

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 5, 2024

Present: Marc Conner (Chair), Tim Harper, Masako Inamoto, Lisa Jackson-Schebetta, Michelle Hubbs, Nathaniel Lowell '24, Josh Maxwell '26, Dorothy Mosby, Beth Post, Tarah Rowse, Rodrigo Schneider, Dwane Sterling, Smriti Tiwari (Vice-Chair), Elizabeth Stauderman, Amy Tweedy, Sarah Delaney Vero, Dominique Vuvan, Joshua Woodfork, Carey Anne Zucca.

Absent: Adrian Bautista, Lori Parks, Jess Ricker, Joseph Stankovich.

Zoom: Dan Konstalid.

Guest: Julie Delay.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Conner at 10:35 a.m.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes for March 1, 2024

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes for March 1, 2024. With no proposed changes, **the meeting minutes were unanimously approved.**

2. Single Record Keeper Update

General Counsel and VP for Human Resources Sarah Delaney Vero reported on the latest updates for our shift to a single record keeper to support our retirement plan administration, including timing and communications. Director of Human Resources Julie Delay is leading the effort. One of the challenges is that we do not actually know how transitions will impact the specific group of investment options for any specific individuals. There will be plenty of opportunities for people to meet with TIAA representatives, our choice for single record keeper, to determine how the transition will affect them individually. Regarding fees, we have been able to assure people that we are not adding additional fees and we are not charging more, and that Skidmore is not benefiting financially because Skidmore does not pay these fees.

Director Delay discussed the communication plan and pointed out our stakeholders for this transition include current plan participants, Skidmore retirees, UPSEU and SEIU Union members, and former employees. Skidmore did its initial information to campus in November and worked through the transition process and at this point we are looking at transition support for plan participants. This began in March and will continue until June and the transition will occur in May. A guide was mailed to employees this week. It contains the information for this transition, educational opportunities, and key dates, including when TIAA accounts will be opened for those who have Vanguard, when the funds will be transferred, and when the first payroll contributions will take place. We have met with UPSEU employee union members, retirees, and will continue these meetings to make sure we are reaching out to everyone. Our HR website has been updated to include transition info and contact information. There will be seminar sessions available as well as a webinar for information.

IPPC member Tim Harper pointed out that this support plan goes from March to June but the transition occurs May 9, and encouraged that this be clarified. Vice Chair Smriti Tiwari pointed out that once we know the cost difference for this transition, we should share it with the community, and FEC Chair Dominique Vuvan agreed, emphasizing the importance of reporting back the impact of major changes. VP Vero pointed out that it is difficult to say how each individual account will be affected, but the overall goal is to lower fees to benefit employees overall. Fundamental to this whole effort is the fact that *on average* our employee participants will be saving something like 20% in the fees they pay.

3. Proposed IT Security Policies

Chief Technology Officer (CTO) Dwane Sterling spoke about our IT security and referenced a wide approach, including necessary security policy updates. We are developing IT security training and a risk management program. Best practices would include having a Data Protection Officer, but currently Skidmore does not. To strengthen our identity and access management, we should be performing an audit process on the IT side to let units know who has access to sensitive information and verify these individuals for access. The account ownership piece of this is regarding accounts that Skidmore provides and has the right to shut down access.

CTO Sterling presented three draft policies and explained that the draft Skidmore Acceptable Use Policy outlines the scope of acceptable use which covers the systems, servers, applications provided, along with the network we have in place. If someone is connected to our network and our system will take audit logs of activity which are what we look into if an issue were to come up. As a standard practice, we do not track people. However, the information is there should someone use our networks to commit a crime. The scope of the document is to protect our network when being used by employees. If we get a subpoena, a government agency can come in asking for access where they can investigate our systems. Additionally, we have our own student conduct policies in place governing student behavior that can be investigated by Skidmore. We recognize academic freedom and give faculty flexibility to pursue scholarship endeavors.

VP for Strategic Planning and Institutional Diversity Joshua Woodfork pointed out that we should ensure our policies for IT do not come in conflict with other College policies, particularly our handbooks. IPPC Member Tim Harper suggested several additions and changes to the policy documents to clarify certain policies and how they affect the Skidmore community. SGA President Nathaniel Lowell asked about how our policies compare to our peer institutions and their approach to these issues. CTO Sterling answered that we worked with a company who gave us the skeletal structure of our policies and indicated that our proposed policies are consistent with other institutions. The challenge is that schools are in different parts of their IT development. SGA VP for Finance Josh Maxwell asked what the threshold is for student activity to be identified as problematic and can they access a students' email activity without due process. CTO Sterling stated that yes, IT has that ability, but it would depend on context.

4. Middle States Self-Study Update

Dean of the Faculty Dorothy Mosby shared that we are kicking off our Middle States reaffirmation of accreditation process. Skidmore is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), which is a creditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. It assures students of the educational quality of its affiliated institutions. Our accreditations are renewed every eight years with our next review taking place in Spring of 2026. There are key parts to this accreditation which are the Standards, the Self-Study, Self-Appraisal and the Peer Review Process. Our Self-Study will be focused on how Skidmore meets the seven standards of accreditation of Middle States. The process is rigorous and designed to ensure institutional accountability and continuous improvement.

Our timeline includes a subset of the Steering Committee who participated in the self-study institute this Fall. In January, we had a conversation with our VP liaison at Middle States and within the Spring semester the working groups have been formed and the Self-Study design has been drafted and templates and charges for the working groups have gone out. Next up, we will submit our Self-Study design and have the VP liaison visit at the end of April. During next academic year, the working groups will create the Self-Study outline and collect evidence, identify strengths, and areas of improvement for the institution and also develop their conclusions. In November 2025, our colleagues Kelly Sheppard and Amy Tweedy draft a Self-Study and in the fall of 2025, we will analyze the Self-Study and receive additional feedback from the working groups and the community. In the fall of 2025, we will have the evaluation visit of the Chair of our peer evaluators and the Middle States Team visit which will be a team of our peers in Middle States led by one of the Presidents of the institution of Middle States. Our steering group is guiding this process. We need to acknowledge the working groups which will each take on two standards in addition to the service being offered to the institution by the people who have volunteered to participate in Middle States. We want to acknowledge Dean of Faculty's Office Senior Administrative Assistant Nora Graubard Coordinator for Institutional Research and Assessment Kerry Nelson for their administrative logistical support. We will have our MSCHE Vice President here for a campus visit on April 30th with an open meeting from 1:00 to 1:45 pm. This is an opportunity for everyone to ask questions and learn more about the Self-Study process and evaluation and the campus visit that will happen in Spring of 2026.

5. Call for Agenda Items

No new items were introduced.

6. Other Business

No new business was brought forth.

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

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