



Strategic Choices

The Strategic Action Agenda: 2008-2009

Recent Accomplishments

Four years ago, Skidmore College approved a *Strategic Plan* that projected a future few schools would dare to envision – a future in which we would realize our “bold promise” to become an institution

that inspires, challenges, and supports the highest levels of excellence for *all* our students, not just for some or even many of them – as evidenced by their achievements in realizing the values of engaged liberal learning while at Skidmore and expressing them throughout their lives. The Skidmore we envision expects that an intellectually rigorous, transformative educational experience will lead to graduates whose achievements at Skidmore will launch them into the next phase of their lives, who are prepared to function effectively in the complex and increasingly diverse world of the 21st Century, and who understand and embrace the responsibilities of living as informed, responsible citizens.¹

This overarching educational objective is matched by ambitions to continue the work of positioning Skidmore as a leading, highly selective national liberal arts college – one that is increasingly able to compete with other such institutions for the strongest students, faculty members, and staff members in both national and international contexts. A primary indicator of success in this area will be continued progress in improving the key admissions parameters in which we already have seen such significant gains (see below, p. 4).

Taken together, the *Plan's* four goals and the priority initiatives under each goal (see below, pp. 8-9) identify the pathway that, we believe, will enable us to achieve these strategic objectives. Specifically, these goals and priorities represent principles of choice that have framed our institutional decision-making for the past three years and will continue to do so for the duration of the *Plan*. Since the *Plan's* adoption, we have made great progress – in some cases, extraordinary progress – in moving toward that future. The following examples represent just a few highlights of what we have achieved to-date under each of the four areas:

Goal I – Student Engagement and Academic Achievement

- We have put in place the new First-Year Experience curriculum, and it is broadly supported by our faculty. As part of these efforts, we have revised our new-student orientation and instituted a highly successful common-reading program for first-year students (supported by programming throughout the year).
- We have added 14.5 new faculty lines of 15 projected faculty lines.²

¹*Engaged Liberal Learning: the Plan for Skidmore College 2005-2015*, p. 11.

²Some of these lines are above and beyond those envisioned in *The Plan*, reflecting our ability to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities or our willingness to convert contingent faculty lines to tenure-track ones where possible. Some commitments – for example, to create four new lines in the sciences – still remain to be completed.

- Each year we have admitted a stronger and more diverse entering class chosen from successively deeper applicant pools and supported by substantial increases in financial aid.
- We have continued planning within the sciences, enhanced efforts to increase the number of science majors, and begun a College-wide conversation about scientific literacy.
- We have increased support for student research (in the sciences and in other areas as well), though challenges with funding may make it difficult to sustain this progress.
- We have continued to develop the distinctive programming of the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, and it has achieved new levels of national (indeed, international) recognition and support (from both foundations and individual donors).
- Construction of the Zankel Music Center (scheduled for completion January 2010) is now underway.

Goal II – Intercultural and Global Understanding

- We have made significant advances in diversifying our student and faculty populations.
- We have advanced campus conversations about intercultural literacy, admitted more international students, and encouraged more of our students to study abroad.
- We have added key positions in Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Human Resources to enhance our institutional capacity in dealing with issues of diversity, intercultural literacy, and respect for all members of the Skidmore community.

Goal III – Informed, Responsible, Citizenship

- We have enhanced our institutional capacity to research and so better understand how our students live and act and the effects of their behavioral choices on their learning, health, and wellness.
- We have improved the campus residential environment, decreasing (though certainly not eliminating) the excesses associated with alcohol and other drugs and the extent of vandalism of residence halls.
- We have strengthened our athletic programs, including both our intercollegiate sports and health and wellness programming.
- We have launched the Responsible Citizenship Task Force.
- We have completed construction of the Northwoods Apartments and Dining Hall renovations, improved our athletic facilities, and renovated several residence halls. We are now considering recommendations from the Case-

Ladd Task Force regarding ways to make Case Center a more effective gathering place for students.

- We have included geothermal heating and cooling as well as other environmentally responsible design features in our three largest recent construction projects (the Northwoods Apartments, the Dining Hall renovation, and the Zankel Center), and we have taken other significant steps to improve the sustainability of all our operations (including, most recently, the hiring of a Campus Sustainability Coordinator).

