



Diversity in Hiring: Strategic Considerations*

Engaged Liberal Learning: The Plan for Skidmore College 2005-2015 sets forth the College's strategic direction and goals for the coming decade within the broader context of our educational mission. Goal II of *The Plan* states that 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." If we are to achieve this objective, we must, in the words of Gandhi, "be the change we wish to see in the world." That is, we must first develop within and across our community the knowledge and skills that we seek to impart to our students. As one necessary means to achieving this end, we must recreate Skidmore itself as a more diverse, globally conscious academic community – one that is ever more capable of supporting this crucial educational goal. Indeed, the College we envision is one that truly lives up to the commitment in our "Mission Statement" to educate "a diverse population of talented students who are eager to engage actively in the learning process."

Liberal education itself requires the interplay of the broadest possible spectrum of ideas, viewpoints, and perspectives. We enhance the intellectual and cultural vitality of our community when persons of many different backgrounds and viewpoints draw upon distinct personal histories and engage in honest dialog. Diversity, likewise, links directly with creativity: interactions between disparate perspectives frequently strike the intellectual sparks that herald the emergence of a new idea. Attention to difference in background, cultural perspective, life experience, and worldview is thus an essential element within the larger framework of Skidmore's most fundamental and longstanding institutional commitments.

In light of these values, each new search and admissions cycle marks a moment of opportunity and possible transformation for the campus community. So as we look to each pool of potential students, faculty members, or other employees, we must reaffirm our commitment to increasing representation from specific targeted populations, especially persons of color, those who bring international perspectives, and other members of under-represented groups. We have begun this work and to-date have achieved a measure of success, but we are not yet where we need to be. Accordingly, we must raise our expectations to increase not just our efforts but our achievements, aggressively employing both our creativity and the best practices we can identify, whether from inside or outside our boundaries.

As a matter of policy, Skidmore College will work actively to increase the diversity of our community. We will address imbalances in both student and employee populations and meet our diversity-related objectives by recruiting the best candidates from as broad a pool as possible. And, as always, we will continue to be guided by our fundamental educational values – leading our students to develop robust cognitive abilities, enhanced critical and intercultural skills, and an appreciation of their individual and social responsibilities as citizens of the United States and the world. Meeting these objectives is crucial to our achieving new levels of excellence as one of the nation's premier liberal arts colleges.

* Endorsed by the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee on February 16, 2007.