

**INSTITUTIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

There will be an external provider for adjudication and a cross-examining advisor, a flexible panel for faculty and students, a single adjudicator for Human Resources, an alternative resolution process for students, the continuation of the informal resolution processes for Anti-Harassment policies for faculty and staff, and differing points for appeals. Dean of Students, Dean of Faculty, and VP of Finance and Administration. These provisions can still be revised through the existing governance and policymaking structures throughout the academic year. Coordinator Aure reported that we now have a clear, constituency-focused 44-page policy document versus a 100+-page policy document. He informed IPPC that training and continued outreach are planned for the fall.

Interim Human Resources Director Sarah Delaney Vero added that the Anti-Harassment policies are being reviewed to ensure that we are compliant with all legal requirements. Online trainings for students and employees will be rolled out in early October and will be managed by Human Resources. The applicable handbooks will be updated as well. IPPC will be asked to review the policies prior to the roll out to the campus community. Director Vero also noted the Protection of Minors policy and accompanying training.

VP Woodfork commented that all of these policies fall under the larger diversity umbrella and call for proactive work to reduce incidents. President Conner thanked Title IX Coordinator Aure and Interim HR Director Vero for their collaborative efforts.

#### **4. Fall Reopening Plan Update**

President Conner presented information regarding the fall reopening plan. The reopening plan is now finalized to meet or exceed all New York State requirements. The plan contains many interdependent pieces that rely on an all-in commitment from our community to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and a quick and simple weekly testing process for students and on-campus employees. Alongside testing, we will be tracking a number of key NYS, local, and campus metrics to closely monitor and mitigate the risk of COVID-19 at the College. We will be sharing some of these key figures, including the number of tests conducted and the number of positive student and employee cases on campus, in a new [COVID-19 dashboard](#) that will be updated with daily and weekly statistics. Skidmore has established five alert levels related to the manageability of COVID-19 cases and campus operations.

At this point in time, approximately 50% of classes will have an in-person component, 1827 students will be residing on campus either in residential spaces or hotels, and 696 students will be off-campus either residing local or remotely for a total of 2,523 taking a full course load at Skidmore. President Conner emphasized that it is important that we have trust in the process and not in the rumor mill and social media. Furthermore

An IPPC member inquired about restroom occupancy levels. Director Vero responded that they aware that there is some confusion regarding occupancy rates. HR is working with facilities to supply specific signage to alleviate any confusion.

There was discussion around the vagueness of the verbiage for the five established alert levels. President Conner replied that case level totality is fluid, and that working with set numbers does not allow for an evolving and rapidly changing intersection of decision points. Dean Banks added that advice received from the health consultants was to exclude percentages in the alert levels. IPPC members were impressed with the newly created COVID-19 dashboard and the level of transparency conveyed. They thanked President Conner and administrators for the completing the work to reopen the College, and the care and concern shown for well-being.

The President noted the media coverage of some higher ed institutions struggling to manage COVID-19 cases. We are fortunate to have a small residential campus setting in upstate New York where case counts have been very low. We have some similarities with our peer institutions and their reopening plans, but the difference is in our testing, where we are utilizing the Broad Institute and their testing protocols, which include more frequency with enhanced turnaround times. President Conner added that he has been amazed with all the work that has been accomplished and is grateful for all the support. He thanked Interim Director Vero and the HR team for their part in drafting the Reopening Safety Action plan.

Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer Donna Ng presented a Financial Projection update. At this point, based on an enrollment assumption of 1,786 students in on-campus housing, a regular tuition enrollment of 2,543 students, and above the line expenses of \$2.7M, the revenue impact is a loss of just under \$4M. The options planned to address this negative budget shortfall are the use of approximately \$1M from a \$3.5M contingency fund, \$1M from a surplus in the supplies and services budgets due to the curtailing of event and travel expenses, \$400,000 from accrued time due to the shortening of the semester, \$200,000 from restricted funds, \$300,000 from the continuation of the hiring freeze, and \$800,000 from a surplus in the summer budget adjustments. Options considered, but not currently planned, include adjustments to the retirement contribution, healthcare cost-share changes, salary cuts, furloughs, and layoff/inventive programs.

VP Woodfork reminded IPPC that these are financial projections and that the next few weeks are critical so that an accurate revenue stream be calculated.

An IPPC member inquired about the savings from accrued time. VP Ng replied that the administration is currently in discussion with union representatives regarding employees taking their banked time in December due to the shortening of the semester. It was also asked if we are hearing from families regarding tuition discounts. President Conner replied that we are working on drafting a set of talking points to respond to parents. The current decision to not reduce tuition costs is in line with our peer institutions. The expense of quarantining, testing to ensure the health and safety of the campus, and the new technologies employed to ensure that we deliver the best remote learning experience possible have been unforeseen expenses that Skidmore has had to incur.

An IPPC member followed up on the summer adjustments savings that included savings from furloughs. Specifically, it was asked if there had been a response to the Academic Affairs Administrative Assistant letter that was written by a group of furloughed employees to the administration. President Conner replied that a response is being drafted, and that although it has been already stated and verified that furloughed employees were made whole or better than whole, he understands the employee morale impact that the furlough caused.

### 5. Student Employment Working Group Update

Vice President and Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Mary Lou Bates and Director of Financial Aid Beth Post presented an update from the Student Employment Working Group. In the fall 2019, a number of students expressed concerns about the student wage paid through the student employment program. Following two open forums, where students asked the College to pay New York state minimum wage, a working group was formed to evaluate the program.

Last semester, the working group reviewed various aspects of student employment with a view to address minimum wage and earning cap. In addition, the group also recommended an annual earning cap of \$2,400 per student, which is consistent with the amount awarded as the work-study component of financial aid awards.

VP Bates and Director Post brought forth a revised proposal that has been recently reviewed and supported by the Board of Trustees. The original proposal has been amended due to COVID-19. The revised proposal includes raising of the minimum wage for campus jobs to \$11.80 per hour and delaying earning cap until academic year 2021-2022. This shifted timeline will give student workers and supervisors a year to plan for the earnings cap change. The reasoning for the delay related to the pandemic was reviewed.

IPPC Vice Chair Joerg Bibow questioned the impact on departments (and other areas of the College) with fewer students working. VP Bates replied that it is hard to predict what is going to happen this year. Director Post added that in any given year we normally have more jobs available than students working. If the cap is put in place, we may have to face decreasing service levels and different service hours. It was then noted by an IPPC member that we need to keep in mind our five-year plan to reduce faculty and staff numbers and the impact this will have in addition to students working less hours and/or less jobs. Student Government Association (SGA) Rachel Dwyer commented that the College needs to think about assisting student supervisors in the coming year with job structure and hours in regards to earning cap implications. With the broader questions related to work and coverage, IPPC agreed that the wage cap needs to be readdressed at a future IPPC meeting.

A motion was made to increase the student wage to the NYS minimum of \$11.80 per hour for the academic year 2020-2021. **IPPC unanimously approved the motion to approve the student wage to \$11.80 for the academic year 2020-2021.**

The wage cap item will return to the committee.

**6. (Employee) Community Meeting**

President Conner reminded IPPC that in the last