

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 22, 2021

PRESENT: Mary Lou Bates; Adrian Bautista; Joerg Bibow, Vice Chair; Marta Brunner; Marc Conner, Chair; Michelle Hubbs; Jina Mao; Donna Ng; Diane O'Connor; Jason Ohlberg; Michael Orr; Lori Parks; Joe Porter; Rik Scarce; Kurt Smemo; Joseph Stankovich; Dwane Sterling; Smriti Tiwari; Amy Tweedy; Joshua Woodfork; and Carey Anne Zucca.

ABSENT: SGA President Geraldine Santoso '22; SGA VP for Financial Affairs Claire Wang '24.

GUESTS: Ayers Saint Gross (ASG) Design Firm: Kevin Peterson; Sarah Wright; and Amber Wendland.

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 October 1, 2021 Meeting.

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of October 1, 2021. With no proposed changes, **the minutes from the October 1, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved.**

2. Campus Master Planning Update

Members of the design firm Ayers Saint Gross (ASG) joined for a presentation to update IPPC on their progress with [Campus Master Planning](#). Over the past few months, ASG has been virtually engaging with the campus community, the Campus Master Planning Steering Committee, and the Campus Master Planning Task Force. They have hosted a series of open forums and toured the campus to gain insights as to the campus's existing conditions.

The firm reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of the campus, identifying recurring themes, reviewing challenging programmatic uses, and learning about campus mobility, facilities, infrastructure, and real estate, and the cross-cutting drivers that are tied directly to Skidmore's *Strategic Plan*, [Creating Pathways to Excellence: The Plan for Skidmore College 2015-2025](#). ASG reviewed common campus themes based on data gleaned from the focus groups. They underscored the natural beauty of campus, sense of community, and inclusivity. They stated they have observed the lack of access to and from buildings into outdoor living spaces and the lack of social spaces. They emphasized the impact of these accesses and spaces on campus wellness, recreation space, stewardship, and collaborative outdoor learning.

An IPPC member asked if a previous proposal on the redesign of Skidmore's main entrance on North Broadway is still viable. President Conner replied that this a perfect example of the type of project that can now be looked at through the lens of Campus Master Planning discussions, particularly since many construction projects were paused because of the pandemic. It was commented that the Center for Integrated Sciences (CIS) is a shining example of collaborative, sustainable, and integrated building design and can assist the College in leading the way in our commitment to sustainability and the concept of integrated learning as opposed to stand alone departments and programs. Skidmore's North Woods was discussed as a wealth of academic and

social recreational space for students, faculty, and staff as well as a location for potential connection with initiatives currently being advanced by the Saratoga Springs community.

ASG reported that the engagement from the Skidmore community has been significant and diverse in assisting to generate a roadmap for sustainable campus development that advances the strategic priorities of the College. They reviewed a draft of six planning principles integral to moving into the next planning phase as well as driving all future planning. ASG will begin envisioning, testing ideas, and synthesizing the draft plan while continuing to engage with the community. Two Campus Master Planning open forums have been scheduled for Oct. 28 and Oct. 29. President Conner thanked the ASG team for all of their very collaborative work to date.

3. IT Planning Effort

Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer Donna Ng and Chief Technology Officer (CTO) Dwane Sterling presented an overview on the development of the five-year Informational Technology (IT) roadmap. The roadmap will run parallel with Campus Master Planning taking into account the College's aspirations and needs and supporting the college's *Strategic Plan*, while evaluating current IT structure to determine readiness and requirements for the future.

Benchmark data will be reviewed and a list of options and recommendations for IT development and priorities along with capital budget estimated costs will be finalized by the end of fiscal year (FY) '22. Chief Technology Officer Sterling added that IT has engaged Thomas Warger Consulting to review current IT structure, garner information from stakeholders, determine IT requirement implications, and assess change management. With faculty's heavy usage of IT for teaching and learning, the plan for this review has been shared with Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr. President Conner thanked VP Ng and CTO Sterling for their efforts moving this review and roadmap development ahead.

4. Board of Trustees October 2021 Meeting Update

President Conner reported that the Board of Trustees had remarkable meetings on Oct. 14–15, noting that the Board was highly engaged for these first Board meetings on campus since October 2019. On Thursday, there was an in-depth Campus Master Planning tour with ASG, the [President Emeritus Philip A. Glotzbach Portrait Dedication and Honorary Degree presentations](#), followed by a welcome dinner for Board members.

