefly to the speakers, workshops, forums, readings that have been planned for *In It 5*. The *In It 5* programming planned is insightful and intentional and aligns perfectly with Skidmore's Racial Justice Initiative.
- President Conner reminded IPPC that the Racial Justice Initiative is an incubator space to grow creative and thoughtful projects that show promise for supporting the inquiries and engagements with race and justice. Proposals are welcome from students, staff, retirees and faculty.
- He again thanked Interim Human Resources Director Sara Delaney Vero for her presentation on Skidmore's Equal Employment Opportunity policies and procedures at the September 18 IPPC meeting. These polices align with new Title IX regulations and with the College's Sexual and Gender Based Misconduct policies, including alignment with New York Human Rights Law.
- These efforts are all a part of our best practices in DEI work, connecting the dots in these intersecting realms of campus climate and college policy.

President Conner also provided a fall update regarding COVID-19 testing. Nearly 17,500 tests have been performed thus far with just four positive tests. All tests this week have been negative. We are now halfway through semester. The President reminded IPPC that all positive tests results are strictly confidential.

3. Healthcare Benefit, Healthcare Premium 2021, and IPPC Healthcare Working Group Amended Charge

President Conner relayed that institutions across the board are seeing large increases in healthcare costs of up to 30%. The premiums for Skidmore are scheduled to increase by 24%. President Conner stated that it was felt that it was not acceptable to pass the whole of this increase onto employees given the current state of the economy and the lack of a general salary adjustment (GSA) for Fiscal Year (FY) '21. He stated that the cap will be set at 10% for the employee healthcare share cost for 2021 and that the College will absorb the rest. IPPC thanked the President for holding the line on premium increases. An IPPC member, however, expressed concern about the potential for higher increases in the near future. Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer Donna Ng stated that with the forthcoming recommendations from the IPPC Healthcare Working Group (HWG) and with community input, we are hoping to offset these higher premium increases. Furthermore, she reminded IPPC that our healthcare costs and premiums are based on forecasted expenses for the calendar year and no savings are projected for next year. We are not seeing premiums decreasing based on the nationwide trend of fewer medical visits due to COVID-19 concerns.

IPPC members stated that they are thankful for the work the HWG has accomplished, that the group has stayed together, and that they will continue to work on the behalf of IPPC and the Skidmore community. A motion was made to extend the charge of the IPPC Healthcare Working Group. **IPPC unanimously approved the motion to approve extending the charge of the IPPC Healthcare Working Group.** IPPC will invite the HWG to a future IPPC meeting to accept its charge and resume its work. Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity Joshua Woodfork added that the community and IPPC need to engage with the HWG in order to assure that the work is accomplished in a timely manner.

4. Oracle Cloud Update

VP Ng shared an Oracle Cloud presentation with IPPC. The presentation will also be presented at the staff meeting and noted at the faculty meeting. The presentation provided an overview of the new system which will provide workflow functionality across systems and departments. The College plans on implementing the Oracle Cloud system as an alternative to existing business and human resource systems. The Oracle Cloud platform has been determined to be the most cost-effective system to meet the increasing need for workflow functionality and to improve efficiencies. The College plans on phasing in the system and providing a multitude of training opportunities and modules. President Conner thanked VP Ng for the presentation and referenced the need for our college-wide systems to be aligned.

5. Winter/Spring/Summer Planning

President Conner stated that winter, spring, and summer planning is underway. He stated that we will continue to assume all health conditions and constraints as we proceed. There are a number of key questions that need to be considered in the winter, spring, and summer planning process—

the number of students on campus, the number of faculty working in-person or remotely, the amount of academic space, spring athletics, quarantine processes, and testing. President Conner stated that all these questions are being worked through and that all tools of communication will be used to share the steps and plans in the coming weeks. He indicated that sharing information regularly and with transparency is a top priority, and he noted that the only set item thus far is the faculty decision on the determination of the academic spring calendar. An IPPC member asked if furloughs were being considered between the end of the fall term and the beginning of the spring semester given the changes to both the fall and spring calendars. VP Ng replied that there are no furloughs planned during this time. She referenced the recent memo sent to the Skidmore Community regarding the use of accrued vacation time and asked for department supervisors to be flexible and to plan accordingly. An IPPC member inquired about testing for those employees who will be working on campus during the break. President Conner replied that our contract with the Broad Institute does not cover this time period and that we are currently investigating with whom we can contract with to get this important testing done. IPPC asked about testing flexibility due to the recent announcement to the changes in the testing schedule and the resulting conflicts these changes now pose for some faculty and staff. VP Ng responded that they are aware of these concerns and that Human Resources is working with these individuals to identify available options.