Goal IV – Independence and Resources

- We have implemented a compensation plan that has moved faculty salaries to the median (or above) of our comparison group schools and that also has maintained a competitive market position for other employee groups, while stabilizing expenditures relating to employee benefits. Funds for this initiative were made available by increasing our budgeted Net Fiscal Enrollment (NFE) by 130 students to 2,280 (reflecting what was then our approximate *enrollment* of that same number). This decision was approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2006 following extensive work by the “Optimization” Task Force.³
- We have completed a revised *Campus Plan* (including a stewardship plan for the North Woods). We have begun planning for the replacement of Scribner Village and several other capital projects.
- To-date, we have renovated four of our traditional residence halls (leaving five to be done), in addition to bringing the Northwoods Apartments on line. We have completely renovated the dining hall, and we have considerably upgraded our athletic facilities. At the same time, we have made numerous improvements to academic spaces across campus (including adding new classrooms, offices, and laboratories).
- We consistently have met or exceeded ambitious targets for the Annual Fund and other areas of fundraising. We have brought the current total of the “Creative Thought – Bold Promise” Campaign to more than \$165 million.
- As a result of both fundraising and extremely competent management by the Investment Committee, our endowment was approaching \$300 million until the severe economic downturn and drop in the stock market (especially during August, September, and early October, 2008) reversed some of this progress.

Many observers, both within and outside of the Skidmore community, have commented on our positive momentum. Even more importantly, the vast majority of the indicated achievements directly influence our students’ experience for the better. Those that do so less directly (e.g.,

³Improved retention among upper-class students and continuing strong admissions performance have made it difficult to reduce our actual student population to this targeted level. Our strongly increased selectivity and ambitious projections for “yield” on admitted candidates have brought our projected NFE for 2008-09 to approximately 2,380, based on a projected fall 2008 student enrollment of approximately 2,430.

attaining our targets for the Annual Fund, providing competitive faculty salaries) strengthen our capacity to meet our broad educational objectives.

Our continuing challenge is to sustain this momentum in the face of an uncertain economy and a set of financial realities pertaining to higher education, in general, and to Skidmore, in particular, that will place increasing pressures on our ability to plan and manage our resources even as we continue to seek new levels of excellence. Fortunately, the *Strategic Plan* remains a viable guide for our actions, directing our attention to our as-yet-not-fully-realized ideals. For example, Section B. of the *Plan*, “Skidmore’s Distinctive Identity – the Values of Engaged Liberal Learning,” articulates an educational vision against which we can continue to measure our progress. To extend our positive institutional trajectory, however, we need to develop an even more robust and widespread understanding of our strategic position within the constellation of premier national liberal arts colleges and the challenges we continue to face. More generally, we must enhance our capacity to make wise strategic choices within a context of shared governance.

Skidmore’s Current Strategic Position

The preceding academic year provided two telling indicators of the progress we have made in positioning Skidmore College nationally, as reflected specifically in our ability to compete even more effectively than in the past for the best entering students. First, we saw a marked increase in the overall Academic Quality Ratings (AQRs) of the applicants in our early-decision pools. By definition, these applicant groups comprise students who have identified Skidmore as their first-choice school. Second, after admitting the strongest spring applicant group in the College’s history (again, as measured by higher AQRs), we experienced a drop in yield from a projected rate of 21% to an actual rate of 16%. The encouraging dimension of this picture is that we found ourselves losing prospective students to more top-tier liberal arts colleges and universities (including Ivy League universities) than in the past. In short, the positive change in our admissions profile has moved us into a more competitive – and therefore more challenging – admissions environment than was the case even one or two years ago.

This realization highlights the central issue in our strategic position: In order to pursue our audacious ambitions, we must compete successfully against schools with far greater financial resources and stronger “market positions” based upon their name recognition than we possess. In the past, we have been able to attract students because of our first-class faculty, our unique curriculum (with its historical strength in the arts, pre-professional programs, the humanities, and interdisciplinary studies), because of our location in Saratoga Springs, and most especially because of the interest our faculty take in students as individuals. Our recent emphasis on science and science recruiting has brought Skidmore to the attention of new populations of prospective students and already is contributing to the increasing strength of our applicant pools. Parents note the way their students develop as a result of our commitment to the complementary values of academic rigor and effective teaching, including all dimensions of academic support we provide.⁴ Both students and parents appreciate the fact that there is no one, definitive way to be a Skidmore student. We continue to see many “models” of successful Skidmore students within our eclectic student body, and our faculty supports this diversity by actively encouraging our students to design successful, personalized academic trajectories that encompass sometimes-surprising combinations of majors and minors. In short, we have been able to compete successfully against better-resourced institutions because of the distinctive Skidmore educational experience.

