

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 15, 2022

PRESENT: Mary Lou Bates; Adrian Bautista; Joerg Bibow, Vice Chair; Marta Brunner; Marc Conner, Chair; Michelle Hubbs; Jina Mao; Donna Ng; Jason Ohlberg; 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: Michael Orr.

GUESTS: Interim Human Resources Director Sarah Delaney Vero; Director of Campus Safety Tim Munro.

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 March 25, 2022 and April 1, 2022 Meetings.

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of March 25, 2022 and April 1, 2022. A recommendation was made for a revision to the draft meeting minutes of **March 25, 2022**, after which the **March 25, 2022 and April 1, 2022 meetings were unanimously approved.**

2. Summer 2022 Flexible Work Benefit

Interim Human Resources Director Sarah Delaney Vero provided information concerning the summer flexible work benefit. She reminded IPPC of the current [summer flexible hours policy](#). She stated 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.

Director Vero explained that Human Resources recently met with supervisors to solicit feedback on the winter term flexible work benefit as well as future ideas. Feedback from supervisors was positive and supportive which aligns with information received from other staff members. She commented on the many positive aspects of a flexible work policy. Some important aspects that need attention were noted, including real time communication and the ability of supervisors and employees to pivot work schedules to accommodate shifting department needs. HR is set to partner with Information Technology to address tech needs. Director Vero referenced LinkedIn learning models as one tool that could be implemented. She stated that HR will be working to develop an employee and supervisor “work guide” that encompasses campus-wide expectations of a successful hybrid work model, while acknowledging the differing levels of needs, autonomy, and supervisory judgment across units.

The College acknowledges that the varied array of services provided across campus means that flexible work arrangements are not appropriate for all positions, times of year, or campus settings. While a “one size fits all” approach is not possible in our unique work environment, the College continues to explore extending flexible work arrangements to provide greater access to this benefit. The 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 from May 31, 2022 - August 26, 2022. It was noted that a compressed work week cannot be combined with remote work, ensuring that full-time employees are on campus a minimum of three days per week. All requests for a summer flexible work arrangement would require advance approval by the employee's supervisor and/or unit head in consultation with the division Vice President. Director Vero stated that the College will evaluate the summer benefit to inform continued usage of remote work.

IPPC members stated their support of the summer flexible work benefit and their gratitude to HR for the attention paid to employee morale and retention. It was asked if units whose work is largely summer-based and requires their presence on campus could be afforded the opportunity to use the flex policy during another time. Director Vero replied that gathering this type of information across units and being able to be attentive and sensitive to the overall needs of each division are goals of the evaluation and benefit.

3. Campus Parking

In response to faculty inquiries about parking congestion concerns brought forward by Vice Chair Joerg Bibow, Director of Campus Safety Tim Munro and Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer Donna Ng presented information regarding campus parking, particularly in the parking lots surrounding the Williamson Sports Center and Palamountain Hall. Director Munro reviewed the current student parking system for residential and commuter students, including the student parking permit sticker system. To address the congestion concerns, it was deduced that the current parking permit system needs to be changed from allowing residential students to park anywhere on campus to restricting parking to student overnight lots from 8:00 a.m.– 400 p.m. Monday-Friday. (This is the current policy, but more consistent enforcement is needed.) The format of the sticker permits for students will be updated. Exemptions to the new parking policy for medical accommodations would be made on a case-by-case basis by the Campus Safety Department. Director Munro reviewed the current parking fine structure and stated that there are no proposed changes to the current system with the exception of automating the current manual vehicle registration and violation notification systems.

The goal of the new parking system centers on compliance. Ensuring that all cars on-campus are registered will assist with the safety of the Skidmore community. Director Munro remarked that Campus Safety will engage with Communications and Marketing and Student Affairs to develop a communication plan. He commented that Campus Safety would be particularly attentive to compliance at the start of the fall semester. VP Ng added that the automated registration system would interface with the HR systems to ensure that when an employee leaves the College their vehicle registration is deactivated. It was stated that employees are at times frustrated with the lack of current employee parking and mindful of the impending fines for parking illegally. In addition, there is frustration with vehicles that are illegally or improperly parked in EV spaces. Director Munro and VP Ng acknowledged these frustrations. They noted the work that needs to be done in being more attentive to employee parking issues. An IPPC member applauded the ongoing efforts to reduce vehicular traffic on campus and address sustainability concerns.

