

**ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
ACADEMIC SENATE
MAY 22, 2014: 12:00-1:50 p.m.
CIMS/2230/2240**

Present: B. Barry; J. Beck; S. Boedo; S. Bower; A. Carrington (SG rep); J. Chiavaroli; D. Defibaugh; W. Destler; J. Haefner; B. Hartpence; J. Hertzson; G. Hintz; S. Hoi; T. Jefferson; M. Kotlarchyk;; M. Laver; E. Lawley; C. Licata (Delegate for J. Haefner); J. Lisuzzo; S. Maggelakis; S.M. Ramkumar; M. Richmond; V. Serravallo; H. Shahmohamad; C. Sheffield; R. Stevens; C. Thoms; L. Villasmil Urdaneta; J. Voelkel; R. Vullo; F. Walker; L. Wild

Members Absent: P. Darragh; T. Engström; H. Ghazle; J. Goldowitz; S. Gold; R. Kushalnagar; J. Lodge; K. McDonald; K. Mousley; T. Policano; R. Raffaele; B. Trager; H. Yamashita

Presenters/Guests: Neil Hair; Joseph Hornak; Jeff Lasky; Rudy Pugliese

Interpreters: Cheryl Bovard, Wendi Gammen

Tech Crew: Ashlee Burke, Vincent Lin, Jessica Snowden

Call to Order: 12:-07 p.m.

Communication Officer's Report: Minutes of 5/15/2014 were approved.

Executive Committee Report:

Thanks were given to all the senators for their service and hard work this year. Appreciation was given to Vivian Gifford, Senior Staff Assistant and a gift presented.

Business/Reports:

Advanced Certificate in Communication and Digital Media

PPt Presentation: <http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17313>

Joseph Hornak, Graduate Council chair presented the Advanced Certificate in Communication and Digital Media.

- This program has the support of the Dean's office (Jamie Winebrake) and the CLA faculty.
- Graduate Council unanimously approved this program.
- There is full confidence that this program will be delivered properly.
- The resources have been carved out to roll out this program.
- The material will count for a master's program.
- See link above for full details of this report.

Comments/Q&A ensued.

- L. Lawley: A similar advanced certificate program was approved by senate and it was said that "we are going to try this idea of compressed on-line courses" but yet now here is another advanced certificate being presented before we have tried the first on-line program. Who is the audience? Will it be priced at a lower level? Can existing RIT students take the courses if they wish?
J. Hornak: Any student that has received their Bachelor's degree can take these courses.
T. Hannigan: Existing students would need permission from the instructor, as this would be an exception, if they are about to graduate and were leaving the area. These courses were made for off-campus students.
R. Pugliese: Students can take these courses to fill their program requirements.

- G. Hintz: There was a concern before to avoid cannabilization. And would these online courses steal students from regular courses?
T. Hannigan: Yes, that is one reason we need to prevent regular students from taking these online courses.
- B. Hartpence: I am concerned about the lack of testing these new programs carefully before we start to offer more of them.
N. Hair: We will be flexible and will adjust programs based on feedback.
T. Hannigan: This is not the first time RIT has offered such courses in the 6 or 8-week accelerated format.
- G. Hintz: Who is training the adjuncts who are teaching these courses? This program is not resource-free.
N. Hair: We have a great team in ILI to handle these courses.
- S. Boedo: When will you have the data on these first set of 8-week courses?
N. Hair: We should be getting real-time feedback at the onset of the course and at the end.
M. Laver: I will invite ILI to the Academic Senate to give a year-end report.
- H. Shahmohamad: How many more of these advanced certificate programs are coming to senate?
J. Hornak: There is just one in the pipeline presently.
N. Hair: there are around 10 certificate programs still being reviewed.
T. Hannigan: We had a nice meeting with Graduate Council and welcome input earlier on.
- L. Lawley: When are the first 8-week classes going to be offered?
T. Hannigan: There will be two courses in the fall.
L. Lawley: And if this is approved when will it be offered?
T. Hannigan: One course in the fall and one in the spring.
- L. Lawley: I would like to see feedback from the first set of 8-week courses before we approve the next set. I trust that you have the best interest at heart. Once we start things it is difficult to start them and this isn't a pilot.
T. Hannigan: I think that is a fair request.
J. Winebrake: Having feedback from three or four courses is better as we can then compare a variety of samples and get data from this.
- C. Sheffield: Noted a typo on page 3, the start date: year "2141".
- C. Sheffield: There is a lot of evidence that the classes require a great deal of money and time. Have you considered real 24-hour support requirements? Additionally, in regards to student learning outcomes, how will critical thinking and ethics be assessed? For example, how will this course address the Mohammad cartoons?
M. Laver: Procedurally this program has been through many reviews by many committees and the Academic Senate is not the best place to discuss course topics.
N. Hair: We have thought about the 24-hour support network in discussing this with ITS and plan to deliver support to students.