Perhaps understandably, our recent successes in developing new resources and deploying those resources in visible ways (whether in enhanced facilities or improved levels of

⁴One concrete indicator of this robust parental appreciation is the 2007 Senior Family Gift project, which brought \$750,000 to the College.

compensation for employees) have made it easier to lose sight of the fact that our achievements have always been predicated on the extremely efficient use of scarce resources. We have been and remain an academic institution that depends most of all upon creativity, dedication to our academic ideals, focus on our mission, and sound institutional judgment. Even as we continue to improve our financial position relative to our history, we will not be able to alter the underlying reality that – *relative to both our own aspirations and our peer institutions – we will continue to remain substantially under-resourced for the foreseeable future.* We must be sophisticated enough to keep this fact in mind, even as we acknowledge our progress in developing additional financial resources that have improved our situation in many concrete ways. Specifically, even as we secure additional resources that enable us better to support existing programs and undertake selected new initiatives, we must become even more vigilant in choosing to use our resources as wisely as possible. The realities of the current economic climate, no doubt, will require us to be even more deliberate in identifying our highest priorities and, in some cases, being patient in revising timetables for completing initiatives that are affected by funding.

Moreover, the “perfect storm” of uncertain financial markets, overall increased utility prices this past year, and pressures to limit future increases in our comprehensive fee confronts us with severe challenges – especially in light of the possibility that increasing numbers of families who otherwise would place students in future applicant pools may come to regard a Skidmore education as simply beyond their means. Schools with greater resources already are responding to this threat by adopting more generous financial aid policies – replacing loans by grants, providing more merit aid, and in general raising the percentage of their student populations that benefit from institutional aid. By contrast, even though over the past five years Skidmore has increased its annual commitment to financial aid by 68% – from \$16.1 million to \$27 million – the percentage of our student population receiving institutional aid has remained relatively constant.⁵ This result follows, in part, from a strategic choice to use need-based financial aid as a primary tool in increasing the diversity of our student population, and we have made very significant progress toward meeting this objective. However, these figures underscore the difficulty we will face, over time, as we move to increase the fraction of our student body eligible for financial aid in the future and preserve the ability of middle-class families to send children to Skidmore. Meeting the likely need for financial aid for future student populations will require the identification of new resources that most certainly will far exceed the resources we have obtained to date. These resources will not be available for other purposes.

Despite the progress we have made on so many fronts, we cannot afford to remain content with where we stand today. We clearly foresee the need for substantial new construction over the coming years. We need to continue increasing our support for pedagogical innovation and for scholarly activity (on the part of both our faculty and our students). Enrollment pressures in certain departments and programs will require additional faculty positions. In some cases, these gains can be achieved by redirecting resources from other areas, but we also foresee the need to add faculty lines in selected areas. Above all, we must continue to strengthen our curriculum. In this light, the *Strategic Plan* identifies science as an area that will require substantial investment in the near and medium term.

⁵This value has fluctuated from an actual low of 40.8% (FY '07) to a high of 42.3% (FY '04), with a projection of 40% for FY '09. The incongruity of such a remarkable increase in financial aid expenditure coupled with such a remarkable constancy in percentage of students benefiting from that aid can be explained by an increase in the size of our student body, coupled with increases in the value of the average financial aid package for high-needs students.

These and other considerations mean that we will continue to confront significant strategic and tactical choices regarding the allocation of scarce resources that likely will require institutional decisions even more difficult than those we have faced in the recent past.

Strategic Challenges – Strategic Choices

Our deep and abiding commitment to shared governance entails that significant strategic decisions must be made collaboratively, with the widespread participation of major constituencies within the Skidmore community. Ideally, such collaborative decision-making gives the College the benefit of many good minds and ensures that important proposals are subject to intense scrutiny before being implemented. At the same time, if the College is to act both wisely and expeditiously, such strategic conversations need to be informed by a high degree of *strategic literacy* across our community and must rise to the same standards of excellence – with regard to both argument and evidence – that characterize our best work in teaching and scholarship. Such decision-making must be informed, especially, by well-analyzed and well-understood data. The fact that we have made such notable progress in the past speaks well of our existing capacity for collective decision-making. At the same time, the extraordinary challenges looming on the near horizon call upon us to create a capability that makes possible an even broader and deeper understanding, across the College, of both the strategic realities we face as an institution and the procedures we need to follow to make wise institutional choices that align with our strategic objectives.

Sound strategic decision-making requires us to understand the nature and implications of institutional choices. Such decision-making seldom pits good courses of action against bad ones; most often, it comprehends a range of good or even excellent options – each of which could claim a legitimate place in some possible institutional future. But no actual future can accommodate all or even most of the possibilities that a truly creative community can imagine. So choices must be made. And they are best made within the context of an overall strategic vision – hence the utility of our *Strategic Plan*. Moreover, as noted above with respect to financial aid, every decision to allocate resources (time or money) in one way, is *per force* a decision *not* to direct those resources elsewhere. Accordingly, those who participate in decision-making must understand that their choices have consequences, which adequate deliberation must take into account. Above all, making wise strategic choices requires decision-makers to embrace an institutional perspective that transcends individual or group interests.

