

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 22, 2024

Present: Marc Conner (Chair), Eriko Fujita, Tim Harper, Michelle Hubbs, Masako Inamoto, Nick Junkerman, Bradley Kadets '27, Dan Konstalid, Josh Maxwell '26, Dorothy Mosby, Amy Oh, Beth Post, Jess, Tarah Rowse, Rodrigo Schneider (Vice Chair), Joseph Stankovich, Elizabeth Stauderman, Dwane Sterling, Amy Tweedy, Sarah Vero, Dominique Vuvan, Joshua Woodfork.

Absent: Jess Ricker.

Guests: Former IPPC Vice Chairs Smriti Tiwari and Kurt Smemo; Dan Rodecker, Assistant VP of Facilities and Planning; Janessa Dunn, Director of Admissions.

The meeting was called to order at 10:32 a.m.

1) Approval of October 25 and November 1, 2024 Meeting Minutes

With no proposed changes, **the minutes from the October 25 and November 1, 2024 meetings were unanimously approved.**

2) Campus Sustainability Plan Assessment Update Continued

Continuing from last meeting, Director of Sustainability Programs and Assessment Tarah Rowse provided an update on the *Campus Sustainability Plan* and how it aligns with the *Strategic Plan*. The core strengths and emphasis efforts are in areas such as geothermal energy, green building, student and community engagement with academic opportunities through courses and research. The Campus Sustainability Subcommittee (CSS) is a central advisory body that focuses on the intersection of facilities, dining services, the sustainability office, residential life, environmental studies, and sciences. In terms of prioritization of this work and the *Campus Sustainability Plan*, much of the recent operational activity has been focused on the policy and practice of green building which has primarily been pursued in response to community feedback. To make more substantial progress on our sustainability objectives as laid out, we recommend that we consider first identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing these projects to support a new sustainability planning process. We need to elevate and prioritize climate action in support of the global scientific consensus on the urgency of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reaching net zero emissions by mid-century to limit global warming to 101.5 degrees Celsius to avoid the worstcase scenario. This gives Skidmore the opportunity to take bold climate action and gives us the opportunity to position ourselves as a climate and energy leader. In a recent survey of environmental sustainability and strategic planning, of the 313 responses, 60% or 184, were students where 60% of them said that Skidmore sustainability values and commitment were part of their decision to attend the College. It is crucial to consider not just the immediate financial bottom line, but how sustainability aligns with our values and long-term vision and financial health. By ensuring our sustainability initiatives are well publicized and widely understood, we can foster a deeper sense of involvement and commitment to our environmental goals. Dan Rodecker, Assistant VP of Facilities and Planning, shared that we are pursuing what is expected

to be our first LEED certified building with Billie Tisch Center for Integrated Sciences. We aim for McCaffery-Wagman Tennis and Wellness Center to be LEED certified silver as well.

3) Strategic Planning: White Papers; Next Steps

President Conner spoke about the white papers and the number that have come in and how it speaks to the enthusiasm for the strategic planning process and the excitement about being invited to participate. We have had a profound level of input coming into the funnel. By sharing how white papers resonated with members of this committee helps us see what are some of the values that we are bringing to the reading of this material. What are some of the things we recognize that we are seeing? How are we going to use this information, evaluate it, and move it forward? We are asking the content experts including Dan Konstalid on the financial side, Adrian Bautista and his team on the residential student experience, Carey Anne Zucca from her role as VP for Advancement, and Jess Ricker as VP for Enrollment and Financial Aid, to help lead the gathering of information and putting it into a summary report of the feedback and materials reviewed. We are asking for 3 to 7 recommendations based on their expertise and all the feedback they have been getting. We are sending out a community memo on Monday that outlines the next steps of the strategic planning process. It will be posted on the [Skidmore 2030 webpage](#). At the December 6 Staff and Faculty Meetings, content leaders will share the gist of those reports with our whole community. The next week, within 30-minute presentations to President Conner, VP Woodfork, and Strategic Planning Vice Chair Tiwari, each content leader is going to share their three to seven recommendations based on their expertise and all the feedback that they have been getting. Over the next four weeks to follow, President Conner will be drafting the next *Strategic Plan* and hopes to have a draft to share with the community by January 31. He will seek feedback at the February 7 IPPC, Staff, and Faculty Meetings. He will make additional revisions based on community feedback and share a draft with the Board of Trustees for their discussion at their February Board of Trustees meeting. The Board may make recommendations for revising it, including considerations of resource alignment and long-term planning. In May, the Board will consider and hopefully approve a final draft.

