SKIDMORE COLLEGE

Strategic Action Agenda: 2005-06

This document identifies key actions to be undertaken across the College during the 2005-06 academic year to advance the strategic objectives articulated in the *Engaged Liberal Learning: The Plan for Skidmore College 2005-2015*.[1] Some of these steps were identified last year in discussions with the Institutional Planning Committee (IPC[2]), the Board of Trustees, or other members of the Skidmore community; others originated in the course of the FY '06 budget process. They have been grouped un

Goal I – Student Engagement and Academic Achievement

We will challenge every Skidmore student to achieve academic excellence

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty in collaboration with the Vice

<u>Administrative Responsibility</u>:   Dean of Faculty in collaboration with Dean of Special Programs and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

16. Increase financial support for academic programs.
Raise $2-3M of $10M Campaign goal for support of academic programs.

<u>Administrative Responsibility</u>:   Vice President for Advancement.

Ø   *Strengthen information resources across the College.*

17. Ensure through institutional planning that the College's technological infrastructure, resources, and services are appropriately aligned with institutional needs and expectations.
Add Chief Technology Officer to Institutional Planning and Policy Committee (IPPC).

<u>Administrative Responsibility</u>:   President in collaboration with IPPC and FEC.

18. Solidify working relationship between Academic Affairs and the Office of IT.
The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty to establish regular working relationship with the Office of IT in regard to support of curriculum via regular meetings among the Chief Technology Officer, Vice President for Finance and Administration, and VPAA. The VPAA will add the Chief Technology Officer to bi-weekly VPAA's Senior Staff meeting.

<u>Administrative Responsibility</u>:   Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Finance and Administration in collaboration with the Chief Technology Officer.

19. Enhance the College web site.
Enhance the College website by implementing CMS.

<u>Administrative Responsibility</u>:   Vice President for Finance and Administration in collaboration with the Chief Technology Officer and Vice President for Advancement.

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

20. Increase the size of the science faculty.
Determine the order of additions to the science faculty, complete first round of searches for identified interdisciplinary positions, and ensure that appropriate start-up funds and laboratory space are available for new hires.

<u>Administrative Responsibility</u>:   Dean of Faculty in collaboration with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

21. Increase the number and enhance the effectiveness of endowed chairs in science.

The Dean of the Faculty will monitor the existing endowed and term chairs in science and work with Advancement in developing new endowed chairs to ensure that the vision and purpose for each chair are clearly articulated and realized.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty in collaboration with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

22. **Increase public awareness of science and its implications, on campus and in the surrounding community.**
Launch an annual series of programs on the natural sciences – including lectures, presentations, and discussions – led by nationally distinguished leaders in the sciences, and devoted to compelling issues of public policy and societal values as they are influenced by scientific discovery and technological innovation. Use some of the resources of the Lubin Chair to foster public discussion of women in science and encourage more women to study in the natural sciences at Skidmore. Increase the quantity of FYS science-oriented courses.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty and Dean of Special Programs in collaboration with Vice President for Academic Affairs.

23. **Over the next five to ten years, enhance the admissions pool and improve yield for science students to make significant progress towards our goal of increasing the number of science majors from its current level of 12% to 25% of our student body.**

In the 05-06 academic year complete the following initiatives:

(Study the relationship of admissions data with ultimate choice of major, focusing especially on science and mathematics majors.

(Identify feeder schools more likely to send us mathematics and science majors; pay special attention to schools in foreign countries or with significant populations of new immigrants. Develop on-campus programming for such schools and for others likely to become science/mathematics feeder schools.

(Work with the Dean of the Faculty to make the most efficient use of faculty time in recruitment; engage alumni – and especially recent grads – in science to participate in this effort as well.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid in collaboration with the Dean of the Faculty.

24. **Increase financial support for sciences.**
Raise $3-5M of $15M Campaign goal for the science initiative.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

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

25. **Enfold consideration of students' post-Skidmore lives into mentoring from the First Year forward.**
    Support the faculty in the transition from advising to mentoring students, beginning with the Scribner Seminar instructors in the First-Year Experience. Provide opportunities for the faculty to mentor students in the Seminars' flexible fourth credit hour, with support from academic departments and programs. Create an environment in which students develop mentoring relationships with multiple faculty members over the course of four years.

    Administrative Responsibility: Dean of the Faculty and the Dean of Studies.

    Increase opportunities for mentoring of students by alumni, parents, trustees, et al. Seek ways to involve broader constituencies in mentoring of students – especially as regards choice of career and plans for post-graduate education (e.g., perhaps make this topic a focus of a Board meeting). Develop closer working relationship between Office of Academic Affairs and Advancement to take full advantage of opportunities in the extended Skidmore community.