Decisions regarding the deployment of resources occur on both macro and micro scales. Paradoxically, difficult macro-level decisions can be the easier of the two to make. For example, it may be unpopular, in a given year, to reduce the GSA from 4% to 3%, cut capital expenditures by \$1 million, decrease financial aid (and so admit fewer students with need), or diminish operating expenditures by 1% across-the-board. But such decisions are easy to understand and simple to implement. They are typically the responsibility of small numbers of individuals, and once they are made life goes on. By contrast, the quotidian micro-level choices required to manage resources efficiently and effectively across an institution throughout the year – e.g., smart purchasing of supplies, efficient scheduling of classes within an academic program, departmental planning that spaces sabbaticals over a number of years instead of concentrating them in one year – require many more individuals throughout the College to make and own difficult decisions. And yet, for many different reasons, good micro-level decision-making is essential if we are to achieve the desired strategic outcomes.

The preceding observation connects directly with the theme of leadership that was given prominence in the 2006-07 and 2007-08 “Strategic Action Agendas.” As we said last year,

Strengthening the College as an environment of excellence requires creative work by the literally hundreds of persons who hold positions of leadership at all levels – department

chairs and program directors, chairs of governance committees, heads of administrative offices, and officers in the Student Government Association and other student organizations, to name just a few. These persons are called upon to establish the conditions necessary for collective work in pursuit of ends that we could not attain working alone – a basic definition of leadership.⁶

The point to be emphasized here is that one essential responsibility of leaders – no matter where they serve – is to realize the values identified above, especially that of seeing their decision-making in an institutional context and helping those with whom they work most closely to realize them as well. In short, this year we are asking those in leadership positions to do their part in increasing the level of strategic literacy throughout the College.

This Year's Strategic Action Items

The remainder of this document outlines the work in the coming year that will allow us to make continued progress on the ambitious goals of Skidmore's *Strategic Plan*. It is worth reiterating that the tasks identified below address objectives identified in the *Strategic Plan*; as such, they point to areas of institutional development. They tend not to include the absolutely essential work that we do on a daily basis, beginning with teaching and learning: work that embodies the core of our mission. Both aspects of this picture are important. Our ongoing work most directly affects our students and shapes the day-to-day realities of life in the Skidmore community. At the same time, the efforts we invest in advancing our strategic initiatives assures that our community will be better – will attain even higher levels of excellence – tomorrow than it is today.

Although all of the individual items in the “Action Agenda” are important, four of them offer particular opportunities to enhance our level of institutional excellence:

- More intentional and extensive academic planning (including continuing work to improve our institutional capacity to determine with integrity just what our students are learning). [See Goal I, items 1, 2, and 3 below.]
- A more clearly articulated facilities planning process. [See Goal IV, item 45 below.]
- Successfully launching the Responsible Citizenship Task Force. [See Goal III, item 29 below.]
- Continued focus on the concept of “intercultural literacy” and its meaning for the Skidmore community. [See Goal II, item 21 below.]

Making progress on these four agenda items – along with the others described below – will require the collective effort of all members of our community. If we undertake this work with intentionality and focus, then this year will see another impressive addition to our list of collective accomplishments.

As we consider the tasks before us in the 2008-09 academic year outlined in the following section, let us keep in mind the strategic considerations discussed above. These are not new ideas. Indeed, the *Strategic Plan* itself includes the following statement in its early pages:

We can maintain our current positive trajectory through the coming years only to the extent that we effectively manage new demands on our finances and on our most precious resources: our time and our energy. We must establish clear strategic priorities,

⁶“Reaffirming Our Commitment To Excellence: The Strategic Action Agenda 2007-08,” p. 5.

understand both their direct and *indirect* costs, and make the difficult choices that will be required to realize them.⁷

This year, let us work intentionally to increase the level of strategic literacy throughout our community, and let us work equally hard to make strategically informed local decisions that are required of any institution operating with constrained resources. It is essential that we make wise choices with regard to both macro- and micro-level issues. Only by doing so can we continue to make progress toward achieving the promise that is Skidmore College. “Throughout our history, we have challenged ourselves to make no small plans – to make no ordinary choices – and we do so still today.”⁸

Philip A. Glotzbach
President

Engaged Liberal Learning

The Plan for Skidmore College 2005-2015

Goal I – Student Engagement and Academic Achievement

We will challenge every Skidmore student to achieve academic excellence through full engagement with our rich and rigorous educational experience.

Priority Initiatives

- Increase student academic engagement in the first year.
- Increase support for research and creative activity throughout faculty careers.
- Enhance intellectual life for the faculty, students, and others who comprise the extended Skidmore community.
- Strengthen information resources across the College.
- Strengthen the natural sciences to increase the number of science majors and enhance the science literacy of all Skidmore students.
- Increase our effectiveness in helping our graduates plan and prepare for their post-Skidmore lives.
- Take better advantage of the resources and capacity for innovation in the Office of the Dean of Special Programs (ODSP) to support the relevant initiatives identified under this Goal (and others, as appropriate).