Motion to approve the Advanced Certificate in Communication and Digital Media passes with 14 in favor, 2 opposed and 6 abstentions.

Report on Implementation of +/- Grading

The Provost gave a brief update on the implementation of +/- Grading.

- We are moving to implement this in the Fall of 2014.
- There are two concerns:

- Multiple section courses – It is important to have meaningful discussions on all marks. This is important from a student’s perspective. The Deans have been charged to have a meaningful discussion regarding this with their departments. The goal is to provide consistency.
- Student progression given the C/C- requirements to move on to the sequential course - Feedback was given on this. The Provost proposed that for a two-year trial period a C- would qualify students to progress to the next course but we would track the student’s performance in follow-up courses after two years and bring the report to Academic Senate for discussion.

Discussion and Q&A.

- L. Lawley: Years ago when this topic was discussed, I shared that I give out just three grades in my courses: A, C and F. The Provost assured me that faculty would always have the option to choose their own grading systems, yet your first concern in regards to multiple sections is not consistent with this assurance and that I would have to use the same grading system as what others use. In my department many courses are so large and they have many sections. I am concerned that my Dean will now tell me that I must be consistent with other faculty who also teach my course.
Provost: I am stating that Deans should tell faculty to discuss this topic and find a way to create consistency. I have no authority to tell you what grades to use.
- R. Stevens: What does “meaningful discussion” mean and should it not take place before the semester begins?
Provost: The dialogue is healthy and it can take place in the start of the semester.
- J. Voelkel: Regarding the proposal for the trial period of the C mark for a student (the 2nd concern mentioned) under the old system a C- would be a C for the student, and they would continue in the progression. So item 2 isn’t really making a change, is it?
M. Kotlarchyk: Regarding this, a C equals a GPA of 2.0 and C- is a GPA of 1.67. How do these align with academic actions, but the student is still allowed to progress?
Provost: Yes, I am not suggesting any changes to academic action but the student would be allowed to progress.
- S. Hoi: In regards to multiple section courses, are you saying the departments would decide which percentage of students would receive a + or – grade?
Provost: No, that is a misunderstanding. I am asking faculty to discuss how to handle multiple-section courses in a consistent manner.
S. Hoi: So faculty have to work together in regards to this yet earlier we were told that faculty would be able to choose whether they wish to have +/- grading or not.
Provost: I am asking faculty to have this discussion. There will be only one system moving forward but again faculty can choose what is best for them as faculty have the right to use or not to use +/- grading.
- L. Villasmil: From a student’s perspective, will students choose sections based on grading policies of individual faculty?
Provost: There are differentiated approaches and I wish the faculty to discuss these issues.
B. Hartpence: This problem already exists, without the +/- question. The idea of consistency is very important.
- A. Carrington, SG representative: From a student’s perspective, the existence of a C- will affect many students’ GPAs.

Resource Allocation and Budget Committee (RABC) Discussion

<http://hdl.handle.net/1850/17303>

Jeff Lasky gave a brief summary as follows:

- We tried to create recommendations which follow the structure of the President's model.
- The guiding foundation was to increase the flexibility of the Administration to provide additional revenues so they could pursue the strategic goals for the future.
- One must either increase the monies coming in or decrease the monies going out.
- We did not consider many possibilities.
- Met with President Destler, Dr. Miller and Dr. Watters.

Discussion and Q/A ensued.

