Call to Order: 12:06 p.m.
Communication Officer’s Report: Minutes of 4/17/2014 were approved as amended. [http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17271](http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17271)

Executive Committee Report
Senators were asked to continue to hold the date of May 22, 2014 if an additional AS meeting is needed during finals week. M. Laver said he will check with senators to see if the majority can or cannot attend.

Business:

Update on +/- Grading Implementation (Report Only)
PPT Presentation: [https://ritdml.rit.edu/handle/1850/17263](https://ritdml.rit.edu/handle/1850/17263)

Linda Tolan, AAC sub-committee chair presented an update on the implementation of +/- grading in regards to the existing policies that have grade standards within the +/- system, and not whether RIT should have a +/- system or if there should be changes to the approved +/- system.

- Charge to AAC: Considering the +/- grading system, to work with Dr. Fernando Naveda, Office of Academic Affairs and Graduate Council, to review existing policies that contact a grade standard. And report to AS at the end of the year on any potential areas of concern moving forward.
- A review was completed of all policies that contain a grade standard and worked with several groups to examine the policies.
- Comparison chart was shown of the Old and New system (see PPT link above for full presentation).
- Reviewed grade standards currently stated specifically in undergrad policies and graduate policies (See PPT for full details).
- Did not look at internal RIT items, such as Awards for Outstanding Scholars, etc.
- Impacts and cautions about changing existing grade standards in policies was reviewed (See PPT).
- Discovered some problem areas as follows:
  - Department of Education guidelines on financial aid and scholarships must have consistency between specific grade standards in policies and graduation standards. If a change is made in one area, it must be made in all areas (i.e. probation/suspension) as this can affect academic progress and changes will have a negative impact on financial aid availability for students
  - Changes up or down in grade standards have consequences.
  - Do we want to lower the current standards? In old or new system a C grade is equal to 2.0. In new system changing an existing standard for example from a C (2.0) to a C- (1.67) is a lowering of an existing standard
We must have consistency and baseline standards as a university, but under policy, a program can have a different standard if appropriate approvals and notifications are followed as detailed in policy. For an example, see the probation policy.

Some financial aid specifically requires a certain GPA for example NYSED Tuition Assistance requires a 2.0 (C average)

The bottom line is that there are many unintended consequences to changing established university grade standards and any changes require thorough analysis of systemic effects. The refined grading system is a separate issue from the established grade standards in policies.

One editing recommendation: In every place in policy where there is either a letter grade or point value, it should be administratively edited so both letter and point value appear and policy is clear (ie. A grade of C is required. This would be edited to “a grade of C (2.0) is required.” Or something similar.)

Discussion and Q&A ensued.

- M. Richmond: Are you recommending that RIT not change to +/- for Fall 2014.
  L. Tolan: No, we are not making a recommendation to not implement this in the fall.
- K. Mousley: Will the Dean’s list be impacted (and other student awards)?
  L. Tolan: No, it does not affect this. Regarding the Dean’s list this would have to go through governance and again is not affected. It is an internal RIT policy only and not connected to progress toward degree.
- H. Ghazle: The last time this was discussed about the system itself, it was discussed about +/- awarding scholarship.
  L. Tolan: This was not part of our charge.
- B. Hartpence: What is the status of the most current policy?
  L. Tolan: Currently D5.0 has the grade chart for the old system as this is in effect until end of this summer. D.5 will be edited and the +/- Refined Grading system chart will be inserted for fall 2014 since this system has been approved by Academic Senate.
  M. Laver: Academic Affairs has the most recent version.
- B. Hartpence: How does one decide how to assign a + or -?
  L. Lawley: The President and Provost had said before that it is up to each faculty person whether they use a + or – in grading.
  L. Tolan: It is always the faculty member’s prerogative to determine what grade to assign in a class no matter which grading scheme is in use just as they now determine in their courses.
  M. Laver: Multiple sections of the same course will be the only issue.
- M. Richmond: So, RIT is moving to +/- grading in the Fall?
  L. Tolan: Yes.

**Academic Senate Executive Committee Elections**

Best wishes and congratulations to the newly elected Executive Committee of the Academic Senate that will serve in AY2014.

