

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 17, 2026

Present: Adrian Bautista, Claudette Castillo '28, Marc Conner (Chair), Amy Frappier, David Hargadon, Tim Harper (Vice Chair), Michelle Hubbs, Daniel Konstalid, Zhenelle LeBel, Ting Li, Yueqi Li, Samantha Majiedt '27, Jess Ricker, Tarah Rowse, Joseph Stankovich, Elizabeth Stauderman, Natalie Taylor, Amy Tweedy, Sarah Vero, Murat Yildiz, Aiwu Zhao.

Zoom: Joshua Woodfork.

Absent: Kerry Nelson.

This meeting was called to order at 10:34 a.m.

1. Approval of April 3, 2026 Meeting Minutes

With a spelling error corrected, **the April 3, 2026 minutes were unanimously approved.**

2. Land Acknowledgement Consideration (coming from CIGU)

This agenda item represents a milestone that has been in development since the President's arrival at Skidmore, and which the President credited to the sustained advocacy for doing the work with integrity and in genuine partnership with Indigenous communities rather than simply borrowing language from other institutions. CIGU Co-Chairs Zhao and Woodfork presented.

Over the past year, the Committee on Intercultural Global Understanding (CIGU), together with the Indigenization and Decolonization Collaborative (IDC) and Indigenous elders, developed a draft Land Acknowledgment rooted in the *Strategic Plan's* Foundation 4: Building an Inclusive Community. The working group was guided in part by Elder-in-Residence Kay Olan, who will receive an honorary degree at Commencement. Will Bryce, president of the student Native American Culture Club and an enrolled member of an Indigenous community, will speak to the commitments at Commencement. The Skidmore SGA has already passed its own Land Acknowledgment; the institutional statement now follows.

Skidmore's draft is substantively different from peer institutions' statements (Smith, Syracuse, Union, Williams, etc. were reviewed): it pairs the acknowledgment itself with a formal set of institutional commitments for 2026–2030, which CIGU views as essential to making the statement both symbolic and substantive. The proposed commitments include supporting an Elder-in-Residence program, pursuing compliance with NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act), facilitating service-learning trips to Indigenous communities, uplifting Indigenous Peoples Day on the academic calendar, maintaining the campus Tree of Peace, and welcoming Indigenous partners through programs such as Witness to Justice.

The committee substantively discussed the wording of the acknowledgement and asked about

CIGU's process for including particular elements. Vice Chair Harper asked that the committee understand the deliberations before endorsing, noting that IPPC members would themselves need to be able to speak to the language. VP Woodfork, Co-Chair Zhao, and others summarized the working group's process and deliberations as well as CIGU's. They noted that the working group balanced the need to accurately portray historical truth, while remaining educationally oriented rather than ideologically declarative. Dean Bautista added that earlier drafts had used language that might be perceived as polarizing.

Other committee observations: Institutional Research Director Stankovich commended the statement's distinctive emphasis on educating the campus community. Zankel Music Center Director LeBel spoke to enthusiasm for the proposed commitments and the ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities. VP Woodfork expressed gratitude to members of the IDC who have worked tirelessly to provide educational opportunities and champion focus on indigeneity in the *Strategic Plan*. President Conner observed that the statement appropriately leaves room for interpretive work rather than closing it off with specific ideological stances. President Conner also noted that such a statement must speak for the entire institution, and that the Cabinet and the Board will review the wording to ensure the highest degree of inclusivity. CIGU formally moved that IPPC endorse the campus-wide Land Acknowledgment. Coming from a subcommittee the motion required no second. **With no further discussion, the IPPC voted unanimously to endorse the campus-wide Land Acknowledgment.** The Land Acknowledgment will now proceed to President's Cabinet and the President for consideration. The President will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees, with the goal of adoption before Commencement.

3. IPPC Subcommittee Alignment with the *Strategic Plan*

VP Woodfork continued the *Strategic Plan* governance review introduced at the April 3 meeting, focusing today on two formal actions and a third item for future discussion. The Subcommittee on Responsible Citizenship (SRC) requested that they move out from under IPPC to expand membership of the group, including more student representation, members from Student Activities and Residential Life, to grow civically engaged collaboration. Accordingly, VP Woodfork recommended that the SRC sunset as a formal IPPC subcommittee and be reconstituted as a broader, more open civic engagement body. The rationale: the work has matured significantly under Director of Civic Engagement Eric Morser and Associate Director of Civic Engagement Michelle Hubbs' leadership (who is retiring at year's end) and through Project Pericles; the next phase requires broader participation from faculty, staff, and students than the subcommittee model allows; and the current IPPC Operating Code and FEC governance processes are not well aligned on how the subcommittee is populated (a point raised by FEC Chair Li, who noted a recent instance where a faculty nominee declined to serve due to the ambiguity). Transitioning the SRC out of the IPPC structure would allow membership to flow more flexibly. IPPC Operating Code language will be updated in the fall.

