

RIT STAFF COUNCIL

Thursday, November 18, 2010
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
1829 Room, SAU

APPROVED MINUTES

PRESENT: Bauroth, Bayerl, Carlino, Carroll, Dana, Dwyer, Fagenbaum, Fiorucci, Henen, Hughson, Johnson, Kiely, Lana, Lepkowski, McKee, Ntheketha, Ott, Phillips, Picioli, Rogers, Schleyer, St. Jean, Sullivan, Tydings, Watrous, Zachmeyer, McCloskey (Parliamentarian)

ABSENT: Fragale, Marlowe

EXCUSED: DeLorme, Ester, Goldberg, McDonald, McKeown, Pollock, Reafler, Rosenberg

GUESTS: Bob Finnerty, Chief Communications Officer
Dr. Fernando Naveda, Semester Conversion Project Director

MEETING called to order by B. Kiely at 2:00 p.m.

MINUTES of 10/28/2010 approved.

CHAIR'S REPORT

- Welcome to our new Block 6 Reps: Betsy Saxe from CIAS and Dawn Sullivan from Saunders College of Business. Thank you both for your participation in RIT's shared governance.
- The Committee for Staff in Academic Units met with newly reclassified staff at lunch today and oriented them regarding Staff Council's role on campus.
- I received a copy of the note that Dr. Johnson sent to the Green email list regarding our concerns about flyers and a rousing discussion has ensued amongst them. Some think flyers are ok, others don't, but it's nice to see a serious discussion on the subject.
- On Nov 4, I had a meeting with Barb Ross, Margaret Bailey, Kim White, Joeanne Humbert and Lee Twyman. Margaret Bailey is a professor in KGCOE, the Executive Director of the WE program and Faculty Associate to the Provost for Female Faculty at RIT; Kim White is with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion; Lee Twyman is the Ombuds person and Barb Ross & Joeanne Humbert are in HR. In various surveys that have been conducted, the work that Margaret is doing on a grant and what Staff Council hears on a regular basis, we're all facing the same issues. Every indication is that people are dissatisfied with communication, career development, recognition, leadership, gender issues and the climate in general. We thought that perhaps if we met, we could combine resources and come up with a plan to address the issues productively. In some form or another, we've had complaints and/or concerns on all these issues and none are anything that can be resolved quickly by any one group. We will be meeting again in the near future-more on that as it happens.
- There really wasn't anything new or unexpected at the Trustees meeting last week. Dinner at the Vignelli Center was great-the food and the company were wonderful and the space is beautiful.

- Thank you to those who volunteered to serve on the search committee for the AVP of HR. We have 4 people interested. We'll be voting to choose one of them at the next meeting – 12/9. Peg will send you their information electronically so you can be prepared to vote.

RIT BRAND

[http://www.rit.edu/fa/staffcouncil/system/files/2010.11.11 - agency overview for rit.pdf](http://www.rit.edu/fa/staffcouncil/system/files/2010.11.11_-_agency_overview_for_rit.pdf)

RSC welcomed Bob Finnerty for an update on the RIT branding project. Bob began with a reminder that in 2006, a project was completed with the consulting firm Art & Science Group which researched RIT's position in the marketplace – our brand. He went on to say a brand is much deeper than a tagline – it is a communication of an entity's personality.

RIT has entered the second phase of the branding endeavor. We have engaged the firm 160-over-90 to create a plan to communicate RIT's brand to the world. The work they are doing is built upon the research done in the first phase. The firm's current clientele is approximately 70% commercial and 30% education. RIT chose them in part because their commercial target audience is primarily the same demographic we are trying to reach. Please see the presentation ([http://www.rit.edu/fa/staffcouncil/system/files/2010.11.11 - agency overview for rit.pdf](http://www.rit.edu/fa/staffcouncil/system/files/2010.11.11_-_agency_overview_for_rit.pdf)) for additional information about the firm, as well as their proposals for defining and communicating RIT's brand. This will be done first to RIT's internal audience the first week of December. Bob encouraged everyone to attend one of the four open forums:

- Monday, December 6th
 - 12:30 – 1:30 pm
 - 2:30 – 3:30 pm
 - 6:00 – 7:00 pm
- Tuesday, December 6th
 - 11:00am – 12:00pm

Bob explained that the first phase research indicated that if RIT were to continue its past communication strategy emphasizing technology, co-op – we could not expect to gain much. Instead, we need to emphasize the 'softer' community aspects of the RIT experience to make gains in the areas of attracting more women and grad students, research, and alumni engagement. Further, now is the right time to do so – to build on the momentum created thus far. He also pointed out that we will soon be moved out of the category in which we have consistently earned a high ranking by US News & World Report. While it is good news that we will be in the company of more prestigious institutions, we must be prepared to tell our story in order to stand out in our new, tougher category.

