

INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
December 3, 2010

PRESENT: Acting President Susan Kress, Chair; Hugh Foley, Vice Chair; Mary Lou Bates, Rochelle Calhoun, Michael Casey, Winston Grady-Willis, Ann Henderson, Mark Huibregtse, Paty Rubio, Bob Turner, Jeff Segrave, Justin Sipher, Michael West, Alexandra Stark, Jonathan Zeidan, Adrienne Zuerner, Gail Cummings-Danson, Denise Smith, and Barbara Krause (Secretary). Guests: Sarah Goodwin and Lisa Christenson.

ABSENT: Muriel Poston and Anne Petruzzelli.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the November 19, 2010 meeting were approved as distributed.

2. Middle States Periodic Review Report

Acting President Susan Kress introduced Sarah Goodwin, Professor of English and Faculty Assessment Coordinator, and Lisa Christenson, Assessment Facilitator. Professor Goodwin and Ms. Christenson led a discussion of the draft Middle States Period Review Report (PRR), which had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

Professor Goodwin first offered an overview of the purpose of this process and of the current draft. She noted that the PRR is intended to be an institutional document that reflects the voice of the community. Individuals drafted the various sections, but as the draft PRR goes through the campus vetting process, it will be revised to reflect consensus or, where appropriate, to note areas where differences of opinion or tension remain. The document has been reviewed already by a number of governance groups, and an open meeting will be held in February to invite the campus at large to respond to the draft report.

The purpose of the PRR is to update Middle States on the College's work described in the 2001 Self-Study Report, to address assessment standards, and to recount remaining opportunities and challenges. Professor Goodwin explained that the PRR is not an accreditation moment, but rather a report at the midway point of our current accreditation at which Skidmore can report on progress made and, perhaps most importantly, to demonstrate our progress toward evidence-based decision-making. She noted that the narrative section currently being vetted is one of several sections to the report. The remaining sections consist of more standard prose and data that will be inserted, but at this point she is seeking feedback on the narrative section. Comments and questions from IPPC members included the following:

Engagement in Intercultural and Global Understanding

- Student members of IPPC generally support the current language.

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Student Engagement and the First-Year Experience

- The student members indicated that students generally view the FYE program in a positive way. One asked, however, if it is a concern that NSSE data indicate only one-third of the first-

4. Budget Planning Overview

Vice President for Finance and Administration Mike West reported that IPPC's Budget and Finance Subcommittee has been reviewing data in preparation for the FY 2012 budget conversations that are about to begin. During December and January, Cabinet, the Subcommittee, and IPPC will work on the major budget parameters, which include enrollment, the comprehensive fee, financial aid, annual giving, the endowment, compensation, services and supplies, transfers to the capital budget, and new initiatives. The Board of Trustees will approve the major budget parameters in February and the budget itself in May.

Mr. West reminded IPPC members that to ensure that annual budget planning is not done in a vacuum, his office develops five-year budget models. He emphasized that the budget parameters used in those models have not been set and almost certainly will change. However, the figures do foreshadow current thinking about our future budget planning.

Vice President West noted a couple of external factors that may influence our work. The Consumer Price Index for the year is up 1.2%. One of our peers announced last spring that it would cap future comprehensive fee increases to the rate of inflation (CPI) plus 1%. If that College follows through on that policy, it would have a low comprehensive fee increase that could put pressure on Skidmore and other peers.

Pressure points that are likely to effect the FY12 budget planning include affordability and access (financial aid), compensation, our current over-enrollment situation, and the impact of position reductions over the past two years (with the related lack of clarity about what work will go away). The Admissions Office has targeted a smaller entering class for the fall 2011.

Mr. West then distributed several handouts to provide general context for the upcoming budget discussions. These included:

- 50 Most Expensive Colleges and Universities in America for 2011-12 (Skidmore ranked 48, but there is great compression).
- Tuition, Fees, Room and Board for Peer Comparison Group FY11, including % increase from previous year (Skidmore ranked 8 of 15; 1.9% increase was the lowest and only school under 2%; one school had a 2.1% increase and another 2.2% - all others were 3.4% or more).
- Various very preliminary models for comprehensive fee.
- Key Numeric Indicators for the comprehensive fee, fee increase by %, financial aid discount rate, and % of students on aid.

Vice President West noted that all of these materials will be discussed in more detail in the coming months.

5. Gender-Neutral Bathrooms

Dean of Student Affairs Rochelle Calhoun reviewed a proposal regarding Gender Neutral Bathrooms, which was distributed with the meeting materials. The proposal was generated by

