

Non-Members Present: K. Gillies (interpreter), J. Kirkpatrick (interpreter), K. Rex, L. Twyman,

Minutes
The minutes from the December 11, 2013 meeting were approved with no changes.

President’s Report & Update on Strategic Plan
Dr. Destler

- Governor Cuomo released his budget yesterday, which included 3.2 million for Pollution Prevention Institute which we run for the state, and Center for Sustainable Manufacturing (A Center for Excellence for New York State).
- Intersession is nearly over and spring semester is about to begin.
- Spring enrollment appears to be on track with previous years and transfer applications and deposits have been up.

Strategic Planning Update:

- Strategic planning committee has met four times, faculty have been added to the committee based on recommendations submitted.
- Dr. Destler recognized Dr. Haefner’s and Dr. Mayberry’s commitment and leadership on project.
- Soon, draft mission and vision statements will be presented to the community for feedback.

Comment: it might be good to remind the community of the website for strategic planning so that returning faculty and students can check in on recent updates. The strategic planning website is located here: http://www.rit.edu/president/strategicplanning/strategic_plan

Q. Will there be any student participation in the strategic planning process?
A. Yes, there is a student representative on the committee and Dr. Destler has asked SG to hold their own forums to collect student feedback.

**Ombud’s Report**

Lee Twyman

- Report includes last academic year’s numbers with reflections from fall 2013.
- Using a new system to collect data
- Reviewed analysis of users of the Ombuds office (see presentation)
- Overview of Ombud’s different roles
- Discussed case studies of Ombud’s experiences

Discussion of academic suspension procedures ensued.

Dr. Destler commented that if the communication system is not working, changes should be made, for example explaining the appeal process in the letter which goes home to parents.

- Discussion ensued on communication issues between students and the faculty, especially as it relates to early alerts.
- Case studies on other common issues brought to the Ombud’s office were also reviewed, including staff issues, and student-faculty communication issues.
- Emerging challenges themes were reviewed, including issues related to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and parents (see presentation).

Q. Is this information compiled by individual college? It would be helpful to identify patterns within colleges so that these issues can be addressed.

A. Lee is happy to present the information at a more drilled-down, actionable level. Lee stated she tries to share information directly with deans regarding college-level trends and she will break down the annual report and follow up with deans where necessary or requested.

Comment: Auto-enrollment of first-semester students needs to be addressed, as students are being enrolled in ‘random’ courses by their advisors, which is not beneficial for students or faculty.

Comment: It would be helpful if first semester students knew who and when to call if they want to change their schedule.

Comment: Students should be auto-enrolled in core classes, but then notified that they need to select additional liberal arts classes and make suggestions.

- Dr. Destler supported this idea in that there should be a referral within the e-mail for them to follow.
- Discussion ensued regarding civil vs uncivil student behavior.
- Opportunities for improvement were reviewed (see presentation).
Comment: None of the courses that were offered during the tiger term were appealing; if the colleges and specific departments do a better job offering and marketing these programs it would increase participation. Example: No GCCIS courses were offered.

Dr. Destler commented that as it was the first intersession, results needs to be analyzed and assessed for potential opportunities to broaden the number of courses offered. Evaluation will happen after three years of implementation to assess effectiveness of intersession.

Dr. Destler emphasized that it’s important to separate challenges that relate to student learning in semesters from the complaints of people who are averse to change.

Q. Does it make sense to make enrollment in Early Alert mandatory for first semester students and their faculty?

Lee Twyman noted that currently, participation in Early Alert is not mandatory for faculty.

Q. How will five week courses during summer be managed under the semester calendar?

A. After extensive discussion, it was decided to evaluate the success of the intersession and this summer’s five week courses and move forward with any necessary changes as a result.

A discussion ensued about federal student aid, intersession and summer sessions, and how that fits into the new calendar system at RIT.

Other business – none.

Meeting adjourned at 4:08 pm.