Goal II – Intercultural and Global Understanding

We will challenge every Skidmore student to develop the intercultural understanding and global awareness necessary to thrive in the complex and increasingly interconnected world of the 21st Century.

⁷Strategic Plan, pp. 2-3.

⁸Engaged Liberal Learning: The Plan for Skidmore College 2005-2015, p. 1.

Priority Initiatives

- Increase global awareness across the community in order to sensitize all Skidmore students to a complex, diverse, and interdependent world.
- Renew the conversation about diversity both within the Skidmore faculty and broadly across the campus community; building upon the work of the Middle States review and other past efforts, establish clear educational objectives relating to this Goal and develop shared expertise in achieving them.
- Enhance the diversity of our student population while providing the resources necessary to support all of our students in meeting our educational objectives.
- Enhance the diversity of our faculty and other employee populations and enhance their skills that relate to achieving this Goal.

Goal III – Informed, Responsible Citizenship

We will prepare every Skidmore student to make the choices required of an informed, responsible citizen at home and in the world.

Priority Initiatives

- Foster pedagogical innovation relating to responsible citizenship; support campus initiatives that teach and exemplify this value.
- Enhance residential learning.
- Enhance the campus residential environment, with special attention to common spaces.
- Increase support for athletics, fitness, and wellness.
- Develop, broaden, and deepen the College's connections to the local community; enhance our ability to function as a socially and environmentally responsible corporate citizen.

Goal IV – Independence and Resources

We will preserve Skidmore's independence by developing the resources required to realize our aspirations.

Priority Initiatives

- Develop and enhance our key financial resources and our capacity to manage them.
- Achieve and maintain competitive compensation for Skidmore faculty, staff, and administrators; enhance our ability to support their professional development.
- Develop and enhance our capacity to manage our physical resources.
- Develop and enhance those relationships essential to the Skidmore community.
- Develop and enhance the "equity" in the Skidmore name.

Strategic Action Agenda Items 2008-09

Note: Unless otherwise indicated, the expected date of completion for each of the following projects is June 1, 2009.

Goal I – Student Engagement and Academic Achievement Projects/Action Steps

➤ ***Enhance institutional structure to support academic excellence.***

1. Clarify and refine the structure of Academic Affairs.

- Continue to clarify the roles and functions of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dean of the Faculty, and Dean of Special Programs. (VPAA)
- Further explore the opportunities created by integrating the Office of the Dean of Special Programs and the Office of the Dean of the Faculty within Academic Affairs. (DSP/DOF)
- Continue to foster and make visible the connections among the Office of the Dean of the Faculty, the Office of the Dean of Special Programs, the Tang, the Library, and other areas of the College – especially as those connections advance initiatives in the *Strategic Plan*. (VPAA)
- Implement structural changes in the Office of the Dean of the Faculty. (DOF)
- Appoint “regular” (i.e., non-interim) Dean of Special Programs. (VPAA)
- Oversee leadership transitions in external degree programs. (DSP)
- Implement structural changes in Special Programs. (DSP)
- Continue process for academic planning. (VPAA)

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Faculty, Dean of Special Programs (as above).

2. Clarify the mission of the Office of Special Programs and its place in the College.

- Complete work (from Summer 2008) of developing a model for a restructured UWW in accordance with the charge of the UWW working group and resolve the strategic discussion regarding the future of the program.
- Implement next steps of Special Programs Study Group Report for all of ODSP (assess summer programs, construct budget, etc.).

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Special Programs.

3. Enhance Skidmore’s capacity for academic assessment.

- Appoint Faculty Assessment Coordinator.
- Establish Assessment Steering Committee (subcommittee of CEPP).
- Hire Assessment Research Coordinator.
- Implement new assessment structure.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs.

4. Establish initiatives to support the academic achievement, retention, and engagement of all students not currently supported by the opportunity program.

- Support cross-divisional working groups to create effective intervention strategies during the first and sophomore years.
- Continue efforts to support Black and Latino males.
- Enhance and support academic achievement for students in the sciences.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty and Dean of Student Affairs.

5. Evaluate recent trends in the yield of admitted students in the first-year class.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid.

6. Achieve fundraising objectives to support Goal I.

- Complete funding for Arthur Zankel Music Center: \$4 million for endowment and launch “seat” campaign to support initial operating costs (\$1-2 million).
- Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum: \$2-4 million for the Mellon match, \$250,000 for Friends of the Tang, and \$250,000 for programs and exhibitions.
- Increase financial support for the sciences: raise \$3-5 million for current and endowed funds and, with Academic Affairs, explore creation of science advisory board.
- Raise \$3-5 million for other academic programs and endowment.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

➤ *Increase student academic engagement in the first year.*

7. Continue to monitor the First-Year Experience (FYE).

- Review the FYE in London program.
- Develop a sustainable system for staffing the Human Dilemmas cluster.
- Continue Teagle sophomore initiative.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty.