VP Ricker presented a proposal for a new two-year Enrollment Opportunity Working Group (EOWG), an idea she has been developing since her arrival in 2023 and discussing with Cabinet

since last June. The group is designed to serve both an educational and advisory function: beginning with shared learning on enrollment data, trends, and external forces, then moving into advisory discussions on opportunities and trade-offs, including international enrollment growth and the strategic use of financial aid for fiscal sustainability. The working group is envisioned as small, approximately two faculty (FEC has already expressed support for a Willingness to Serve call), two students, and two staff, with a second monthly meeting open to broader campus participation (subject matter experts, partners, students). VP Woodfork noted that keeping the core membership small is essential to scheduling viability; supplementary forums and surveys can extend reach without inflating membership. The group will report to IPPC as appropriate and is not intended to bypass existing governance channels.

A motion was made by SGA President Majiedt and seconded by FEC Chair Li **to endorse both actions: (1) transitioning the SRC from an IPPC subcommittee to an independent civic engagement body, and (2) constituting the Enrollment Opportunity Working Group. Without debate, the motion passed unanimously.**

A third item, membership review and renewal for the Campus Sustainability Subcommittee (CSS) under Foundation 5 was deferred to the May 8 meeting. The CSS will continue; the question is updating its membership to align with current strategic priorities.

4. Student Government Association (SGA) Election Results: 2026-2027

SGA President Majiedt reported that elections concluded on April 5, with 785 voters participating (strong turnout relative to most prior years, though below the 1,192 who voted in spring 2025, which was an unusually high-engagement cycle). Speech Night was held for the first time in Wyckoff Center to improve accessibility. Incoming SGA leadership for 2026–2027 includes: President Dylan Kostbar, Executive Vice President Bryce Terry, VP for Academic Affairs Katherine (Kate) Sterling, VP for Financial Affairs Raahim Latif Khan, VP for Student Life Paul Ziek (returning), VP for Club Affairs Claudette Castillo (transitioning role), VP for Institutional Diversity Zara Uju Nwosu, VP for Engagement and Outreach Evvy Shoemaker, Student Events Council Chair Nila Rothman, and Senior Class President Nana Kwame Minkah.

Incoming SGA President-Elect Kostbar and VP for Financial Affairs Khan will be invited to attend the May 8 IPPC meeting to observe and begin their orientation to IPPC’s work. The committee extended warm congratulations to outgoing SGA President Majiedt and VP Castillo for their exemplary service this year.

VP Woodfork noted that incoming FEC Chair Pat Hilleren and incoming CEPP Chair Ryan Overbey should also be invited to the May 8 meeting.

5. Task Force on Accessibility Update

Dean Bautista reported that the Tri-Chairs (Bautista, Oscar Perez Hernandez, and Elise Hinrichs) received the Willingness to Serve submissions earlier in the week. The three Tri-Chairs meet this afternoon to review the names, determine the Task Force's size and composition, and prepare a recommendation for the President's Office. The working principle is to keep the task force small and nimble, approximately one additional member from each major stakeholder area, supplemented by open forums, surveys, and consultant engagement to extend community participation beyond the Task Force itself.

6. Draft Policy: "Skidmore Institutional Guidelines on the Usage of AI"

President Conner reported that the campus comment period on the draft AI guidelines and policy will close April 20. Feedback has been forwarded on a rolling basis to Interim Advancement VP Hargadon for incorporation. Based on feedback so far, the President anticipates a lightly revised policy, similar in substance to the April 3 draft, to be distributed to IPPC members by email prior to the May 8 meeting, at which formal endorsement will be sought.

7. Mission Statement Next Steps

President Conner confirmed that a three-question community survey on the Mission Statement will go out via campus-wide email early the following week. A discussion on mission statements will be held on Wednesday, May 6, in the Wyckoff Center with an open format, focused on what makes a strong mission statement and how Skidmore's might evolve. This concludes the spring phase of the mission statement project; drafting of candidate statements will occur over the summer for fall IPPC review.

8. Call for Agenda Items

AI Policies

Operating Budget

Poster and Publicity Guidelines

Welcome new IPPC members and gratitude for members rotating off

IPPC Subcommittee Alignment with the *Strategic Plan*

9. Other Business

No other business was brought forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Summary document assisted by Claude AI.

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