Committee members noted particular topics appearing in the white papers and talked about categorizing themes. Committee members asked President Conner if he already had ideas in mind for the next *Plan*. He explained that he will be guided by the content experts and their recommendations and the other planning streams thus far, including the Campus Master Plan and the Visions and Values project. How can we be helpful with the information we have gathered, including how we share it? We are trying to mark the next five years in a forward-thinking mindset, considering where we want to be, and collecting the community's input. President Conner noted that we also have the Middle States reaccreditation process, and we are entering into a consultancy which, in particular, asks how we do the work that we do in a way that is efficient to set a strong and vibrant financially sustainable and responsible future?

4) Class of 2029 Update

Director of Admissions Janessa Dunn discussed the headwinds impacting enrollment trends at

Skidmore. While it's still early, we won't have all of the information until our final application deadline in mid-January. Early decision (ED) round one allows students to apply to their top choice school earlier in the application cycle. If accepted, the student is committed to enroll at Skidmore and must withdraw from other colleges provided our financial aid offer meets their needs. We need to be strategic about enrollment planning across all rounds. Between now and the January 8th deadline, it is a multi-year process as we look to expand our markets outside of the north and northeast. We are in the midst of not only recruiting the Class of 2029 but subsequent Classes of 2030 and 2031. Given that this year is trending more like the classes that enrolled in the Classes of 2019, 2020, and 2024, we have adjusted the net tuition revenue goals for the Class to be more in line with the results of those years. While there is a perception that we consistently enroll half of our class in the full pay category, which would be 350 students in a class of 705, we have only reached this level twice in the last six years. Additionally, our retention analysis reveals that full pay students are our largest group of withdrawals, often leaving after just one or two semesters. This means our actual full pay count per class typically settles in the mid to upper 200s. The applications we have read so far this year include our QuestBridge ones, a new partnership that will bring in an additional 10 students into the early decision group and we are excited to admit them. Our data shows that aided students tend to have both stronger academic profiles and higher retention rates, contributing significantly to Skidmore's academic excellence.

5) Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Negotiations Update

VP Sarah Vero shared that faculty negotiations started back in February 2023 with a presentation by the non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty organizers to the bargaining team for the College's administration. NTT organizers identified several priorities such as job security, career advancement, professional development, health insurance, retirement benefits, and higher compensation. There has been significant progress made with tentative agreements pending. Tentative agreements include that entering non-tenure-track faculty members become a member of the union. It will be a closed shop with no strikes, no sympathy strikes, and no lockouts. Their participation on our safety committee, a grievance procedure, discipline and terminations, and institutional support took the longest time to negotiate. With respect to appointments and assignments and academic rank, one of the key things with respect to career advancement that was requested was that there would be three ranks for all non-tenure-track faculty members. Currently for librarians, there are three tracks of promotion, as well as the artists and writers in residence status. We did agree that there would be three tracks also for our teaching faculty. The compensation piece is where we are really stuck because of what has been requested is essentially \$15 million over three years, and that's about \$9.7 million over what we currently have budgeted. One of the most significant challenges for us is that the NTT bargaining leadership are requesting a 7% general salary adjustment (GSA) for this past year, which has not been budgeted. They already received a 3% and then want 5% for the next two years. This is much higher than the historical GSA we have ever had at the College, which is something our budget cannot absorb. We would have to reallocate it from somewhere else. If we took the GSA away from everyone, we still would not have enough money to cover what they are asking for.

They are also looking for certain reductions in workload calculations, which would impact how many courses we would be able to offer and how many students we would be able to serve. Regarding next steps, we want to accomplish this by the end of the year, December 2024, with several bargaining sessions planned. This still needs to be voted on by the entire bargaining unit, which includes both the part-time and full-time faculty members.

6) Budget Considerations

VP Konstalid explained that we have updated our draft Operating Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 to reflect the new admissions information. The update that was given in terms of assumptions around the financial profile for the incoming class has now been factored into our presentation for the budget development update, as have other inputs for enrollment, such as revised estimates around financial need per student, both for an incoming class as well as for returning students. We do not have input for the non-tenure-track faculty. Until the contract is finalized, we won't know what additional impacts we may need to factor into the Operating Budget for next year. The budget for FY 2026 is similar to what we reported in May and in October. In May, we were projecting for FY 2026 an above the line deficit of \$4 million so we are still in a deficit situation at about the same magnitude as when we entered the year. The one significant open item is where does the NTTF contract find itself? Regarding the expected increase in overall revenues for 2026 versus the current year, 2025, we are expecting an increase in overall revenues of 1.2% which is how much expansion room we have in the FY 2026 Operating Budget. Adopting the current NTTF proposal alone for FY 2026 would increase our Operating Budget by 1.6% and would essentially crowd out any other growth in the FY 2026 budget.

IPPC members expressed gratitude for all three updates: Class of 2029, NTT, and budget considerations. The meeting ran over allotted time so we did not have questions or further discussion.

7) Call for Agenda Items

No new agenda items were brought forth.

8) Other Business

No new business was brought forth.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.

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