Q – The proposals seem to emphasize a program or project. Shouldn't the goal be to emphasize RIT as a whole?

A – The goal is to create an overarching concept which all colleges can plug into and adapt to their own story; what you've seen are some examples of this.

Q – Can we expect to see changes in current practices at our desks i.e.: how/what a department communicates in its regular communications to their target audiences?

A – We will distribute branding guidelines we'd like everyone to use.

Q – Should we therefore put a hold on current projects and wait for these guidelines?

A – I shouldn't think so. Just as the web standards introduced 5 years ago have gradually brought consistency to many of RIT's web sites, the branding guidelines will further enhance consistency. But things like the R-I-T logo won't be changing. We hope to have ongoing, formalized meetings to help those responsible throughout the university create a consistent message.

Q – What about the cost? I would think this type of project would involve millions of dollars.

A – You're right – it is not inexpensive. The cost for phase 3 (rolling out the message) will be 2-3 times more than phase 1 (research) and this phase 2 (creative work) combined. The administration discussed this

before we even began phase 2, and committed to moving forward. It is my hope that the schedule for funding will be decided in 2011.

Q – How/Can the world-famous names such as Kodak and the George Eastman House be used in this campaign?

A – Rochester’s “big 3” of the past are no longer the heart of Rochester as they once were. Instead of that heritage, the campaign uses RIT heritage throughout such things as art, fonts, Vignelli styles that echo RIT tradition.

Q – One piece you showed us talks about Dubai, which is actually a very small place. Why is RIT not going to bigger places worldwide?

A – There are over 60 nations that RIT is involved with in some way. While the piece you’re referring to used Dubai, it is simply the illustration of a broader concept emphasizing the opportunity for students’ global involvement.

In closing, Bob once again encouraged all RSC members to attend one of the open forums in December, and invited everyone to submit further feedback and questions to him (refuns@rit.edu).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communication – M. Johnson

- We are aiming for a December 1st go-live date for the updated website.
 - There will be a ritstaff email announcing the change, with a link to the site’s blog
 - The blog will have a welcome message with descriptions of and links to many parts of the site
 - The committee plans to have a new blog entry at least every 2 weeks, with email encouraging the community to visit the site
 - We will ask the community for suggested topics for blog entries
- We are developing a display to highlight and congratulate the Staff Recognition Award recipients.

Elections – O. Phillips

- Special elections are complete. Results:
 - Block 5 – Ada Rodriguez-Elliott, NTID president’s office
 - Block 6 – Betsy Saxe, CIAS dean’s office
 - Dawn Sullivan, SCOB EMBA program
 - Working on arranging orientation for the new members
- Our next project is drafting a by-laws amendment relating to special elections

Events – J. Ott

- Picnic planning continues – because of the positive feedback last year, we have confirmed Brick City catering for this year

Institute Issues & Policies – J. Watrous

- Have been following greenRIT’s discussion on the proliferation of flyers

Ad-hoc Committee for Staff in Academic Units – S. Bayerl

- Hosted a welcome/orientation luncheon earlier today for the group recently re-classified as staff, explaining Staff Council’s role. They had a number of questions which we answered for them.
- Just completed leadership interviews about manager training and development; will now draft a list of best practices. We will be working with Joeann Humbert, Human resources’ associate director for organizational development, who offered to share information about the manager training series now being piloted in F & A.

Ad-hoc Hot Topics – J. Lana – no report

SEMESTER CONVERSION UPDATE

http://www.rit.edu/fa/staffcouncil/system/files/staff_council_11-18-2010_final.pptx

RSC welcomed Fernando Naveda to explain the progress made to date on RIT's conversion to a semester calendar. He explained that, while the implementation of the new student information system (SIS) is not part of the conversion project, the two are interwoven. The timeline for conversion – Fall, 2013 – is heavily dependent upon the SIS progress. The SIS timeline is actually more compressed – it is targeted to have the prototype up and running in February, 2011; fine tuning will then begin.