Chair: Michael Laver, CLA  
Vice Chair: Hossein Shahmohamad, COS  
Operations Officer: S. Manian Ramkumar, CAST  
Communications Officer: Clarence (Chip) Sheffield  
Treasurer: Stan Hoi (SCB)
Carol DeFilippo, AAC sub-committee chair shared the history of this policy, highlights of the new proposed policy and the AAC’s motion for senate to approve the new policy.

- The work on this policy was AAC working in collaboration with the Institute’s Academic Advising office and Lynne Mazadoorian, who is the Director of the Institute Advising Office.
- D9.0 was first approved in 1975 and then in 2012 was presented to senate but not completed while Guidelines for Academic Advising were being finalized through the Office of the Provost. (See Ppt for full details.)
- The new structure included professional staff as academic advisors and an Institute Advising Office that will provide strategic leadership. This will be in place by 2014.
- This is a shared responsibility by the faculty, advisor and the student to keep their academic plan up-to-date.
- AAC was charged to review Policy D9.0 and it led to an 8-month Revision Process.
- Today’s D9.0 Proposal has been reviewed by the AAC, by the Director of the Institute Advising Office, Deans’ delegates for advising and by the Provost’s Office.
- The scope, purpose, oversight and responsibility of academic advising was reviewed. (See the Ppt for full details of this report.)
- A motion went forth stating that Academic Senate approves the proposed revision of Policy D9.0: Undergraduate Academic Advising as presented.

Discussion and Q&A ensued.

- M. Laver commended the AAC as they have worked with people across the entire campus in revising D9.0.
- T. Engstrom: Referred to the slide on purpose and oversight (slide 10). Under “Purpose of Academic Advising” the words “discipline-specific” and “career-focused advising” do not seem to be generous enough. Where does interdisciplinary and Gen Ed advising fit into the definition of the purpose of advising? Could we articulate that into the definitions of advising so that the totality of the student’s curricular interests is included in all areas of education.
  C. DeFilippo: We have professional staff that will be doing the advising and are knowledgeable regarding Gen Ed offerings. And we have faculty that are there to provide a discipline and career perspective for the students. Gen Ed is not listed explicitly in the proposal, but it is also not excluded.
  J. Hertzson: This policy concentrates on roles of professional academic advisors. Some faculty feel very engaged to work with students, and that is why faculty are included in this document. The primary responsibility lies with the professional advisors who deal with all of the issues that deal with a student’s academic plan. The piece about “discipline-specific” was added to acknowledge the work of faculty who feel very engaged with advising students in specific programs. This is interdisciplinary and includes all areas of education, and will be handled by the professional advisors. No one is left out of the process.
- H. Ghazle: Does each program have its own curricular plan or does this plan refer to something else?
  C. DeFilippo: This is about an individual student’s plan.
  L. Mazadoorian: It may be their program worksheet, IAP, or whatever the communicated plan of study is for their program.
- H. Ghazle: I am concerned that the students do not like the plan we provided after having a meeting with them across campus on what makes them successful.
  C. DeFilippo: I have great confidence in the student advising office.
L. Mazadoorian: IAP’s were designed by colleges and/or departments within the colleges, and there are many different versions of IAP’s.
H. Ghazle: I do not mean to cast aspersions on anyone personally in regards to this.

- H. Yamashita: Regarding minors, “academic advisors” should refer to both major program advisors and also advisors for immersion. Could this be a friendly amendment regarding minors advisors, making it clear that some faculty advisors may be provided for minors?
M. Laver: The language is a bit vague.
J. Hertzson: The document’s term “advisors” refers to professional advisors, not to faculty members. They are charged with all the advising the student will need, whether for majors or minors.
L. Mazadoorian: Advisors reside in the college and for this policy we were looking at the common-advising experiences all undergraduate students will have. Not all students take up a minor.
J. Hertzson: The focus of this document is about professional academic advisors and not assigned faculty advisors.

- S. Hoi: Advising is a very decentralized process at RIT. What does the director of the Advising Office do in this process?
L. Mazadoorian: We meet bi-weekly with college advising leads who are the deans’ delegates for advising and with deans and program chairs; partner to ensure consistency across the Institute, survey students and work on assessment of academic advising.
S. Hoi: Minor advising is quite different across the colleges and could your office make things more consistent regarding this, to have every college have the same process in place regarding advising?