    Explore new ways to bring representatives from academic departments and programs together with Career Services and Alumni Affairs to pursue efforts already underway with such initiatives as the Mellon grant and other initiatives as appropriate.

    Increase the early awareness (i.e., awareness in the Sophomore and Junior years) of Skidmore students regarding post-graduate opportunities such as graduate or professional school, as well as fellowship opportunities available to help support such continued study.

    Administrative responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs and Dean of the Faculty in collaboration with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

∅ *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).*

26. **Build new administrative structures to enhance coordination between the Office of the Dean of Special Programs and the Office of the Dean of the Faculty.**
    Through regular meetings with the Dean of the Faculty and Dean of Special

(Develop a comprehensive plan to sustain and strengthen existing programs, initiate new programs, and advance program development across disciplines and interest areas by refining the goals and objectives of Special Programs as a whole.

(Undertake systematic efforts to strengthen ties between Special Programs and the rest of the College Community, and between the College and the broader civic community with which it interacts. Sustain the momentum for the Visiting Artist-Scholar and Greenberg Residencies.

(Work with the interim Director of the Masters of Arts in Liberal Studies

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.

Projects/Action Steps

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

> 30. **Develop and implement a plan for regular and thorough evaluation of Skidmore Programs and Skidmore-Approved Programs for study abroad; develop advising tools and communication capacities as required to support the new study-abroad structure.**
> Work with the Advisory Committee on International Study (ACIS) to develop guidelines and a schedule for regular site visits to overseas programs. Develop meaningful ways to disseminate information regarding Approved Programs and home school fees to ensure that faculty and staff are able to work effectively with students who are interested in study abroad. Continue to work with faculty to address department-specific and program-specific needs regarding curriculum integration with overseas programs. Achieve greater balance in enrollments over the semesters.
>
> Administrative responsibility: Dean of the Faculty, Director of International Programs, and the Dean of Special Programs.

> 31. **Solidify the Skidmore in China Program's structure and support.**
> Develop and implement a program structure and plan to ensure the long-term feasibility of Skidmore's program in China (currently with Beijing University) once the Freeman grant expires (fall 2007). Explore different program models and sites, as appropriate, to ensure that the final program meets Skidmore's needs while remaining financially viable.
>
> Administrative responsibility: Dean of the Faculty and the Director of International Programs.

∅ *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.*

> 32. **Constitute an Intercultural and Global Understanding Task Force**
> Form a broadly representative advisory and leadership group co-chaired by the President and a member of the Skidmore faculty. This group will advance a College-wide effort to accomplish the objectives within this strategic Goal by advising the President, initiating broad-based conversations, and identifying actions in support of specific Initiatives. The task force will have the capacity to support such efforts through resources provided by the President from Presidential Discretionary Funds.
>
> Administrative responsibility: President.

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

33. Build upon the progress of the previous year (04-05) toward increasing the percentage of students of color within the Skidmore population.
Increase the annual HEOP/AOP entering class from the previous norm of 25 students and the '04-05 total of 34 new students to 40 new students for Fall 2005 and maintain

feasible, explore interdisciplinary position descriptions to expand candidate pools; signal special interest in candidates experienced in and committed to working with students from underserved populations. Ensure that chairs, directors, and colleagues are working in advance to establish and solidify professional networks to help attract broadly diverse applicant pools. Ensure that offers of compensation are competitive. In selected instances and for compelling reasons relating to the needs of the department or program and the College, enable a department or program to make an additional diversity-enhancing hire from within a strong hiring pool. It remains the responsibility of the DOF to determine, in collaboration with the appropriate faculty chair, whether any given hiring pool is sufficiently strong (considering all relevant factors) to advance the search at any given stage (e.g., from compiling applications to inviting candidates to campus or from campus interviews to making an offer).

Administrative responsibility: Dean of the Faculty in collaboration with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

37. **Continue efforts to recruit, attract, and retain candidates for administrative positions who enhance the diversity of the campus community.**
    The Assistant Director for Equal Employment Opportunity and Workforce Diversity will work with senior administrators and directors to ensure that ads for positions are written so as to attract the broadest possible applicant pool. Senior administrators will be responsible for ensuring that heads of hiring units work in advance to establish and solidify professional networks to help attract broadly diverse applicant pools. Ensure that offers of compensation are competitive. Empower the Cabinet officer responsible for a hiring unit to close a search that has not developed an appropriately diverse applicant pool.

