

# **CREATING PATHWAYS TO EXCELLENCE: THE PLAN FOR SKIDMORE COLLEGE 2015-2025**

**OUR CHALLENGE – AND OUR OPPORTUNITY – IS TO CREATE AND EMBRACE A VISION OF SKIDMORE COLLEGE 2025 THAT IS AT ONCE DISTINCTIVE, COMPETITIVE, GROUNDED IN SKIDMORE’S PARTICULAR EXPRESSION OF THE VALUES OF LIBERAL EDUCATION, AND ACHIEVABLE.**

*We begin by reaffirming our commitment to the fundamental principles of liberal education as realized in a residential liberal arts college,<sup>1</sup> while acknowledging the need to refine and refresh Skidmore’s distinctive expression of those values in ways that best meet the needs of our students in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.*

## **Creating Pathways to Excellence – V. 14.5**

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***To succeed in realizing this commitment to creativity requires the College to be a special kind of supportive community – one in which the broadest possible range of ideas is explored and critically interrogated, comprising persons who bring the broadest possible range of personal experiences to their interactions. In short, a commitment to creative thought also requires a genuine commitment to diversity and inclusion – to inclusive excellence***

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- I. Integrative Learning and Education – To Develop Students’ Capacities to Create, Imagine, and Change the World, and to enhance the work of the faculty as teacher-scholars:**
  
- II. Access – To Assure Access for All Our Students to an Extraordinary Educational Experience:**
  
- III. Well-Being – To Strengthen the Inclusiveness, Health, and Well-being of Our Community:**
  
- IV. Sustainability – To Continue to Build a Sustainable Foundation for Excellence:**

**Creating Pathways to Excellence – V. 14.5**

**GOAL I: INTEGRATIVE LEARNING AND EDUCATION – To DEVELOP STUDENTS' CAPACITIES TO CREATE, IMAGINE, AND CHANGE THE WORLD, AND TO ENHANCE THE WORK OF THE FACULTY AS TEACHER-SCHOLARS:**



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***PRIORITY INITIATIVES in support of GOAL II: Access***



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***Strengthening the Extended Skidmore Community and Enhancing our Public Identity***



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### **APPENDIX I**

#### **Skidmore College Goals for Student Learning and Development**

The goals that follow reflect the unique characteristics and synergies of our B.A. and B.S. programs, as well as certain emphases that are deeply engrained in Skidmore's history and culture: on creativity, on civic responsibility, and on interdisciplinary thinking. As in the past, we aim to graduate students who can think deeply and creatively, communicate well and act effectively. We continue to ask our students to link theoretical and practical learning, and now also to develop intercultural understanding and an appreciation of their roles as global citizens. These goals have much in common with those of all liberal arts colleges who share a common mission, though we take pride in having long approached them in our own distinctive way.

Our goals emerge in particular from our collective sense of a Skidmore education as a transformative experience. We want our students to acquire both knowledge and capacities that enable them to initiate and embrace change and apply their learning lifelong in new contexts. We believe that this learning takes place throughout our students' experience, both inside the classroom and out, on campus and off. Our goals articulate, then, in language that is as clear and lean as possible, our understanding of students' learning and development at Skidmore. They lay the groundwork for our continued inquiry into the evidence of that learning.

#### **I. Knowledge**

- Acquire knowledge of human cultures and the physical world through study in the arts, humanities, languages, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences
- Understand social and cultural diversity in national and global contexts
- Demonstrate advanced learning and synthesis in both general and specialized studies

#### **II. Intellectual Skills**

- Think critically, creatively and independently
- Gather, analyze, integrate, and apply varied forms of information; understand and use evidence
- Communicate effectively
- Interact effectively and collaboratively with individuals and across social identities
- Engage in and take responsibility for learning

#### **III. Personal and Social Values**

- Examine one's own values and their use as ethical criteria in thought and action
- Interrogate one's own values in relation to those of others, across social and cultural differences
- Develop practical competencies for managing a personal, professional, and community life
- Apply learning to find solutions for social, civic, and scientific problems

#### **IV. Transformation**

- Integrate and apply knowledge and creative thought from multiple disciplines in new contexts
- Embrace intellectual integrity, humility, and courage
- Foster habits of mind and body that enable a person to live deliberately and well
- Develop an enduring passion for learning