Program review is well underway. ICC, Grad Council and Academic Senate are all putting forth tremendous effort to see that the program review timeline is met. The first batch of programs is expected to be submitted to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) for approval this December or early January, 2011. This is imperative, because NYSED has told us the process will take a year, and RIT can't recruit students into programs until they have NYSED approval. NYS fiscal problems have resulted in layoffs at NYSED, but they have assured us they still plan to meet this timeline.

RIT has made a commitment that all students will have a personal conversion plan. This will take intensive one-on-one student contact with every student. The majority of the conversion budget is allocated to hiring 15 additional student advisors to deliver on this promise. [*Note: although other numbers were discussed at the meeting, the actual count of 15 was reported upon review of plan after the meeting.*] Fernando is hopeful hiring will begin soon, to allow ample time for training. He pointed out that every student will in effect be a transfer student – transferring from RIT (quarters) to RIT (semesters).

The good news is, the process is working and we're on track. The new Gen Ed framework was approved today by Academic Senate. This is great news, because other programs' frameworks are dependent upon it. Fernando explained that there are a number of non-academic issues outside of his purview that need to be addressed. While he is not responsible for solving them, he wants to be sure someone is looking at them. He invited RSC members to contact him with any such issues, saying he would be happy to raise them to the appropriate party.

Q – Will the advising positions be temporary or permanent? If they are permanent, that will have budgetary repercussions for the colleges after the conversion budget is eliminated.

A – That is under discussion at this time. If any of them become permanent, the budget will have to be revisited. The need for advisors may subside after the intense conversion phase is past. I will continue to this discussion with the provost.

Q – Will these advisors be new positions or reassigned headcount?

A – I don't know yet. I will look into it and get back to you as soon as I can.

Q – When will these decisions be made?

A – The conversation is in process now. It would be ideal if decisions were in place during the budget cycle so parameters could be in place when hiring is done.

Fernando thanked RSC for the opportunity to share this information. RSC asked that he continue to do so as the conversion project progresses.

RSC WEB SITE

Communications Committee member Matt Dana reported that the Staff Council web site that has been rebuilt on the DRUPAL platform will soon go live. He explained that the Drupal platform was adopted by RIT in 2009. It allows the end user to easily modify, add, or edit their website without having to know web programming. He went on to say the RIT site can only be successful if all members actively participate by reading and commenting on blog posts, suggesting topics and/or submitting articles, etc.

The blog is meant to be fun and informative. Anyone can participate – just contact Matt to be enabled to contribute. Matt noted that it would be possible for RSC members to make the site their home page, and use it to share comments, updates, important personal events, etc. with other members on a daily basis. It might even be possible to eventually offer this connectivity to all RIT staff.

The site also contains:

- a list of Staff Council members with contact information and photos
- meeting agendas, minutes and presentations (you must log in with your RIT user account to access minutes and presentations)
- RSC and university committee service
- A list of notaries public on campus who offer their services to the RIT community
- A list of other links staff might find useful – suggestions for other links are welcome

Q – Can people post to the site anonymously?

A – It is not set up that way at this time – you must log in to post.

Comment – Please consider adding a drop-box where people can make comments to RSC (not posted on the site) anonymously. That might make people more comfortable in sharing some information.

Q – Have you considered linking the blog to Facebook, etc.?

A – That takes vigilance to monitor, but we will discuss it within the Communications Committee.

Comment – A note on social media sites might prompt people to visit the RSC site who would not otherwise do so. Also, a “share” link would offer the possibility of increased visibility.

NEW BUSINESS

1. A constituent asked when the salary market bands had last been updated, and if/when there were any plans to do so.

RSC Chair will follow up with HR.

2. When jobs are posted internally, it would be very helpful to include the salary band.

Meeting visitor Lori Sykes, HR Services Manager (HRSM), explained that this omission is the result of an Oracle functionality issue. HR is in the process of reviewing application sites, and is hoping to find one that will be able to solve the issue.

3. A constituent was awarded a raise that moved him/her into the next salary level for benefit contribution rates. The change would have resulted in a net \$300 salary reduction. When the parameters of the salary level were updated for inflation, the constituent’s problem was solved. But is there, or should there be, a broader solution to protect others from the same situation?

EC will discuss possible solutions with Barb Ross, Interim Director of HR.

MEETING adjourned at 3:40 p.m. with wishes for a **Happy Thanksgiving!**

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret S. Meyers

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Staff Council Coordinator