    Administrative responsibility: President in collaboration with members of the President's Cabinet and hiring units.

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.

Projects/Action Steps

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

38. **Encourage pedagogical innovation relating to responsible citizenship.**
    Create opportunities for faculty members to develop new ways to interrogate the concept of responsible citizenship within courses and enhance curricula in ways that encourage our students to engage this value actively (e.g., the SENCER project in the sciences). In a parallel effort, develop creative ways for faculty members to fulfill their service responsibilities by working with students and student groups in co-curricular settings to foster responsible citizenship – both on and off campus.

    Administrative responsibility: Dean of the Faculty in collaboration with the Dean of Student Affairs.

39. **Expand opportunities for service learning and student volunteer work.**
   Continue the Mellon Service-Learning Initiative. Expand and strengthen support from Student Affairs for student internships and volunteer opportunities.

   Administrative responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs in collaboration with the Dean of the Faculty.

40. **Ensure the alignment of institutional expectations of faculty with the system of faculty review and reward.**
   Work with CAPT to review (and, as necessary, modify) Handbook criteria and standards for faculty contract renewal, promotion, and tenure to ensure that they accurately reflect institutional expectations for teaching, research, and service.

   Administrative responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Ø *Enhance the campus residential environment, with special attention to common spaces.*

44. **Ensure that the revised Campus Master Plan and related space planning enhance student community and the values of the *Mission Statement.***
As we complete the revision of the Campus Master Plan, ensure that planning continues to develop additional common spaces where students can gather for study (especially group work and late-night study) and the informal interaction that is foundational to campus community. [See also #66, below.]

    <u>Administrative responsibility</u>:   Dean of Student Affairs and the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

45. **Complete the new student residential complex.**
Complete the new student residential complex for juniors and seniors on time (by Fall '06) and on budget. Assign an appropriate name to the complex.

    <u>Administrative responsibility</u>:   Vice President for Finance and Administration.

46. **Complete the sale of Moore Hall.**
Identify a suitable buyer for Moore Hall and complete that transaction.

    <u>Administrative responsibility</u>:   Vice President for Finance and Administration.

47. **Modernize the primary campus dining facility.**
Complete and implement planning for a complete renovation of the campus' primary dining facilities. As part of this project, develop a new flexible space that can be used for dinners, small conferences, etc.

    <u>Administrative responsibility</u>:   Vice President for Finance and Administration in collaboration with the Dean of Student Affairs.

48. **Update dining plan.**
Develop a more flexible dining plan, including a "fourth meal," so that the dining experience more effectively meets the nutritional needs of students, supports the creation of community on campus, and proves attractive to residents of the new student apartment complex.

    <u>Administrative responsibility</u>:   Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Dean of Student Affairs.

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

49. **Mentor new Athletic Director.**
Ensure smooth transition of new Athletic Director into Skidmore community and enable her to establish herself effectively in her new role.

    <u>Administrative Responsibility</u>:   Dean of Student Affairs.

50. **Implement NCAA Women and Minority Leadership grant.**
Support new Athletic Director in launching search, completing hire, and mentoring of
new athletic administrator to be supported by this grant.

Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Student Affairs.

51. **Increase support for intercollegiate athletics, intramurals, health, and wellness
programs.**
Provide additional support for both operating and capital investments in athletics,
health, and wellness programs.

($200 - 250K from the Friends of Skidmore Athletics (FOSA);
($200 - 500K for capital projects.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

52. **Review and, as necessary, develop and extend planning and policy documents
pertaining to the Athletic Department.**
Review and evaluate existing athletics planning documents (e.g., the Athletic Review
Committee (ARC) Report) and policy statements in light of the *Strategic Plan*,
NCAA standards, and expertise in the Athletic Department and the broader Skidmore
community. This review will delineate clearly the College's philosophy, policies,
and priorities (and the financial implications relating thereto) with respect not only to
intercollegiate athletics but also to club and intramural sports and recreational and
fitness activities.

Administrative Responsibility: Director of Athletics in collaboration with the Dean
of Student Affairs.

53. **Ensure that the quality of food served in our dining halls is consistent with our
overall goals for student health and wellness.**
In conjunction with plans to renovate dining facilities and revise dining plan,
emphasize freshness of produce and foodstuffs. Where possible seek local producers
and sources of organic produce, etc. Involves students actively into this process.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration.

Ø *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.*

54. **Consider the establishment of a retirement community on College land.**
Review the report prepared by the former CFO. Working with the Board of Trustees,
determine the next step in the decision process with regard to this possible project.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration.

