

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE (IPPC)
MEETING MINUTES
October 7, 2022

Present: K. Aurelia Ball; Adrian Bautista; Marc Conner, Chair; Jacqueline Conrad; Xiaoshuo Hou; Michelle Hubbs; Nathaniel Lowell '24; Donna Ng; Michael T. Orr; Lori Parks; Beth Ann Post; Tara Rowse; Rodrigo Schneider; Mahesh Shankar; Kurt Smemo, Vice Chair; Joseph Stankovich; Dwane Sterling; Smriti Tiwari; Amy Tweedy; Claire Wang '23; Joshua C. Woodfork; Carey Anne Zucca.

Absent: None.

Guests: Associate Professor of Statistics Lynne Steuerle Schofield, Swathmore College.

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

1. Strategic Action Agenda (SAA) 2022-2023

At the last committee meeting, President Conner presented the draft SAA and received lots of helpful feedback. He explained that the next draft incorporated feedback and that today he is seeking more input with hope to have an endorsement of the document prior to bringing it to the Board of Trustees' Strategic Planning Committee on Thursday, October 13.

President Conner noted that he tried to better explain our current covid-19 context, as well as place the racial reckoning of 2020 within a broader lens. It is clear that neither of these issues has gone away and continue to be addressed as we progress. The next revision regarded speech and expression, President Conner decided to provide more context with the words "civility" and "tolerance."

Committee members provided further feedback, including: asking for another word besides "abating" in terms of Covid and RJI; consideration of the juxtaposition of the issues of Covid and RJI; questioning specifically mentioning the Israeli-Palestine relations; separating the two issues of Covid and RJI; wrapping up the SAA from last year—how do we track these past items?

President Conner responded to the feedback and offered to work on an annual review of the SAA, which he hoped to complete and publish, suggesting we will bring it to IPPC so we may assess this past year and determine what steps we want to put in place for our annual assessment of the SAA.

An IPPC member moved an endorsement of the SAA by the IPPC to be recommended to the President's Cabinet and Board of Trustees for their approval. Another committee member seconded this motion. **IPPC voted unanimously to endorse the 2022-2023 Strategic Action Agenda to the President's Cabinet and Board of Trustees' Strategic Planning Committee.**

2. Health, Wellness, Fitness, Athletics

The Health, Wellness, Fitness and Athletics project is moving on for Board of Trustees consideration next week at its October meeting. As we discussed at our last meeting, part of our important next steps include: a community forum and communication steps to our whole community. The larger question moving forward is how to plan the projects emerging from the *Campus Master Plan*? Particularly emphasizing that these projects are several years away from beginning to completion. It will take a lot of collaboration, communication and sharing of ideas to get to the end result.

3. Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

Regarding the non-tenure-track faculty union item, we had the votes regarding the union, which concluded in favor of unionization. We support our non-tenure-track faculty and unionization is their decision and the College will respect and abide by this decision. Ultimately, there were 102 faculty votes in favor of unionization and 54 votes against unionization. We need to work together to include everyone now that this vote has taken place.

Dean of the Faculty and VP for Academic Affairs Michael Orr explained that since the election, he has reached out to the leadership of the organizing committee and the College's commitment to bargaining in good faith and this process should begin shortly. The first contracts for unionization typically take a long time to negotiate and make take a year or longer. We are obligated to maintain the status quo in regard to policies and procedures that affect non-tenure-track faculty and that were in place prior to the election. While current policies and procedures continue to apply during this interim period, we are constrained from making any changes to policies and procedures without first bargaining with the union. For example, if the faculty were to vote to make changes during the current year to the *Faculty Handbook* pertaining to non-tenured faculty, they won't apply it to non-tenure-track faculty pending the outcome of collective bargaining. At the same time, the College is able to conduct business provided we follow existing policies and practices. The College fully expects to move forward this year with open enrollment for health benefits and GSA adjustments subject to negotiation as needed until such time that a collective bargaining agreement has been reached. We will continue to move forward to reach mutually agreed upon terms of employment.

4. October Board of Trustees Preview

The Board of Trustees meeting is next week and members will be coming to campus. Three of the committee meetings happen this week virtually. The Academic Affairs committee had a great presentation from three Skidmore faculty on what makes Skidmore unique. The Board will have a lunch presentation on the Visions and Values project. The Board's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) committee met and reviewed the Association of Governing Board (AGB) "Statement on Race, Justice and Equity," which puts us out in front for liberal arts colleges engaging these issues. A big topic is the Health, Wellness, Fitness and Athletics project which will be presented seeking contingent approval for part of this project, leaving the Board until February to review it, which provides our community more time to give input and discussion on this project. After the Board meeting, I will share with IPPC more information on what occurred.

5. Outside Facilitator Assoc. Professor Lynne Steurele Schofield, Swathmore College

VP Woodfork introduced a guest facilitator to the committee, Associate Professor of Statistics Lynne Steurele Schofield from Swarthmore College. Professor Schofield facilitated a discussion on how to set ground rules and guiding principles, specifically pertaining to the work of shared governance. Much of our work together will include building trust among members of this committee and exploring how each individual brings different wisdoms, privilege, fears, biases, etc. to this group. It is important to learn to value everyone's contributions, and take risks when you are in uncomfortable situations and conversations, acting with generosity and kindness. We can take these uncomfortable moments and turn them into teachable moments.

Professor Schofield discussed the importance of recognizing hopes and fears and the committee participated in an exercise where members shared their hopes and fears for our common purpose. The subject of power difference in status was discussed. It is important that all levels are represented and opinions are respected regardless of what power one holds within the college community. It is important to recognize various ideas and suggestions

The facilitation was interactive using jamboards and included discussion on how to develop guidelines and expectations, consider representation, active listening, respect, and encouragement of dialogue. It is important for the committee to think about how they communicate with the broader community to best serve the College.

President Conner thanked Professor Schofield for facilitating and asked members to think creatively on how we can do meaningful work together this academic year.

6. Call for Agenda Items

No new agenda items were raised.

7. Other Business

No other business was brought forth.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

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