

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 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; 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: Student Government Association (SGA) Executive Vice President Nathaniel Lowell '24.

The meeting was held via Zoom and called to order at 10:33 a.m. by Chair President Conner.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes from the March 4, 2022 Meeting.

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of March 4, 2022. With no proposed changes, **the minutes from the March 4, 2022 meeting were unanimously approved.**

2. COVID-19 Check-In

President Conner referenced the recent communication of March 11 that was sent to the Skidmore Community regarding [COVID-19 protocols for visitors, gatherings, dining, and testing](#). He noted there are currently six active student cases. He sought feedback from IPPC regarding masking and testing. An IPPC member commented on initial concern about not requiring masking. It appears that many students, faculty, and staff are choosing to mask. It was noted that faculty who have required masking in their classrooms have not encountered any student resistance. Student Government Association (SGA) Executive Vice President Nathaniel Lowell '24 stated that some students are feeling uneasy masking when they are in a predominantly unmasked environment. He asked if in addition to the current mask friendly and mask support signage there were any supplementary measures that could be implemented. Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer Donna Ng noted that in addition to students being able to pick up free KN95 masks at Campus Safety Office and Facilities, masks could be made available at multiple visible student sites on campus. VP Ng stated that she will confer with the COVID-19 Logistics Working Group to see how to best implement this suggestion. An IPPC member inquired about the apparent low number of required student COVID-19 tests performed in the week following the return from spring break. VP Ng replied that she will be in contact with Health Services to verify the testing information that is being reported.

President Conner reminded IPPC of the importance of hearing different perspectives and noted the email address: covidfeedback@skidmore.edu. He stated that over 20 feedback forms have been received thus far, and they include questions seeking information and clarification, as well as concern surrounding the differences between faculty and staff in controlling spaces, and safety concerns for unvaccinated individuals on campus.

3. NACCC Surveys

Vice President for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity Joshua Woodfork spoke to the [National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climate \(NACCC\) staff survey](#) that was sent to all staff to complete. He reminded IPPC that the survey is part of the [Racial Justice Initiative](#) and Skidmore's participation in the [Liberal Arts College Racial Equity Leadership Alliance \(LACRELA\)](#). The survey is being brought to the community in sponsorship with the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU). VP Woodfork remarked on the important role staff play in contributing to a campus climate that strives to make people feel supported and included, and that the results from the survey will be used to shape our institutional priorities, which include continuing to make Skidmore a quality place to work for everyone. As a reminder, for all regular and union staff, the staff survey window will run Tuesday, March 22 - Thursday, April 21. The survey takes approximately 20-minutes to complete. It covers six content areas: 1) workplace mattering; 2) racial learning and literacy; 3) encounters with racial stress; 4) workplace equity; 5) appraisals of institutional commitment; and 6) impact of external environments. He asked IPPC members to encourage colleagues to consider participating, and to remain mindful of the depth of the topics that we are asking staff to weigh in on as the College continues to strive and improve upon the staff experience. He thanked the Communications and Marketing team for the NACCC website development and Human Resources for assisting with the "Take Care 2" participation incentive. VP Woodfork noted that the current staff survey participation rate is 25% with a participation goal of 75%.

Institutional Effectiveness Specialist Amy Tweedy and Director of Institutional Research Joseph Stankovich presented the findings of the 2021 [NACCC Student Survey](#). Specialist Tweedy and Director Stankovich explained that the survey findings are based on student experiences with over 26,000 students from 51 participating institutions. Skidmore students were invited to participate in the NACCC Student survey in spring 2021. Skidmore's participation rate was 53%, the highest of any LACRELA institution, and well above the median response rate of 30%. Of the survey respondents 59% identified as cisgender women, 32% as cisgender men, and 8% as other gender. The sample is representative across class years. The survey covered six content areas: 1) appraisals of institutional commitment; 2) impact of external environments; 3) racial learning and literacy; 4) encounters with racial stress; 5) mattering and affirmation; and 6) cross-racial engagement. Survey findings in each of the six content areas were presented to IPPC, including asking for feedback, and asking about ways in which Skidmore is already engaged in the related work that addresses the particular areas. Findings where Skidmore stood apart from other institutions were also presented.

Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Orr cited the revision of the General Education Program in 2017 and the incorporation of the [Bridge Experience](#) into the curriculum as an example of encouraging and fostering racial learning and literacy. He referenced recent incentives implemented by Academic Affairs in a number of venues around increased attention to inclusive pedagogy and passivity in the classroom, the [Racial Justice Teaching Challenge](#), mandatory inclusive hiring workshops for all chairs, and the diversity advocates required on tenure track hiring searches as ways in which the College is rethinking the criteria and expectations for teaching and being much more explicit about inclusivity. Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs Adrian Bautista noted the important role that

student organizations play in cross-racial engagement by sparking conversation, providing peer to peer support and cutting across the lines of multiple communities. An IPPC member questioned the steps the College has taken thus far to hire and retain a racially diverse staff and faculty as a cornerstone in preparing students for a racially diverse environment. It was noted that the strategic hires that have been made in some departments have been pivotal in diversifying student program participation and creating welcoming spaces. VP Woodfork remarked that the compositional representation rate is important as is the quality of the experience. We must continue to ensure that faculty and staff have the resources and tools needed to make every student feel appreciated and acknowledged.

The survey data highlighted the student campus climate on and off the Skidmore campus—from experiencing bias or inclusivity in the classroom and administrative offices to feeling included, welcome or safe in spaces on campus and in the Saratoga community. IPPC members stated that Skidmore needs to provide inclusive student support, to improve our commitment to diversifying the faculty and staff, and to build a community of trust. President Conner echoed these sentiments and stated his appreciation of the work that has been done and continues to be done in these areas. This is and will remain a very high priority for the College. VP Woodfork noted that the student survey findings will be presented in two small group sessions as part of *In It 6*. He asked members to please reach out if they know of any groups that might be interested in presentations. Survey results will be posted to the NACCC survey webpage in late spring.

4. Values and Visions Presidential Forums for 2022-2023

President Conner spoke to the Values and Visions initiative of which work will begin this spring and be implemented fall 2022. The yearlong initiative will encompass a series of discussions, events, and forums that will ask what are the special or unique signature values at Skidmore and how we understand these as we reflect on our centennial.

5. Call for Agenda Items

No new agenda items were raised.

6. Other Business

President Conner remarked on the myriad of events that are happening on campus between now and the end of the spring semester—from [The Center for Humanistic Inquiry Symposium](#), the largest in person faculty gathering since fall 2019, the [Filene Music Scholarship Competition](#) taking place on campus for the first time in three years, the [Edwin M. Moseley Faculty Research Lecture](#), and to the numerous preparations taking place for senior week and the [Class of 2022 Commencement](#). He stated that planning is underway for a budget and finance presentation, which is informed by the [Faculty and Non-union Staff Compensation study](#) that began fall 2021. The President reminded IPPC that work is continuing on the [Campus Master Plan](#).

Meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

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