8. Enhance the collaborative programming between the First-Year Experience and the Dean of Student Affairs.

Establish working group to strengthen the residential learning components of FYE.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs.

➤ *Increase support for research and creative activity across the faculty career.*

9. Strengthen support for research and creative activity across the faculty career.

- Develop vision and plans for a Center (Center Study Group) to support faculty as teachers, scholars, and citizens from orientation through retirement and beyond. (VPAA)
- Plan for faculty retirements (bridge grant). (VPAA)
- Assess faculty workload by reviewing course release structure, support for academic administrative work, independent studies, and service. (DOF)

- Review sabbatical support and planning in order to enhance financial support for sabbatical leaves. (DOF)

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Faculty (as above).

➤ *Enhance intellectual life for the faculty, students, and others who comprise the extended Skidmore community.*

10. Continue program development in the following areas:

- Implement next steps for Arts Administration.
- Identify resources for implementation of Critical Media Studies.
- Coordinate resources for Student/Faculty Summer Research.
- Implement writing initiative.
- Merge Periclean and Honors Forum (review standards).
- Enhance efforts to support students seeking national, competitive scholarships (e.g., Goldwater, Truman, Rhodes).

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty.

11. Develop a plan for the College calendar.

Identify administrative processes and technological programs that will allow the College to better manage the scheduling and planning of campus events, including consideration of space availability and demands on key College services (e.g., Facilities, Dining, IT-Media, etc.).

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Special Programs.

12. Coordinate representation at Consortium for High Achievement and Success (CHAS) conferences.

The Dean of Studies and Student Academic Services will work to have at least two Skidmore faculty and/or staff members attend each of the Consortium for High Achievement and Success (CHAS) sponsored conferences during 08-09.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs.

13. Develop program for Arthur Zankel Music Center.

Work with Zankel Music Center Study Group to develop plan for Zankel academic program and coordinate operations.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs.

➤ *Continue to strengthen information resources across the College.*

14. Ensure through institutional planning that the College's technological infrastructure, resources, and services are appropriately aligned with institutional needs.

- Continue to advance the goal of Information Literacy by developing pilot projects in key departments.
- Implement next steps of Internet2.
- With IRC, IT, Library, and others, continue to work on Plan for Digital Assets Management.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs.

- Continue review of administrative computer systems and determine desired strategic platform direction by May 2009.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration, in collaboration with Vice President for Academic Affairs, IPPC, and IRC.

- Continue to develop integrated database to support lifelong connections with alumni.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

➤ *Strengthen the natural sciences to increase the number of science majors and enhance the science literacy of all Skidmore students.*

15. Pursue various initiatives to strengthen the natural sciences.

- Complete Science Plan and identify resources to support it.
- Enhance retention and academic support in the sciences with Student Academic Services.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty.

16. Continue to enhance the visibility of the sciences to prospective students and counselors.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid.

➤ *Increase our effectiveness in helping our graduates plan and prepare for their post-Skidmore lives.*

17. Investigate funding opportunities to dramatically increase available resources for paid internship opportunities for all Skidmore students.

Administrative responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs.

➤ *Strengthen our system of shared governance and our capacity for developing leadership throughout the College.*

18. Continue a community conversation about our goals for shared governance and the effectiveness of our current structures and procedures.

- Cultivate leadership skills and provide leadership development for institutional academic leaders, including department chairs, program directors, and other academic professionals. (VPAA Senior Staff)
- Complete revisions of Part One, Article X of the *Faculty Handbook*. (VPAA)
- With FEC, review function and structure of faculty meetings. (VPAA)

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs/VPAA Senior Staff (as above).

- *Take better advantage of the resources and capacity for innovation in the Office of the Dean of Special Programs (ODSP) to support the relevant initiatives identified under this Goal (and others, as appropriate).*

19. Continue to advance the work of the Office of Special Programs.

- Hire UWW Director.
- Hire MALS Director.
- Complete implementation of Oracle in UWW and MALS.
- Restructure 4th Floor operations.
- Institute the Carr Residency.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Special Programs.

20. Increase financial support for Special Programs.

- Develop advancement prospects to support new and continuing programs in conjunction with articulated plan for Special Programs.
- Institutionalize advancement opportunities for the Office of the Dean of Special Programs.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Special Programs.

***Goal II – Intercultural and Global Understanding
Projects/Action Steps***

- *Increase global awareness across the community in order to sensitize all Skidmore students to a complex, diverse, and interdependent world.*

21. Under the leadership of the Office of Academic Affairs, develop clear educational objectives to enhance intercultural literacy.