- S. Boedo: I read an article in the newspaper recently in regards to the UofR and RIT spending as a fraction 6% of the endowment whereas other schools spend around 10%. Is this true?
President: The actual number is around 5% for RIT and for other colleges it is 4-6%; 10-12% would be financial suicide.
J. Watters: Anymore more than 7% is deemed to be imprudent and is subject to investigation.
- V. Serravallo: You have always promoted diversity. What are your thoughts on the recommendations?
President Destler: All the recommendations have been under active consideration at all times. To increase the number of students admitted to selective courses and not to give as much financial aid ought to be considered seriously. High school demographics will become more diverse in the future, so RIT cannot avoid increasing in diversity. A number of items in the report will help us to understand what the faculty might support. For example, we weigh the value of programs not only on revenue but as the report states, that revenue can be considered.
M. Laver: Education is a public good and we want to have as much diversity as possible. If we take programs which have a high demand and accept only people who are able to pay, then we may be not accepting some who would be excellent students as the population that would not be able to afford this would be excluded.
J. Lasky: We did not look at it this way and we saw this as a way to make additional revenue in some areas in order to increase support for students in other areas. We want to supply more financial aid in regards to diversity. All on the committee want to support diversity.
President Destler: We admit students first, then we examine the need for financial aid. Our ability to enroll students is in line with providing financial aid.
- S.M. Ramkumar: In regards to the "high demand signature programs" there should be some definition of what these programs are and to be clearly defined.
President Destler: Any program which would only accept less than 40% of the applicants would be a high-demand program.
J. Beck: It's a volatile balance. If one changes admissions, one might need to change curriculum, which might decrease the popularity of the program. Also, decreasing scholarship monies for competitive high-demand programs could cause students to look elsewhere for the better deals, and we may lose out on some very good students coming to RIT.
President Destler: Yes, those are exactly the choices we wrestle with.
- L. Lawley: I am currently in a competitive program at RIT. There is much competition and parents are aware if prices go up and differences between schools. I've discovered that these programs change with time. The report also mentioned administration costs. There was a recent article on salaries for administrators, and 1% at State Universities show that salaries for senior administrators have increased recently. As more adjunct faculty have been hired, it seems that more tenured faculty have moved into administrative positions. What impact does this have on us financially and in regards to quality? RIT has seen drop-offs in applications. We should not undermine the programs which attract students.
President Destler: The Chronicle of Higher Education does publish Administrative salaries.
- A. Carrington: Decreasing financial aid for students in high-demand programs will decrease the number of students coming to RIT. Preventing them from coming into the program would be crippling. I know some students who turned down Harvard to come to RIT. Have you considered modifying financial aid

conditions for students who are in such programs?

President Destler: For the program of Film and Animation, we get twenty times as many applications as we can admit. If we doubled the size of Film and Animation, we could increase the overall student profile since the students we do not accept are high quality students. Yet doubling this program without increasing faculty and staff and resources would be not wise. There may be some way of increasing the number of students and resources that might make sense. RIT has seen waves of student interest in the past and we are aware of the changes in popularity of programs. This is a complicated problem.

- S. Boedo: The alumni giving rate seems to be lower at RIT than elsewhere. What are the systemic reasons for this and what is RIT doing to increase the giving rate.

President Destler: This is a big question. Nationally the rate is going down, At RIT, our oldest alums only got an Associate's degree, not a Bachelor's degree. We add 3.5% to the alumni base every year, so we need 3.5% more money to maintain our current rate. But most alums are young and not making much in pay yet. So we have a demographic problem. It will improve and the current rate of giving of our current enrolled students is greater than the alumni giving. We are working hard at this as it is a hard problem.

- J. Capps: The forecast model shows modest deficits and how big is that?

J. Lasky: It is difficult to given an answer because there are many scenarios one can run. One recent model showed \$1-5M deficits in 5 years.

- J. Capps: The rate of unfunded student aid is increasing faster than tuition. What sources of outlay are also increasing at such a fast rate?

President Destler: Health-care insurance.

J. Lasky: Most expenses tend to increase at 2-3% per year.

President Destler: Inflation of energy used to be increasing quickly, but at the moment is not increasing so fast.

- H. Shahmohamad: The general health is good, but what is the general health of the Institute?

President Destler: I would call the state of health at RIT to be quite strong. Healthy applications are rising, unlike other schools. RIT has grown by 300-400 students per year, and 3,000 students added in 7 years. And we have new programs that will add to enrollment. We will continue to grow and next year will have about 18,500 students.

- J. Voelkel asked the President and Dr. Watters if there was anything in the report from RABC that surprised them.

President Destler: Some of the issues, such as diversity were sacrosanct, so I was surprised to seem them raised in the report. Cornell several years ago decided to address financial concerns by admitting 200 or so extra full-cost payers.

- S. M. Ramkumar: Is it possible to ask parents of incoming students to pay a large amount to endowment in exchange for free tuition? Have you considered something like this?

