

November 2023
Faculty Meeting
Dean of Faculty Report

Dear Colleagues,

“Community is a place where the connections felt in our hearts make themselves known in the bonds between people, and where the tuggings and pullings of those bonds keep opening our hearts.”

– Parker J. Palmer

At the start of this report, I would like to acknowledge, first and foremost, the pain and grief members of our community are experiencing. The last two weeks have been particularly heavy as we grapple with the loss of human life as a result of the war in Israel and Gaza and the tragic events in Lewiston, Maine. Even if these events do not directly impact us, many in our community carry the pain of frustration and suffering. I know many of you, as teachers, mentors, and advisors, are sharing this emotional burden. I would also like to acknowledge the labor of faculty and staff and the tremendous empathy you have demonstrated to our students as they navigate these challenging times. Thank you for helping them grapple and sit with the questions that have no satisfactory answers.

Our colleagues in Student Affairs have been steadfast in their support of our students, and I have been in touch with several members of the faculty about creating some type of academic forum to contribute to our students' understanding of the current conflict in Israel and Palestine and the hope for peace. I have also been in conversation with FEC and CLTL about gathering input from the faculty about what is most needed to support teaching at this moment. Although I do not know yet the exact format any of these activities will take, whether they be pop-ups, panels, workshops, etc., I do know that they will be done with a great deal of care and intention under the leadership of our faculty. They will be responsive to the intellectual curiosity and the holistic education of our students, and I look forward to working in partnership with our faculty colleagues.

As I write this, I have concluded a lively day of meetings with the New York Six Provosts/Deans. We discussed several topics, including improving our institutional cooperation, creating leadership pipelines for faculty, supporting associate professors through mid-career malaise, addressing faculty and staff morale, and communicating the importance of service for the vitality of our colleges. However, much of our day-long conversation centered on supporting our faculty, staff, and students through this current inflection point. I was reminded of the importance of the groundwork on our campuses to bolster inclusive pedagogy, civil discourse, and dialogues across differences in our academic spaces. This critical and foundational work helps to foster learning communities where our students can thrive and express themselves. Still, it also provides opportunities for our students to deepen the role of empathy in their learning, as well as appreciate the power and responsibility of that expression in relation to others.

I regret that I cannot be present at the November faculty meeting. After the New York Six Provosts/Deans meeting, we will travel to Colby College to join our colleagues at the annual Northeast Deans meeting on Thursday and Friday. Topics include AI, post-pandemic grading, faculty workload equity assessments, and public-facing scholarship. I will present some remarks on a panel on faculty and staff relations. I look forward to sharing some of the information I have learned from my counterparts at other small, private liberal arts colleges when I return to campus.

UPDATES

Dean of Faculty Office Hours

I invite members of the Skidmore community to meet with me during my office hours for this semester. Individuals will be accommodated in order of arrival.

- November 13, 3-4 pm; DoF Conference Room, Palamountain 4th floor
- December 13, 3-4 pm; DoF Conference Room, Palamountain 4th floor

SEIU Negotiations

The negotiating teams continue our discussion of non-economic items, and the next confirmed meetings of the negotiating teams will be held in mid-November and mid-December.

I would like to thank the Chairs and Program Directors for sharing their insight about renewable and terminal non-tenure-track positions during our breakfast conversations last week.

The Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) and the Office of the Dean of the Faculty will host two faculty forums for tenure-line faculty regarding the non-tenure track collective bargaining process. There will be two forums to accommodate faculty with different availability. The forums will take place on **Tuesday, November 7**, and **Wednesday, November 8, 4-5 p.m., in Gannett Auditorium**. Please check your email for the link to send questions.

Moseley Lecture

This is a friendly reminder that the deadline for nominations for the Edwin M. Moseley Faculty Lectureship is **Friday, November 3, 2023**.

Established in 1957, this annual award recognizes a Skidmore faculty member for their outstanding scholarly achievement, artistic accomplishment, academic research, and/or creative work. The recipient of the award gives the Moseley Lecture, one of the college's major public events of the year. While deemed a "lecture," the presentation has no prescribed format: it might center, for example, around a reading, performance, or exhibition. The award acknowledges an exemplary level of scholarship and achievement that sets a standard for academic excellence at Skidmore. It is the highest honor that the Skidmore faculty can bestow on one of its own.

You can find the online nomination form at the following link:

<https://www.skidmore.edu/fdc/awards/moseley/moseley-lecture.php>

NACCC Survey

Thank you to all who have completed the National Assessment of Collegiate Campus Climates (NACCC) Survey. If you have not already completed the survey, I encourage you to do so. The College is committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable campus environment where every community member feels heard and valued. The NACCC survey will help get us closer to this goal with your input and perspective. The survey takes approximately 20 minutes of your time. Your responses will remain confidential, and the data collected will be used to inform institutional policies, practices, and initiatives designed to enhance our campus community. The survey closes on Tuesday, November 7, and we would like a high participation rate.

Classroom Space

The team from Facilities has worked diligently to clean carpets in the classrooms and has identified some rooms that require replacements. This work is being scheduled, and depending on the supply chain and room availability, this work may occur as soon as winter break. I am thrilled to report that Dan Rodecker is developing a team that includes Purchasing, Facilities, and Academic Affairs to review furniture and order replacements as needed. We continue to progress in maintaining our instructional spaces and look forward to receiving any questions you may have.