- Assess Cultural Diversity/Non-Western culture (CD/NW) course criteria; evaluate current gaps in CD/NW curriculum.
- Develop student learning outcomes and curriculum for intercultural literacy.
- Review Intergroup Relations (IGR) program and follow up for additional training; coordinate diversity component of Dialogues Project.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty.

- *Enhance the diversity of our student populations while providing the resources necessary to support all of our students in meeting our educational objectives.*

22. Increase percentage of students of color in the first-year class to 22-23%.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid.

23. Increase the College's resources for need-based student aid.

Launch \$3-5 million fundraising initiative for Opportunity Program students.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

- 24. Increase the enrollment of international students in the first-year class to 3%, including at least five from the Davis United World College Scholars Program.**

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid.

- 25. Assess the continued work of the Bias Response Team under the new structure of the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding.**

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs.

- 26. Enhance cross-divisional work with the leadership of the Director of Intercultural Studies, the Interim Director of Student Diversity Programs, and the Assistant Director of EEO and Workforce Diversity.**

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty, Dean of Student Affairs, and Vice President for Finance and Administration.

- *Enhance the diversity of our faculty and other employee populations and enhance their skills that relate to achieving this Goal.*

- 27. Continue efforts to recruit, attract, and retain candidates for faculty positions who enhance the diversity of the faculty.**

- Establish accountability and review processes for recruitment of faculty/staff of color in faculty/staff search plans.
- Support for affinity groups (e.g., Black Faculty and Staff Group) through the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding as a means for supporting and retaining faculty of color.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Faculty.

- 28. Sponsor launch of CASE Liberal Arts Diversity Initiative.**

Launch national effort to recruit individuals from groups currently under-represented in the field of advancement in higher education.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

Goal III – Informed, Responsible Citizenship

Projects/Action Steps

- *Foster pedagogical innovation relating to responsible citizenship; support campus initiatives that teach and exemplify this value.*

- 29. Support joint efforts of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs related to responsible citizenship.**

- Foster development of Dialogues Project between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.
- Implement and support work of Responsible Citizenship Task Force.
- Continue development of Learning Communities during FYE.

- Foster development of links to broader community: e.g., Saratoga Hospital professional development and ESL support; Water Resources Initiatives.
Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty and Dean of Student Affairs.

➤ *Enhance residential learning.*

30. Evaluate the first-year programming model for the residential halls.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs.

➤ *Increase support for athletics, fitness, and wellness.*

31. Work toward the implementation of the recommendations from the Health and Wellness Task Force report.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs.

32. Enhance financial support for athletics, fitness, and wellness.

- With the Friends of Skidmore Athletics, raise \$250,000 for athletics operations and \$200,000 for capital projects.
- Develop and launch fundraising efforts for new equestrian and crew facilities.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

➤ *Develop, broaden, and deepen the College's connections to the local community; enhance our ability to function as a socially and environmentally responsible corporate citizen.*

33. Review alumni and college events practices to identify opportunities to integrate more environmentally friendly practices.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

Goal IV – Independence and Resources

Projects/Action Steps

➤ *Continue to develop institutional capacity for effective planning and proactive internal communication.*

34. Continue to improve our institutional capacity to communicate financial information effectively throughout the Skidmore community.

Continue work of prior years to improve communications and provide fall and spring updates to College constituencies.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration.

35. Engage in dialogue with the presidents and senior administrators of Colgate, Hamilton, Hobart and William Smith, St. Lawrence, and Union to explore the possibility of extending the existing four-college consortial arrangement to include two additional schools and develop new forms of cooperation. Work with the Mellon Foundation to secure additional support for this new venture.

Administrative Responsibility: President.

36. Develop plans to celebrate, with the campus and other important constituencies, key accomplishments of the comprehensive campaign and the *Strategic Plan*.

Initiate planning to celebrate, in fall 2010, the successful conclusion of the comprehensive campaign and key achievements of the *Strategic Plan* to-date, including the formal opening of the Zankel Music Center and the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Tang Museum.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

➤ ***Develop and enhance both our key financial resources and our capacity to manage them.***

37. Align academic priorities with budget development.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Finance and Administration.

38. Continue progress under current Optimization plan to reach budgeted enrollment of 2280 Net Fiscal Enrollment (NFE).

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid.

39. Evaluate strategic use of financial aid (i.e., current financial aid packaging policies).

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid.

40. Complete the Sale of Moore Hall.

Execute the Purchase and Sale Agreement for Moore Hall by October 2008.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration.

