

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 4, 2022

PRESENT: Mary Lou Bates; Adrian Bautista; Joerg Bibow, Vice Chair; Marta Brunner; Marc Conner, Chair; Michelle Hubbs; Jina Mao; Donna Ng; 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: Assistant VP for Student Affairs and Director of Athletics and COVID-19 Logistics Working Group Co-Chair Gail Cummings-Danson; Ayers Saint Gross (ASG) Design Firm: Kevin Peterson; Sarah Wright; and Amber Wendland.

As there were many agenda items, the meeting time was extended by thirty minutes, held via Zoom, and called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Chair President Conner.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the December 10, 2021 Meeting.

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of December 10, 2021. With no proposed changes, **the minutes from the December 10, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved.**

2. Doing our Work Together: Engaging Voices & Sharing Space Spring Semester 2022

President Conner referenced the September 10th IPPC meeting when Swarthmore College's Associate Professor of Statistics and former Associate Dean of Faculty for Diversity, Recruitment, and Retention [Lynne Steuerle Schofield](#) facilitated an interactive discussion that centered on IPPC's proposed work for this academic year. The discussion focused on IPPC's guiding principles, development of ground rules that lead to productive committee work, ways that we as committee members can support, contribute, and learn, including our agreements, assumptions, and expectations. As we begin our committee work for Spring semester, President Conner reflected on this interactive facilitation and emphasized the importance of continuing our collaborative efforts. He asked committee members to reflect upon our "engaging voices and sharing space" as we approach our shared work moving forward.

3. COVID-19 Updates

Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer Donna Ng and Assistant VP for Student Affairs and Director of Athletics and COVID-19 Logistics Working Group Co-Chair Gail Cummings-Danson provided an update on Spring 2022 COVID-19 protocols. VP Ng stated that work is currently focused on ensuring the availability of rapid covid-19 tests kits, as well as ensuring supplies of KN95 masks for students, faculty, and staff. She referenced the use of the Co-Verified app for students as a significant tracking tool and its beneficial use in the Murray-Aikins Dining Hall and Williamson Sports Center. Assistant VP Cummings-Danson noted that student intramural teams, faculty-staff pickup basketball, and winter varsity sports are in full swing. We are still not allowing concessions at any of these activities. The COVID-19 Working

Group is exploring some easing of the restrictions to allow catering in certain venues when it is deemed safe to do so.

Student Government Association (SGA) VP for Financial Affairs Claire Wang '24 stated that some students are feeling uncomfortable with large groups of students using the workout facilities at the Sports Center without spacing and with masks coming down for water hydration. Assistant VP Cummings-Danson explained that we are actively monitoring the usage levels, noting that the space crunch in the workout rooms will be addressed with the renovation of the Sports Center. SGA President Geraldine Santoso '22 added that this is an example of student involvement, and having student members on the COVID-19 Working Group would be helpful to decision-making. She inquired about the current three day a week testing schedule for spring 2022 as compared to the full week of testing that occurred in the fall. VP Ng replied that the current schedule is in response to available staffing levels and schedules, as well as testing result turnaround. She encouraged all students to reach out to Health Services at any time if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms outside of normal testing hours and that a rapid or PCR test could then be provided if needed.

An IPPC member asked if data was available regarding booster shot participation rates for faculty, staff, and students. VP Ng replied that Human Resources is in the process of reaching out to those individuals who have not yet uploaded their COVID-19 booster verification. It is anticipated that booster shot participation rates will be similar to the College's COVID-19 vaccination rate of 98%. The Working Group is also working to keep the [COVID-19 website](#) up-to-date with the most current data and relevant information regarding campus COVID-19 policies and procedures amidst the ever-changing CDC, federal, and state guidelines. At this time, there are no changes to the academic calendar for spring 2022. It is anticipated that re-entry testing following the March 2022 spring break will mimic the guidelines that were implemented at the start of the spring semester.