On Friday, the Board debriefed the campus tours and discussed needs related to the Campus Master Plan, including the role of the Board in the Campus Master Planning process. Board members expressed eagerness for this project and recognized the need for resources. The new Campus Master Plan is scheduled to be presented to the Board for approval during its May 2022 meeting.

The Board heard from the year-old ad hoc Board of Trustees committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). In collaboration with the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding's (CIGU) Analysis Working Group a presentation of the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) 2019 Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey findings was shared with the Board. The Presentation to the Board was the culmination of many hours of

careful, in-depth analysis of the findings, and of a series of presentations to different constituencies, including students, staff, and faculty. Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity Joshua Woodfork commented that Board's interest in DEI work is a clear signal of their level of care, engagement, and concern in ensuring that Skidmore is a more positive and welcoming campus for all. President Conner echoed these remarks and added that Board members are now reading the first-year summer reading, Ibram X. Kendi's *How to Be an Antiracist*. VP Woodfork shared that the findings from the student racial campus climate study are forthcoming this fall, which will likely lead to spring presentations. A staff racial campus climate survey will be conducted this spring followed by a faculty survey spring '23. President Conner thanked VP Woodfork and his co-presenters for the Board presentation, CIGU members Marta Brunner, Joseph Stankovich, and Amy Tweedy, noting their thoughtful engagement in this important work, helping to ensure a more positive campus climate.

President Conner remarked that Board Members attended a "[Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship](#)" panel discussion Friday afternoon. Skidmore faculty and students weighed in on the "Skidmore Difference" connected with how we engage with creativity. On Saturday, the Board held the [Inauguration of President Marc C. Conner](#) as Skidmore's eighth President. President Conner stated it was a momentous moment for the Board, faculty, staff, and students to hold this delayed celebration. He thanked everyone for pulling this off while we remain under this pandemic.

5. Call for Agenda Items

No new agenda items were raised.

6. Other Business

President Conner spoke to the current campus climate surrounding sexual and gender-based misconduct on the Skidmore campus. He stated unfortunately college campuses across the nation are grappling with these same issues and have been for some time. Recently, as part of the College's ongoing efforts to educate and raise awareness about [confidential support resources](#) and policies around Title IX and [reporting of sexual and gender based misconduct](#) (SGBM), Title IX Coordinator Joel Aure and Title IX Deputy Coordinator for Student Affairs Gabriela Melillo co-facilitated a Zoom information session. Zoom capacity of 300 participants was reached. Students expressed frustration with the College's processes, responses, and engagement with the Title IX office. The next day several hundred students gathered outside Case Center and again voiced concern and frustration.

Rather than go through the reporting process, students have turned to social media as a way to make their voices heard. The President denounced sexual and gender-based misconduct. He stated that student voices are being heard and that the College is committed to doing everything it can to listen, learn, and address this challenging issue.

Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs Adrian Bautista gave credit to the students for voicing their concerns and stated that the College is eager to move forward and engage with students and to create individual and group listening sessions and forums for students to share their experiences and concerns. Student Affairs is working with student leaders and student organizations and will utilize external expertise and partner with nationally

recognized experts from Cozen O'Connor's Institutional Response Group led by Gina Maisto Smith and Leslie Gomez.

IPPC members spoke to the well-organized platform students used to bring SGBM issues to the forefront and agreed that student protest is a positive sign of a healthy campus environment. An IPPC member expressed a sense of frustration due to the lack of knowledge of the demonstration, resulting guidance, and the concern over the impact of SGBM issues on student learning. President Conner replied that these events are being organized on social media and are often happening in the moment. Dean Bautista added that building stronger connections with student leaders would most likely increase the likelihood that students would register these types of events.

One IPPC member praised the administration's approach to these student concerns, including expressing sympathy and listening. An IPPC member commented on student activism occurring on college campuses nationwide and the ways that students and administrators are now communicating is rapidly changing. As a community we need to think more creatively about ways in which we communicate with students, the different points of entry that can be utilized, and the tools faculty and staff need when engaging with students—to hold space and communicate that we care while maintaining carefully communicated boundaries. We have an individual and collective responsibility to equip and educate students on how to negotiate things that they feel passionate about.

Meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

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