41. Complete the fifth year of the comprehensive campaign.

- Secure \$20 million in new commitments and reach at least \$185 million in campaign total.
- Initiate 150-175 new solicitations totaling \$25-30 million.
- Raise \$22-25 million in cash.
- Raise \$7.5-10 million in gifts to the endowment.
- Conduct 1,500 individual visits with prospects (12% increase).

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

42. Continue the development of the Annual Fund.

- Raise \$6.7 million.
- Increase participation to 38% (750 new donors).

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

➤ ***Achieve and maintain competitive compensation for Skidmore faculty, staff, and administrators; enhance our ability to support their professional development.***

43. Continue to implement the Total Comprehensive Compensation Framework.

As we continue to move forward with the Total Comprehensive Compensation Framework goal of bringing both salaries and benefits of all Skidmore employees to the median of our peers (or better), give special attention to areas where current salary levels impede our ability to hire our first-choice candidates. Continue to monitor progress toward meeting targets in relation to appropriate external comparison groups. Explore ways to create long-term funding for salary competitiveness through the Comprehensive Campaign.

Administrative Responsibility: President in collaboration with Cabinet.

➤ ***Develop and enhance our capacity to manage our physical resources.***

44. Continue to address facilities planning for academic space.

- Plan for classroom and office space. (DOF/VPFA)
- Coordinate Campus Plan with Academic Plan. (VPAA/VPFA)

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Faculty, Vice President for Finance and Administration (as above).

45. Further develop the Campus Plan – complete the development of a comprehensive facilities planning process.

Continue to develop the Campus Plan first-phase initiatives including defining initial programming plans, analyzing ranges of costs of these plans, and developing initial funding plans for these projects through the Comprehensive Campaign, Special Campaigns, possible debt financing, and the operating budget. Place this work in the context of a comprehensive planning process relating to major capital projects.

Administrative Responsibility: President in collaboration with President's Cabinet, the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee, and others as appropriate.

46. Further develop campus sustainability policies.

Continue to develop campus sustainability policies, plans, and initiatives, and communicate to the community the College's commitment to sustainability.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration and Vice President for Academic Affairs in collaboration with the President's Cabinet, the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee, and others as appropriate.

47. Continue to address deferred maintenance.

Implement next phase of work to address issues of deferred maintenance. Finalize long-range schedule for completing this work.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration.

48. Improve the College's stewardship of the Skidmore North Woods.

Continue to develop and implement the management plan for the Skidmore North Woods balancing the values of preservation and flexibility of use for the College's

immediate and long-term needs. Ensure effective management for appropriate educational and recreational uses by the Skidmore community and local residents. Communicate the results of this work effectively within the Skidmore community and beyond. Continue work of the North Woods Stewards and Friends of the North Woods in education, development of policies, communication, and enforcement of policies for the woods.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration in collaboration with the President's Cabinet, the Campus Environmental Committee, and others as appropriate.

49. Complete program planning for the replacement of the Scribner Village Apartments.

Complete program planning for Scribner Village Replacement, with the goal of adding enough rooms to accommodate all returning juniors and seniors, and some sophomores, in apartments. Review other services that appropriately can be included in the new proposed facility, such as additional common spaces for studying (including group spaces), limited aerobic workout facilities, and related. Explore ways to create long-term funding through a Special Campaign, gifts, special fees, and other sources.

Administrative responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs, in collaboration with Vice President for Finance and Administration and Vice President for Advancement.

50. Continue to address facilities needs in Student Affairs.

- Begin a comprehensive review of the space needs for Health and Wellness.
- Continue efforts to address athletic facilities needs, specifically the boathouse, the stables/riding center, and an indoor tennis facility.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs.

51. Continue work begun by the Case-Ladd Task Force.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs, in collaboration with Dean of the Faculty and Dean of Special Programs.

➤ ***Cultivate a broader positive awareness of Skidmore within local, regional, and national populations.***

52. Create a stronger sense among alumni of being part of a lifelong community.

Launch a new virtual social networking community.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

53. Create a more personalized experience for each alumna/us.

- Clean up alumni database.
- Continue work of integrating existing college databases to better serve students once they graduate.
- Institute segmented approach to fundraising and develop events targeted at specific constituencies.

- Launch regular survey program.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

54. Broaden base of support and leadership within the alumni community.

- Continue to grow Council of 100 (add 5-10 new net members).
- Expand volunteer base by 10%.
- Reinvigorate Student Alumni Council.
- Launch Homecoming and “Zero-Year” Reunion programs.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

➤ *Develop and enhance the “equity” in the Skidmore name.*

55. Continue to strengthen brand and pride in the College.

- Launch “Global Skidmore” and “Skidmore Science” portals.
- Complete Phase II of “Virtual Skidmore.”
- Focus *Scope* in theme-based fashion around key elements of the *Strategic Plan*.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.