4. Strategic Action Agenda (SAA) 2021-2022

President Connor spoke to last academic year's [Strategic Action Agenda \(SAA\) 2020-2021](#) and the relevance and importance of the continuance of this work into this academic year. He referenced the five key goals of the 2020-2021 SAA: COVID-19 response, Racial Justice Initiative work, Campaign conclusion, financial health, and campus master planning, and noted that some of this work continues. President Conner commented that the [Strategic Plan: Creating Pathways to Excellence, 2015-2025](#), the result of a full community effort to determine the guiding strategic goals for Skidmore, remains a relevant and inspiring map for our present and future efforts. The four major categories of the *Plan* remain impressively relevant: integrative learning, access, sustainability, and well-being—these are areas where Skidmore continues to seek achievement and improvement, and all our major programs and projects are well described in these goals. The *Strategic Plan* was thoroughly reviewed and commented upon in the fall of 2020, resulting in the [2015-2020 Strategic Plan Midpoint Review document](#), which brings into relief the substantial progress we have made on the *Strategic Plan*, showing multiple accomplishments and pointing towards more to come.

In the same spirit of fidelity to our institutional *Strategic Plan*, and also responding attentively to current needs and priorities of the institution, the 2021-2022 SAA has been crafted. The 2021-22

SAA emerges from a time of extraordinary pressure on Skidmore due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This requires once again a laser-sharp focus on clear priorities for the college, each of which is connected to and impacted by our COVID-19 response and at the same time clearly supports the pillars of our *Strategic Plan*.

He reviewed the draft of the *Entering Into the Future 2021-2022 SAA* which consists of five goals— four of which carryover from last year, not due to a lack of progress or achievement, but rather the nature and significance of the goals. *SAA 2021-2022* is in many ways a continuation of last year's SAA, partly due to the continued challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic—which continues to impact virtually every aspect of the College's operations and planning—and partly because the goals articulated in the *2020-2021 SAA* have continued into the current year as ongoing major priorities. Campus Master Planning, the Racial Justice Initiative, and financial sustainability, along with COVID-19 management, are all areas where we have made excellent progress and achievement this past year, and they continue to be areas of institutional priority this year.

One goal is new and reflects a major priority of this year to which we have been largely reactive and for which we need to become proactive. The area of sexual and gender-based misconduct and Title IX policies and procedures has arisen as an area of major attention on college campuses nationwide, and Skidmore is no exception. This year presents an opportunity for us to review and where necessary revise those policies and practices, as part of our broader effort to support student health and well-being and to foster a campus of inclusivity, support, and trust. Inclusion of this goal into *SAA 2021-2022* will enable us to bring that to fruition. The *2021-2022 SAA* will enable Skidmore to continue to constitute the guiding of our priorities to help shape and define the Skidmore community.

Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) Chair and Associate Chair of Dance Jason Ohlberg added that Skidmore needs to be mindful of the importance of the recruitment and retention of underrepresented and marginalized individuals as we focus on the significant *SAA 2021-2022* work that needs to be accomplished. President Conner echoed these sentiments and referenced the recent prestigious [Andrew W. Mellow Foundation grant of \\$1.185 million](#) in support of Skidmore's Black Studies Program and Racial Justice Teaching challenge as one positive example of the faculty and administration working in collaboration to address these issues. He cited proactive COVID-19 management and prudent financial planning to ensure that these issues become part of Skidmore's ongoing operations as opposed to sporadic crisis management. Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity Joshua Woodfork thanked Professor Ohlberg for this reminder and asked the group to be mindful of the ways in which we can all exhibit DEI leadership within our constituency groups on campus as we look for ways to continue building a welcoming and inclusive community.