The President asked IPPC for their input in the planning process. IPPC members recommended to the President to keep the start of the spring semester comparable to the start of the fall semester. Student Government Association (SGA) President Rachael Borthwick '21 asked to please keep in mind the importance of student programming as the weather turns colder. Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr stated that faculty are very busy planning for the spring. Dean Orr commented that intensive work will be happening in the next weeks in terms of classroom planning because of the unavailability of classroom tents at the start of the spring semester. He stated that they are fairly confident that space will be available for any spring classes that will need to be scheduled on campus. IPPC members thanked the President and the Skidmore Community for all of their efforts to date.

6. Activating IPPC Subcommittees for 2020-2021

VP Woodfork asked each of the IPPC Subcommittee representatives to weigh in on their membership status, the timing of their first meeting, and if they had any agenda items for IPPC. The IPPC subcommittee check-in included: IPPC Subcommittee on Budget & Finance (B&F), Campus Sustainability Subcommittee (CSS), IPPC Subcommittee on Student Affairs (SA), Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU), IPPC Subcommittee on Responsible Citizenship (SRC), and the IPPC Subcommittee on Institutional Effectiveness (SIE). All subcommittees reported having full membership, with the exception of the SIE Subcommittee which was finalizing its student member. VP Woodfork stated that the Bias Response Group (BRG), a subcommittee of CIGU has full membership. All subcommittees reported having met or will be meeting shortly. VP Woodfork noted that the Space Planning Working Group (SPWG), although not an official IPPC subcommittee, is also a group charged by IPPC and that IPPC will need to check in with them to ensure that all members are in place and that the group is prepared to meet if necessary. SIE Co-Chair Amy Tweedy noted that the SIE annual report will be presented to IPPC shortly.

7. Call for Agenda Items

No new agenda items were raised.

8. Other Business

VP Woodfork announced that *In It 5*, a suite of diversity and inclusion programs designed to raise our cultural fluency and strengthen our community, will be held Tuesday, Oct. 6, through Friday, Oct. 9. *In It 5* programming will take an intersectional approach and focus on Black Lives Matter and antiracism, exploring national issues and our own campus climate. The interactive sessions have been designed to allow for plenty of time for Q&A. He stated that as time permits, he hopes that IPPC members will please join in for the various event components and noted that all events require advance registration. VP Woodfork encouraged supervisors to please be flexible with their staff so that they can attend the *In It 5* programming.

He thanked the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU), Inclusion Liaisons (representatives from each of the College's divisions), Associate Dean of Student Affairs Mariel Martin, and Senior Administrative Assistant Molly Roush for their coordination, and support in organizing the events. He asked for IPPC's assistance in pushing this important programming out to the Skidmore Community and provided [the *In It 5* website](#).

President Conner stated his enormous thanks to VP Woodfork and all faculty, staff, and students who have been involved in the *In It 5* programming. The President commented on the connection between the Racial Justice Initiative and the *In It 5* events and stated that the programming is thoughtful and intentional. He reflected upon the DEI effort here at Skidmore and stated the work is very impressive. President Conner invited everyone to participate in these vital moments. Today we have a more diverse student body than in the past—but we have a lot more work to do around DEI. The President asked for everyone to take the issues presented seriously and to invite everyone in.

SGA President Rachael Borthwick '21 commented around the racial tensions in the local community, specially the announcement by the Saratoga Springs Police Department and the rights of protestors. Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs Cerri Banks replied that they are aware of the recent announcement and that it is part of the ongoing conversations that Skidmore is having with students about protesting. She stated that Skidmore completely supports the right to peacefully protest and is communicating with students about what we can and cannot do as an institution to support that. VP Woodfork stated that accordingly students should be aware of what it means for them to freely engage in the City, understanding the implications of what may occur under these new guidelines.

Meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

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