

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 19, 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; Geraldine Santoso '22; Rik Scarce; Kurt Smemo; Joseph Stankovich; Dwane Sterling; Smriti Tiwari; Amy Tweedy; Claire Wang '23; Joshua Woodfork; and Carey Anne Zucca.

ABSENT: None.

GUESTS: Interim Human Resources Director Sarah Delaney Vero.

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order at 10:31 a.m. by Chair President Conner.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the November 5, 2021 Meeting.

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of November 5, 2021. With no proposed changes, **the minutes from the November 5, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved.**

2. Flexible and Remote Work for Non-Union Staff

Interim Human Resources Director Sarah Delaney Vero provided an update on the proposed winter break flexible work arrangement policy. She reminded the committee that any flexible work policy must support the central mission of the College, which is to educate full-time undergraduates in a residential setting. It is important to have a work environment that fosters creativity, mutual respect, and openness to ideas in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

In reviewing potential flexible work arrangements, Director Vero explained positive aspects, including: reflecting the needs of staff members, creativity, and ability to promote inclusivity, which may lead to a more diverse workforce. The challenges around flexible work arrangements include: inequity in application, resentment, reduced sense of community, reduced collaboration, and supervision challenges. Eligibility rests with the ability to perform job duties remotely or with alternative hours without compromising our educational mission and values. Director Vero cited several flexible work arrangement examples including remote work, flextime, and a compressed work week and reviewed the College's current [summer flexible hours benefit](#).

The proposed next step is to expand the current summer flexible hour benefit to include a remote work option of up to two days per week to be implemented on a trial basis after the Fall semester's last day of classes and over the winter break, so from December 13, 2021 through January 21, 2022. It was noted that a compressed work week cannot be combined with remote work, ensuring that employees are on campus a minimum of three days per week. To participate in flexible work arrangements, a written request would need to be completed by the eligible employee and signed off by the supervisor, enabling Human Resources (HR) to track data and evaluate the expanded benefit. After January 21, 2022, the College would return to full on-campus work while an assessment of the expanded benefit is conducted, including engaging staff

in further discussions. IPPC members stated their support of the proposed policy and their gratitude to HR for the attention paid to employee morale and for fast-tracking the policy.

A motion was made and seconded to endorse the winter break flexible work arrangement benefit. **IPPC unanimously approved the motion to endorse the winter term flexible work arrangement benefit.**

3. Non-Union Staff and Faculty Compensation Study Updates

Director Vero and the Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr spoke to the current staff and faculty compensation studies. Director Vero reported that a non-union staff compensation study update meeting was held via Zoom on November 16 with over 200 staff members attending. The presentation included information regarding the current staffing structure, HR's partnering with The Segal Group to analyze current non-union staff and faculty wage and salary structures relative to the market, and the use of best practices to remain competitive under the total compensation package (salary and benefits) offered to employees. The update meeting included discussion of the College's pay practices, the scope and progress of the compensation study, and was followed by a robust question and answer period.

Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr reported that the Faculty Advisory Group Compensation Study Working Group has recently been assembled. Working Group members include Teaching Professor of Anthropology Kathryn Baustian, Associate Professor Management & Business Ting Li, Professor of American Studies Daniel Nathan, and Associate Professor of Psychology Jessica Sullivan. The group will be meeting shortly and will work closely with consultants from The Segal Group, including looking at peer group benchmarking, developing criteria for internal salary equity for use in a market competitive and internally equitable compensation plan, and exploring a sustainable structure that will provide for consistency in future compensation decision-making.

Dean Orr added that a Faculty Advisory Group on hiring has recently been created. Committee members include Senior Lecturer of Geosciences Jennifer Chohnoky, Associate Professor of Economics Sandra Goff, Professor of World Languages and Literatures Maria Lander, Associate Professor of Sociology Andrew Lindner, Professor of Health and Human Physiological Sciences T.H. Reynolds, Associate Professor of Art Sarah Sweeney, and Associate Deans of the Faculty Janet Casey and Pat Fehling, as well as Dean Orr. The group will assist the Dean of Faculty Office with establishing criteria for evaluating requests for continuing faculty lines, approving searches, and considering long-term planning implications as they pertain to the overall reduction in faculty lines that will be phased in over the next five years. Dean Orr commented that the deadline for departments/programs to submit new replacement requests to fill open faculty lines has been pushed back and that this information had been recently communicated to chairs and program directors.

In response to IPPC members' questions, Dean Orr noted that there are certain elements of the staff and faculty compensation projects which will intersect, citing benchmarking as such an example. Director Vero commented that the compensation study is one project related to employee recruitment and retention. She explained that the steps we are undertaking account for differences in the ways staff and faculty are employed. She referenced the cost of living with

respect to the local market as an example of concern for employees. Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity Joshua Woodfork added that we are hearing from the community a larger call for increased care. The compensation study is not solely about wages, it is an example of us striving to be the school and employer of choice.

4. Updates on Student Engagement

President Conner stated that a virtual Q&A forum with the Student Government Association (SGA) Senate and other students, approximately 80 students total, was held on November 16. A top priority of the forum was to discuss student concerns with Skidmore's Title IX and sexual and gender-based misconduct (SGBM). The President commended SGA President Geraldine Santoso '22 (who was welcomed to her first IPPC meeting) for presiding over a challenging meeting. He acknowledged the structural challenges of discussing such weighty items over Zoom, especially with so many comments via chat. SGA Vice President for Financial Affairs Claire Wang '24 thanked President Conner and Cabinet staff for attending the difficult yet useful session, noting that many student voices were heard. SGA President Santoso concurred.

Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs Adrian Bautista commented on the progress being made with the SGBM review. Practices and policies are being reviewed by the College with the assistance of national expert [Leslie Gomez](#), and in consultation with student input gathered during listening sessions that began earlier this month. A survey on SGBM/Title IX practices will be sent shortly to all students, staff, and faculty. Dean Bautista stated that the College is taking steps to engage with the community, holding ourselves accountable, and developing specific action plans.

VP Woodfork explained that he and Associate Dean of Student Affairs Mariel Martin are scheduled to meet with the leaders of the transphobia protest next week. He and Associate Dean Martin are eager to connect and directly engage in this important work of responding to the concerns. An IPPC member inquired about progress on student name infrastructure. VP Woodfork replied that in deference to the student leaders' efforts, progress on the student demands would first be communicated directly to the student leaders, but he welcomed returning to IPPC with updates. He asked Chief Technology (CTO) Officer Dwane Sterling to provide any comments. CTO Sterling explained that the College's information technology infrastructure is hugely complicated and evolving and that IT is consistently working to stay ahead of the curve while paying attention to student identity concepts, noting that names involve our own systems as well as our use of vendors.

Dean Bautista noted that besides SGBM other major student topics of the forum included the challenges associated with the financial aid work study pay cap; improving communication between students and the administration regarding transgender and BIPOC experiences on campus; COVID-19 policies and student representation; supporting students during the upcoming holiday breaks; preserving small class sizes; and concrete progress resulting from the College's racial justice efforts.

5. Call for Agenda Items

No new agenda items were raised.

6. Other Business

No other business was brought forth.

Meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

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