5. Campus Master Planning with Ayers Saint Gross (ASG)

Members from the firm Ayers Saint Gross (ASG) updated IPPC on the progress with [Campus Master Planning](#). ASG hosted two virtual Open Forum Zoom sessions on December 6 for the entire Skidmore community. The forums focused on the sharing of specific ideas for changes that could be made to campus over the next ten to twenty years, including ideas for Skidmore's next building renovation projects, renovated and expanded housing, and proposed potential new

building sites. We are now in the synthesize phase, which encompasses the formulation of a draft plan, and refining and developing an implementation strategy, from which a final plan and document are created. The draft plan is based on a solid foundation crafted from the listening and brainstorming sessions that have been held with the Skidmore community and external stakeholders, and the continuous communication and sharing that has occurred throughout the planning process.

ASG reviewed a series of projects that supports the overall vision of the draft plan. Landscape improvements, building renovations, relocation of academic units, and enhancements to and the creation of spaces for collaboration, informal learning, and wellness were addressed as ways to improve the student, faculty, and staff experience, while supporting a vibrant residential experience. ASG stated that it is important that we are careful and intentional when we think about diversity and create spaces that support a wide range of learning, while acknowledging histories and shared experiences at Skidmore. An IPPC member commented on the need to keep the momentum of community involvement and collaboration moving forward as we encapsulate these projects into our *Campus Master Plan* and *Strategic Plan*. VP Ng provided a brief high-level overview of the cost estimations associated with the series of projects that ASG presented within the draft plan. She noted that day-to-day repairs and upkeep of spaces will need to continue to move through the normal processes and are not part of the Campus Master Plan. Completion of the Campus Master Plan will allow for a smooth connection between the capital budget and building renovations and projects.

ASG stated that Skidmore needs to prioritize these projects, look at how future projects advance planning principles, establish guideposts and aspirations that we want to achieve, and determine how to best support Skidmore's mission within the framework of project costs. ASG will be surveying the Skidmore community shortly to gain perspectives on the prioritization of the proposed projects. The survey questions will require the community to reflect on how well a project supports sustainability, advances planning principles, and promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion. Questions will be framed to include a wide band of engagement and opportunity for feedback. In addition to the online survey, ASG will directly engage with students on campus to solicit feedback. The final plan rollout to the community is anticipated to occur in April/May 2022, culminating in a presentation to the Board of Trustees at its May 2022 meeting.

6. Greenberg Child Care Center (GCCC) Project

President Conner provided an update on the Greenberg Child Care Center (GCCC) project. He noted that the GCCC, including its location, has previously been discussed at several past IPPC meetings. The most recent discussion was held during the [IPPC meeting of April 20, 2020](#), when the pandemic hit and all new construction projects were placed on hold. Prior to that meeting, IPPC endorsed the College's exploration of relocating the GCCC to an expanded Pine Cottage Annex. He stated his appreciation of and commitment to the importance and significance of the GCCC in the Skidmore community. The relocation of the GCCC to the Pine Cottage Annex is fully funded with previously approved capital budget allocations. Based on cost estimates, it falls under section III, "Policy for all Projects," of Skidmore's [Sustainability Construction and Renovation Policy](#) for enhanced sustainability initiatives, which states that "All projects, regardless of scale, or that utilize or replace any of the materials or components listed below, shall adhere to the following standards and criteria." GCCC Director Nancy Wheeler has been in

communication with GCCC families about the relocation. VP Ng stated that despite the construction and renovation hold on the project in April 2020, design work continued. Site plans are ready to be submitted to the Town of Greenfield Planning Board. Construction is slated to begin in March 2022 with completion of project construction by September 2022. Occupancy of the building is estimated to occur in October or November when final approval and licensure from the New York State Child Services Department is acquired. VP Ng explained that GCCC would hold an upcoming forum for families and prospective families and that the community will be invited to further understand the GCCC future plans. Forum information will be shared with IPPC. IPPC stated their appreciation of all the effort and hard work that has been done to ensure that the GCCC remains an integral part of the Skidmore Community.

7. Call for Agenda Items

No new agenda items were raised.

8. Other Business

No other business was brought forth.

Meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

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