- C. DeFilippo: Should we add this wording at the end of the sentence you are referring to: “…a faculty advisor and other advisors as deemed appropriate by the college”?
M. Laver: So that line would read: “Every student would be assigned an advisor and may also be assigned a faculty advisor and other advisors as deemed appropriate by the college.”
R. Vullo: I am a minor advisor and all my advisees come from outside my college, so I am suggesting that we avoid complicating the policy with adding “by the college”.
S. Hoi: I think it is dangerous to do this and could we ask the director to bring out a process for the future.
M. Laver: There is an objection to this friendly amendment per the wording (bolded) so it is now to be voted on. This is seconded.

“Every student would be assigned an advisor and may also be assigned a faculty advisor and other advisors as deemed appropriate.”

Vote to approve this additional wording (amendment) passes with 19 in favor, 0 opposed and 2 abstentions.

- T. Engstrom: When we articulate this discipline specificity for focused advising, there is a challenge regarding this across the colleges and we want to avoid a “silo mentality”. The wording should be expanded to include other educational goals, and to not segregate those commitments. Therefore, he suggested the following friendly amendment regarding the purpose of advising, and to insert after “career-focused” the following wording (bolded wording is what is being proposed):

“Additionally discipline specific and career-focused advising which also facilitates consideration of multi and cross-disciplinary options and in relation to the General Education curriculum.”

C. DeFilippo: The student would get exactly what you are talking about through their professional advisor. And faculty can offer knowledge and expertise regarding the relation between the academic plan and a student’s career interests.
B. Hartpence: The Ppt wording is different than what the policy reads and then suggested this wording
instead of T. Engstrom’s proposal, removing “discipline-specific and career-focused” advising. And this would go under section II. Purpose of Academic Advising, last sentence:

“Additionally, advising is provided by faculty advisors in partnership with the academic advisors of the college.”

This is adopted as a friendly amendment.

- M. Laver stated that this policy once implemented can still come back to senate.
- H. Ghazle: What happened to advising for non-degree students who are not undergraduates?
  M. Laver: Discussion today is only on this proposal.

Motion to approve Policy D9.0 as amended passed unanimously with 21 in favor.

- B. Hartpence: On the website it says “this policy is under review.” There is a policy still in force, correct?
  M. Laver: That policy exists but is not enforced presently since it has been under review.

**Policy on Graduate Level Courses (D3.0 and D12.0)**

PPt Presentation on both policies presented by Graduate Council: [http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17266](http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17266)
Proposal: [http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17259](http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17259)

Joseph Hornak, Graduate Council Chair presented this policy. See links above to the PPt presentation and proposal presented.

- Despite the fact that all graduate courses underwent the Semester Conversion process, there are still programs not adhering to this practice.
- The purpose of this proposal is to clarify existing practice by appropriate additions or modifications to the policy manual (policies D3.0 and D12.0).
- This is in regards to the following:
  o Only graduate courses (600-900 level) courses count towards graduate degrees
  o No more than 20% of the graduate course credits can be cross listed at the undergraduate level
  o Cross listed courses must be 500 level undergrad with 600 graduate.
- Graduate Council unanimously approved the appropriate additions and modifications made to D3.0 and D12.0 in regards to the existing practice.

Discussion and Q&A ensued.

- Correction under Section 3 of the proposal, and it should read “20% course credit hours” as “credit hours” was mistakenly omitted.
- T. Engstrom: The policy does provide for exceptions, by the Provost, but why doesn’t the Graduate Council consider such requests first and forward them for the approval of the Provost? You are ceding a very important oversight responsibility of faculty through the Graduate Council and the body whose expertise it is to evaluate these requests. He proposed in that section to change Provost to Graduate Council.
  J. Hornak: We wanted to keep it the way it was as it has worked fine.
  S. Hoi: There might be some implementation issue. Approval of the programs must be in the hands of the Graduate Council, but for implementation giving the Provost that additional responsibility would make the program more flexible.
S. Boedo: If a problem needs to be resolved quickly, then the Provost is a better option than Graduate Council.

T. Engstrom: This is a matter of governance, not administration and Graduate Council is the appropriate body. He proposed the following amendment to change the wording in this sentence in Policy D3.0C. to read:

“In certain cases, the Provost Graduate Council may allow exceptions to this rule provided there is sufficient justification.