President Destler: There are problems with that kind of an approach. You cannot allow parents to purchase admission for their children. One can't just add a few students for a low cost forever. RPI charges \$42,000 for tuition with a discount rate of 49%. RIT charges \$32,000 with a 33% discount, so \$21,000 is collected per student.

J. Watters: The IRS has ruled that cash for endowment is illegal. Only a small fraction of endowment funds can be used annually. RIT does have a lump-sum option payment for parents.

- President Destler commenting on administrative costs said that all the presidents' and VP salaries are set by the Trustees after a market study. The 50th percentile of the peer group are for good performers and the 75th percentile of the peer group are for outstanding performers. But all the institutions are paying too much, so this method leads to runaway salaries. We do have to live in the real world.

- M. Richmond: Have you asked the Trustees to modify the way they set administrative salaries?

President Destler: I have told the Trustees that incremental increases for Administrators should not be out of line with those salaries for others. Their response is that there are separate processes and market

forces that make it difficult. Most Trustees come from the business world, so there is a culture clash. It is a delicate issue.

- L. Lawley: I am not so much concerned about administrative salaries, but about the misperception and concern about the growing number of administrators and an increasing administrative load. In our program our new hires are told they can only teach two courses per year for six years. So we must bring in lecturers to teach most of our students, and this affects the quality of student experience. So changes in expectations for new faculty are making a big difference in the quality of our program. This disturbs me.

President Destler: The number of administrators is rising but we are not out of proportion overall. Are we administration-heavy compared to our peers? No. And most campuses have a reduced teaching load. Some efficiencies can be increased. In regards to new-hire teaching loads, that is news to me. Many colleges are giving new hires a much lower teaching load due to the monies which comes from grants.

- V. Serravallo: Remember that RIT is made up of people – faculty, staff and students. Reducing financial aid for high-demand programs may have unintended consequences. RIT students rely heavily on Pell grants. We need an Institute that is well balanced and what kind of retention rate will we have with all who have a high income rate?

President Destler: Thirty percent of RIT students are eligible for Pell grants. We serve a noble purpose in helping people move up the ladder, but also everyone we employ at RIT is a person too.

- J. Voelkel: For the high-demand programs it is not inconsistent to have a set of people pay full price and still increase diversity. The two are not mutually exclusive. This year tuition revenues for the summer are lower than expected. A 10-week summer term is not the same as a 15-week semester. So a switch to a more balanced fall-spring-summer might help.

President Destler: We should look at these ideas.

- C. Thoms: Can you comment on recommendation number 5 in regards to the consolidation of some programs and what does this mean (e.g. elimination of department heads)? In some cases lecturers can become department heads.

J. Lasky: We were looking at ways to free up resources and decrease expenses. Last year there were 55 department heads. If on average they teach 1/3 of the time and 2/3 of the time is for administrative work, then that means 35 FTES are not available to teach a regular load. If there are situations in which there are two low-enrollment programs to be combined into one unit, with just one department head, there may be opportunities here and there to consolidate. We did not anticipate lecturers becoming department heads. The same may be true of some administrative units.

- A. Ray: I was intrigued by what you said about the Trustees and the make up of the board. Is there a difference between a university and a corporate culture? If so, I implore you to have faculty on board as Trustees.

President Destler: Those are good points. Trustees are mainly a corporate group. They do donate a lot of money and typically come from businesses and not academia. Tensions are at work here as the Trustees do look at RIT as a business. There is no sentiment with the Board of Trustees now for adding a faculty member to the membership as they believe it would be a conflict of interest. They have invited the Academic Senate to designate a representative to sit at the meetings. I do what I can to educate them and the Provost recently have them a tutorial on tenure. The basis for decisions should be: 1) what is in the best interest of the students, and 2) what is in the best long-term interest of the institute?

- H. Shahmohamad: What do you plan now to do?

President Destler: These are good recommendations and I could make a report to Academic Senate next year for decisions we will have made by that time. Not big decisions are planned for the immediate future.

Provost Haefner: I will check into L. Lawley's comments on the teaching loads in GCCIS.

Additionally, we will be publishing a website which will view the new instructional activity dashboard

showing RIT-wide teaching activity, college by college, lots of statistics etc. And this will include non-tenure lecturers as well.

Adjournment: 1:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Richmond, Communications Officer
Vivian Gifford, Senior Staff Assistant