55. **Enhance the College's capacity to function effectively, as a corporate citizen and
a good neighbor, within our local community.**
Develop ways to engage with the local community more deliberately and effectively
– to share the benefits represented by the College and to gain the benefit of good

60. **Develop an action plan for implementing the systematic evaluation of operations within administrative offices across the College.**

     Administrative Responsibility: President in collaboration with President's Cabinet.

61. **Continue to improve strategic communications across the College.**
     Integrate planning for strategic communication in highest level of administrative decision-making. Review and revise, as needed, the comprehensive campus communications program. First area of focus: enhancing the effectiveness of communications with prospective and incoming students.

     Administrative Responsibility: President in collaboration with the Vice President for Advancement.

62. **Improve our institutional capacity to communicate financial information effectively throughout the Skidmore community.**
     Continue active collaboration with appropriate governance committees and provision of periodic updates to College constituencies. As part of this effort, identify and track key strategic indicators correlated most directly with the objectives identified in the Strategic Plan. Develop a format for presenting these indicators concisely and effectively to College constituencies highlighting changes and trends over time.

     Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration in collaboration with the President.

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

63. **Continue the development of Annual Fund,**
     Reach $5.5 million annual fund goal. Specific actions include the following:

     (Expand the middle tier ($2,000-$9,999) of donor base in Friends of the Presidents (FOP) program.

     (Enhance the success of reunion fundraising, particularly in Milestone reunions.

     (Increase participation of alumni in annual giving to 42-43%.

     (Increase attendance at Reunions (by 15%) and at regional alumni events.

     (Raise the profile of Skidmore Classic Horse Show; meet increased revenue target.

     Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

64. **Complete the second phase of the Comprehensive Campaign.**
     Finalize plans for the Comprehensive Campaign (including creation of Campaign Executive Committee), complete solicitation plan, attain goal for FY '06: $100M in commitments and gifts by 1 June 2006.

Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

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

65. **Implement the next phase of Comprehensive Compensation Framework.**
    As we move forward with the Comprehensive Compensation Framework – which applies to all Skidmore employees – give special attention to areas where current salary levels impede our ability to hire our first-choice candidates and continue to monitor progress toward meeting targets in relation to appropriate external comparison groups.

    Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration.

    Improve Skidmore's competitive position in faculty hiring vis-à-vis our Comparison Group of institutions:
    Implement first phase of compensation enhancement plan to address issues of competitiveness at the faculty rank of Assistant Professor. If possible, make provisions in the FY '07 budget to begin addressing issues of competitiveness and equity in faculty salaries in other ranks.

    Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Finance and Administration in collaboration with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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

66. **Update Campus Master Plan.**
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collaboration with President's Cabinet.

Ø *Develop and enhance relationships essential to the Skidmore community.*

69. **Cultivate and strengthen relationships across the College and between the College and the Saratoga Springs community.**
    Develop a multi-year action plan to enhance key relationships across the College and with important external constituencies through improved communication and collaboration. Implement the first phase of the plan, focused on strengthening the relationship between the College and the local community. Document one important aspect of Skidmore's contribution to the region through an economic impact study.

    Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement in collaboration with the President and the President's Cabinet.

70. **Improve communications with alumni – create a virtual alumni community.**
    Launch On-Line Alumni Community through College web site.

    Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement.

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

71. **Continue to develop ways to enhance broader awareness of the College – both within and beyond the American higher education community.**

    Administrative Responsibility: President.

72. **Improve our spring yield in the Admissions process.**
    Enhance our communication of information regarding student engagement in academic work and collaboration with faculty members at Skidmore to prospective students (especially admitted students) in the Admissions process.

    Administrative Responsibility: Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid.

73. **Increase the visibility of the Skidmore name, identity, and images on campus.**
    Re-launch comprehensive effort to improve the consistency of the visual symbolism on campus that relates to Skidmore's identity. This multi-year effort includes a number of specific components relating to the campus physical plant (e.g., signage), athletics, the Skidmore Shop, Admissions, and publications.

    Administrative Responsibility: Vice President for Advancement in collaboration with the Cabinet.

74. **Build on the 5th Anniversary of the Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery to increase awareness of its distinctive mission as a teaching museum.**
    Develop publicity for the Tang's 5th Anniversary Celebration. Use this opportunity to broaden and deepen the understanding of the Tang's distinctive mission within the Skidmore community and among external communities. Strengthen the regional and national reputation of the Tang and, by extension, the reputation of the College.

<u>Administrative Responsibility</u>: Vice President for Advancement in collaboration with Director of the Tang and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.