R. Stevens: Have you looked at current graduate programs to which your proposed change will cause a problem?

J. Hornak: No problems should occur if programs follow the rule.

T. Engstrom amended his original amendment so the wording would read:

“In certain cases, the Provost, in consultation with Graduate Council, may allow exceptions to this rule provided there is sufficient justification.

M. Eastman: This does not seem timely if a rapid response is needed and Graduate Council would not provide a rapid enough response.

T. Engstrom: The foundation of this policy should not be based on these situations but on consistent principles of academic governance. This wording maintains this consistency.

B. Hartpence: What is the context of these exceptions? Wouldn’t the certification process occur in the home department and wouldn’t they have to get approval.

Motion to amend the last sentence of D3.0C under Graduate Registration (T. Engstrom’s amendment) passes with 15 in favor, 4 opposed and 2 abstentions.

- G. Hintz: Graduate Council can make the policy, but RIT may not have the resources to follow the policy (i.e. Writing Policy). College A cannot force College B to modify their courses to a graduate level and then offer the courses. This problem occurs across the Institute of not being able to follow policy, because of lack of resources.

T. Engstrom: If you are underfunded and under resourced, that is the responsibility of the Provost, not a function of Graduate Council policy.

Motion to approve the appropriate additions and modifications made to D3.0 and D12.0 in regards to the existing practice passed as amended with 18 in favor, 2 opposed and 2 abstentions.

**Academic Standing Proposal Regarding Policy D5.1 IIB**

Proposal for D5.1 II A: [http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17260](http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17260)

Joseph Hornak, Graduate Council Chair presented this policy proposal with the purposed of making this graduate policy on “Good Academic Standing” to be consistent with the undergraduate policy. See PPT for full details of this proposal.

Discussion and Q&A ensued.

- T. Engstrom: It is stated that this has to do with individual colleges. Are there not examples of Graduate courses that cross colleges collaboratively?

S. Maggelakis: One program is cross-college and that is Computational Finance.

Friendly amendment by T. Engstrom: To delete the word “individual” before the word “colleges”.

K. Martin: Then one should delete this in the undergraduate policy too.
Motion to approve the additions made to Policy D5.1 IIA as amended passes unanimously.

**A Plan to Address the Shortage of Writing-Intensive General Education Seats**
PPt and Response Letter: [https://ritdml.rit.edu/handle/1850/17262](https://ritdml.rit.edu/handle/1850/17262)

David Martins, IWC Director and Richard Zanibbi, IWC Chair presented a plan proposed by the IWC and UWP to address the shortage of writing-intensive General Education seats. See link above to view the full presentation.

- The plan seeks to implement a slightly modified version of the Institute Writing Policy that is true to the spirit of the original one.
- This plan if implemented would resolve the WI-GE seating shortage by Spring 2015.
- The strategies were presented: (See PPt for full details)
  - Advising: permit substitutions and equivalencies
  - Build capacity by recognizing existing courses as well as new ones

Discussion and Q&A ensued.

- T. Engstrom: The cost model assumes that WI courses can be added by giving non-WI courses to adjuncts. Adding WI courses is designed to enhance educational quality. Is a budget model that implicitly encourages adding adjuncts the best way to improve the quality of education?
  D. Martins: We use adjuncts as a placeholder and an interim measure until other resources are identified for the long term.
- M. Richmond: Have you checked for the availability of space for the new sections of classes that would be offered? In COS there are no rooms available on some days.
  R. Zanibbi: We have not done so yet and we envision a few tens of new sections at the most. So it won’t be a high number.
- N. Cifranic commented on the benefits of the WI courses in taking them throughout his years at RIT.
- H. Ghazle: Communication skills are so important for student success. For the AP score, why was “5” chosen instead of “4”?
  D. Martins: Current rules give some AP credit for scores of 3, 4 or 5 and this year over 800 students received credit. We have discussed this issue and wish to raise the bar by having a higher standard of AP credit.
- S. Boedo: I support this initiative entirely. You are recommending 25 students per section in the WI courses and right now we are over that. I foresee a future with 30-35-40 students in WI sections. Have you considered making it strict, and keeping it at a maximum of 25 students?
  R. Zanibbi: We would prefer to make this a hard limit of 25 students.

Please contact David Martins and Richard Zanibbi with your comments and suggestions.

Adjournment: 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Richmond, Communications Officer
Vivian Gifford, AS Senior Staff Assistant