

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

May 9, 2025

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

Absent: Sarah Vero.

Guests: Claudette Castillo '28, Amy Frappier, Samantha Majiedt '27, Zhenelle LeBel, Aiwu Zhao, and from Huron Consultants (by Zoom) Ben Chrischilles, Nolan Adams, and Peter Stokes.

The meeting was called to order at 10:31 a.m.

1) Huron Consultancy Update

VP for Finance and Administration Dan Konstalid provided an update on the College's Huron consultancy. He shared that we partnered with Huron Consultants on an analysis of both our academic portfolio and our administrative operations in order to further our goal of aligning our expenses with expected future revenues. Huron consultants Ben Chrischilles, Nolan Adams, and Peter Stokes spoke about their work with Skidmore and reviewed the project's goals and objectives. They noted that many of the financial pressures that Skidmore is facing are common across higher education institutions today. In relation to Skidmore specifically, there is additional pressure on hitting enrollment goals as there has been a reduction in the number of full pay students in our applicant pool, which ultimately has an impact on aggregate net tuition revenue, coupled with rising costs, and an increasing number of instructors and offerings over the course of the last several years. Skidmore operates from a relative position of strength, and by addressing imbalances proactively now, can avoid a more reactive approach later on. The goal is an effort to move towards a multi-year plan of 5% to 10% operating margin improvement.

The first work stream was focused on the **administrative operations**. On the administrative side, Huron collaborated with a steering group, as well as with President's Cabinet around opportunities for margin improvement across all administrative units. Huron's second work stream was focused on **opportunities for efficiency on the academic affairs side** and worked with an academic portfolio leadership group. The key component of the academic portfolio review has been around development of a portfolio economics model, allowing exploration of different opportunities in a data-informed way and providing Skidmore with a tool that can be leveraged and updated while assessing the impact of changes. Huron shared an inventory of opportunities, which are now being prioritized for consideration throughout the summer and fall.

In terms of the scope of the administrative work stream, Huron leveraged financial and HR data, conducted interviews and focus groups with close to 60 individuals, and utilized peer and

national benchmarking to identify and quantify some potential cost saving and revenue enhancement opportunities, resulting in twenty plus opportunities for potential savings and/or increased revenue. These opportunities range in their ease of implementation, timeline for implementation, and financial impact. Some of these opportunities are organizational in nature and are opportunities where efficiency could be realized through changing reporting relationships or identifying opportunities for sharing of resources across units. Others are more policy and process oriented. These opportunities need to be weighed against the *Strategic Plan*, as well as the general mission of the College and importantly, the degree of impact on the student experience.

For the academic work stream, there are five opportunity types that we have been discussing in a data informed way. The first is around right-sizing course offerings: recognizing that there may be opportunity to reduce the number of distinct courses and sections that are offered and thinking about the different lenses that might determine which courses might not need to be taught in the future. The second opportunity type is related to the faculty mix and thinking about how that mix of different instructor types might evolve and shift over the course of the next several years. The third and fourth are more faculty-oriented. Items like course related policy, faculty workload expectations have been part of a healthy discussion with the leadership group. On the course policy side, there has been an effort to increase enrollment in high demand courses, reducing the number of necessary sections, and ultimately trying to reduce the cost to educate on a per course basis. Skidmore is below the peer median with student to faculty ratios and course offerings, but what stands out more is while the peer median has increased over this five-year time horizon from 9.1 to 9.7, Skidmore has actually remained at the same level. This is largely driven by peers reducing the number of faculty while Skidmore has kept that constant with changes in student enrollment and the course offering data. This year and next academic year two larger cohorts graduate and projections are that they will be replaced by smaller incoming first-year classes. Without faculty adjustments, the student to faculty ratio will likely decline further. We looked at the course fill rates and excess capacity. The goal fill rate across all levels for courses is 87%, while our actual fill rate is dramatically lower than this goal figure. This shows that there is quite a bit of capacity, especially at the upper (300 and 400)-levels for Skidmore to improve and capture some of what we are calling latent capacity to create cost savings. In many cases, acting upon opportunities arising from the academic workstream will require consultation and agreement as called for by the College's governance structures. A faculty group will be formed to review and think explicitly about those opportunities this summer with conversations ramping up through the shared governance process in the fall.