VP Ng reviewed the impact of CIS summer construction plans on the Palamountain parking lot. The current count of 269 parking spaces will be temporarily reduced to 174 spaces beginning

May 22. Beginning in the fall semester, the current CIS staging area will return to a parking lot resulting in 156 additional spaces for a net gain of 61 spaces. An IPPC member referenced the need for clear communication to the community regarding the new parking changes and ensuring compliance in light of these changes coupled with the temporary summer reduction of available parking. It was noted that summer parking shifts and construction access shifts should be communicated, especially as units work with deliveries from outside vendors. A formal communication of the parking changes to the Skidmore community is planned.

4. IPPC Subcommittee Check-In

VP Woodfork noted that we will need new staff members on IPPC and the IPPC Subcommittee on Student Affairs as members are completing their three-year terms. He asked to please inform him of any other members that will be rotating off subcommittees. A willingness-to-serve call will be sent shortly.

5. Call for Agenda Items

No new agenda items were raised.

6. Other Business

President Conner spoke to the recent announcement of Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr stepping down from his position effective May 31, 2023. He stated his gratitude to Dean Orr for his innumerable contributions to Skidmore. A national search to fill this cabinet-level position will commence shortly. President Conner has been consulting with the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) and the Appointments and Tenure Committee (ATC) and a willingness-to-serve call for search committee membership will be sent shortly. Skidmore will partner with the firm Storbeck Search for candidate recruitment. An IPPC member commented on the importance of the inclusion of faculty and staff as well as the broader campus community in the search process. President Conner remarked that a variety of forums to engage with the community will be planned.

President Conner remarked on the [COVID-19 communication](#) of April 15 regarding the return to mandatory indoor masking on campus. He stated that the decision to return to mandatory indoor masking through the end of classes, Tuesday, May 3 was in response to the recent COVID-19 positivity rates trending upward on campus, in the local community, and in the state, resulting in a designation of “high” by the Centers for Disease Control. KN95 masks (or equivalent masks) are required in all indoor public spaces, subject to previously approved exceptions. Free KN95 masks continue to be available in various high traffic locations and are accessible at events. Drop-in PCR testing remains available to all students, faculty, and staff from noon to 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and 8 a.m. to noon on Wednesdays in Sussman Village Apartment A1. As outlined in an [email message](#) sent to students and forwarded to faculty and staff on Monday, April 11, COVID-19 protocols for upcoming campus events will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may include additional required testing and safety measures. The President expressed his gratefulness to all for their commitment to the safety of our community and the ongoing efforts at understanding, patience, and mutual support as we continue to navigate our way through the challenges of this pandemic.

An IPPC member commented on hearing concerns from the community on the insufficient communication prior to the April 15 memo and the resulting perceived lack of concern for those in our community who are immune compromised as COVID-19 cases increased. An IPPC member voiced hearing concern over the denials of accommodations and employee anxiety over appealing the denials in light of the planned staffing reductions. It was suggested that supervisors receive clearer communication defining reasonable accommodations and the definitive steps for employees to request an appeal. President Conner acknowledged these concerns and restated that the College will be continuing faculty and staff reductions over the next five years through attrition and not the elimination of employees in current positions. This has been stated in several public forums and will be again at the May 24 state-of-the-college finances session. VP Ng encouraged all employees who have COVID-19 accommodation concerns to please reach out to Human Resources. It was noted that the COVID-19 Working Group currently has one representative from Academic Affairs and two Student Affairs representatives and that increasing these numbers could lead to faculty and students having an enhanced voice in COVID-19 discussions. President Conner reminded IPPC that the COVID-19 Logistics team, while a collaborative, transparent, and informative Working Group, is not a policy advising body, unlike IPPC which advises on COVID-19 policy. Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs Adrian Bautista and Co-Chair of the COVID-19 Logistics Working Group added that some members of the group have met with students outside of regular group meetings to discuss student events and will kindly continue to do so.

Student Government Association (SGA) President Geraldine Santoso '22 remarked on student concerns over the location and accessibility of the current testing site location and hours of operation, current communication of the masking protocols in light of the increased number of visitors on-campus in part due to admission tours, mask availability, and faculty leniency in regards to masking and excused absences due to COVID-19. President Conner thanked SGA President Santoso to giving voice to these student concerns. He stated that expanding COVID-19 testing hours will be explored, that everyone is working diligently to ensure that masking policy communications are timely and clear, and that the availability of free masks will continue to be expanded beyond the current high-volume student traffic areas. He remarked that he will reach out to the Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr on faculty protocols surrounding COVID-19. An IPPC member acknowledged the feelings of stress and anxiousness that tend to occur this time of year for faculty, staff, and students and asked that we acknowledge these feelings and be mindful and gracious with one another.

Meeting adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

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