There are things that we have had conversations about on both the administrative and academic side that ultimately may not emerge from our process as prioritized but should not be disregarded and should be shared with the relevant division leaders for future consideration. SGA President-Elect Samantha Majiedt asked what Huron's role is in facilitating or providing feedback on our implementation strategies and what it looked like from the previous years to now. President Conner shared that Huron is not making decisions for Skidmore. They are in the mode of putting things before us for consideration with some analysis provided. Steering group member and

CEPP Chair Nick Junkerman shared that it is important to remember that we are not using just one metric as a basis for making decisions and highlighted the amount of work that remains to be done to determine the most effective next steps. He shared that these ideas are all connected to each other and impact various elements of our community that impact people's jobs and lives.

2) Title VI Policy Update

President Conner provided an update on Skidmore's compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that prohibits discrimination based on protected categories like race, color, and national origin for any institution that receives federal assistance. With the federal government's heightened attention to anti-Semitism on college campuses, we want to ensure our policies effectively support and protect our community. General Counsel and VP of HR Sarah Vero will bring forward revised policies that align with current interpretations of federal law. This is similar to our recent review and updating of our Title IX policies and practices. VP Woodfork shared that CIGU had a helpful discussion about our approaches to Title VI compliance, specifically that CIGU received a report from Dean Bautista, who is the chair of the Bias Response Group BRG which is a subcommittee of CIGU, including discussion of communication with the community and the need for continued proactive educational steps.

3) IPPC Annual Report

President Conner shared that Vice Chair Rodrigo Schneider is working on the committee's Annual Report. He has worked on this all year and put together an effective report that captures a sense of the major activities of the committee. Once finished, the Annual Report will be circulated and shared on IPPC's website. As we've discussed, the committee's vice chair drafts the report and the chair reviews it. Last year's vice chair, Smriti Tiwari, did a great job compiling a report. During the pandemic, we were unable to complete these annual reports. We have received the draft report from Kurt Smemo, who was the vice chair two years ago, and hope to post it soon. Working with the past vice chairs, we will tackle the three missing years and have those reports posted during the fall '25 semester. Of course, all the detailed minutes of every IPPC meeting continue to be available to our community.

4) IPPC Vice Chair for 2025-2026

We consulted with IPPC faculty and the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) and the motion was made to nominate Management and Business Department faculty member Tim Harper, who will be in year three of service to IPPC as an elected faculty member next academic year, to be the next vice chair of the IPPC for the 2025-2026 academic year. A motion was made to elect Tim Harper as the next Vice Chair of the IPPC. **With a unanimous vote, Tim Harper was elected as IPPC's vice chair for 2025-2026.**

5) Gratitude and Welcome

President Conner expressed appreciation to Rodrigo Schneider for serving as the vice chair of the IPPC and thanked Tim Harper for succeeding him. President Conner shared that working with an external facilitator IPPC's first meeting in the fall is devoted to the reflective work of the committee. President Conner welcomed incoming committee members, including: SGA

President-Elect Samantha Majiedt '27, SGA VP for Financial Affairs-Elect Claudette Castillo '28, Department of History faculty member Murat Yildiz, FEC Chair-Elect Ting Li, Committee on Educational Policies and Planning (CEPP) Chair-Elect Amy Frappier, Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU) Co-Chair-Elect Aiwu Zhao, and Exempt staff committee member-elect Zhenelle LeBel. He also noted Department of Political Science faculty member Natalie Taylor, who was unable to attend the meeting.

President Conner recognized and thanked those members who served for the past academic year and are rotating off the committee, including Josh Maxwell '26, Bradley Kadets '27, Beth Post, Amy Oh, Rodrigo Schneider, and Dorothy Mosby, who is stepping down as Dean, and he noted those who have served in their leadership roles for two years, including Domonique Vuvan, Nick Junkerman, and Masako Inamoto. President Conner acknowledged VP Woodfork for maintaining the work of the committee and Administrative Assistant Colleen Cronin for producing the meeting minutes.

6) Call for Agenda Items

Two items were raised for consideration by IPPC next fall: first, Dean Bautista and SGA President Maxwell shared that the Student Affairs Subcommittee wants to present for consideration new poster event guidelines; and second, Institutional Effectiveness Specialist Amy Tweedy shared that the Subcommittee on Institutional Effectiveness wants to present for consideration a data governance policy.

7) Other Business

No other business was brought forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

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