Standing Committee Charges for the Academic Year 2014-2015

Academic Affairs Committee – Approved as amended adding charge #7

1. Determine whether revisions to Policy D7: Foreign Travel Programs are necessary, and if so, work with the appropriate offices on campus to suggest such revisions.

2. In conjunction with Graduate Council and ICC, review Policy D2 and D12 with an eye to:
   a. clarifying language related to residency requirement
   b. clarifying language related to amount of credit able to be transferred from a completed associate degree
   c. examining whether there should be a threshold for the number of minimum credits that should be taken at RIT in order for an RIT degree to be awarded.

3. Determine if there is any faculty input into the evaluation of the admissions office. Included in this would be more transparency in how students are selected for admission, and how the promotional materials are developed, especially in light of RIT strengths in the area of design.

4. Propose modifications of D8 and D18 in light of last year’s experience in implementation. Specifically look to better coordinate both policies and to clean up processes that have shown to be problematic in practice.

5. Exercise oversight of the Honors Program, particularly in light of the new “core curriculum” being implemented this year, and report back to senate towards the end of the year.

6. Following-up on the comments of the recent Honors program external reviewer Dr. Spurrier that Honors Admissions being solely determined by EMCS "is a marked departure from other colleges and universities," examine whether this should continue, is broader input from faculty and administration needed, and is the current procedure satisfactory?

7. The AAC will take up the creation of an affiliation agreement which will determine the composition and rules of engagement for faculty who wish to work in one of the RIT Research Centers of Excellence.
   - RIT has designated research centers of excellence that must meet certain performance metrics in order to receive a portion of overhead return to meet their operating needs.
   - Performance metrics are based upon the performance of the faculty who are affiliated with the center.
o We need to clarify who is affiliated with these centers, what will be required of an affiliate and what are their rights and privileges and their duties and responsibilities.
o There is not a uniformed standard across campus and would like the committee to take charge of developing one.

**Academic Support and Student Affairs Committee – Approved as Amended**

1. Examine having a representative from ILI on the Academic Support Committee.

2. Review the Information Security Policy (Section C8.1)

3. Nominate a faculty member of the committee to serve on the Web Advisory Committee with an eye towards evaluating the aesthetics of the RIT website and the ease of use.

4. Work with ILI and faculty affairs to undertake a comprehensive review of intellectual property policies as it pertains to online learning.

5. Evaluate whether the mental health needs of our students are being adequately served. In particular, is the university appropriately staffed with mental health professionals; does student insurance meet the needs of our students seeking such care?

6. In conversation with Academic Affairs, look into implementation issues of the Smart Evals system, including:

   • Is it possible to re-examine the question of who at RIT has access to the results from the SRATE SmartEval system? Currently, the only people who can access this data are (1) an individual instructor, who can view his/her results; (2) the department chair who can view the department results; (3) the dean and associate dean who can view the college results. This bypasses the Dean’s Assistant and other staff who need access to the system to print tenure and promotion materials. These staff members are routinely trusted with RIT’s most confidential records and information. Academic Senate voted to limit access. Apparently, there was no consideration given to standard office procedures, and to the bottleneck that is created when trusted staff are suddenly not trusted. Given the current rules, it will require either a Department Chair, Associate Dean, or Dean to spend valuable time locating, compiling, and printing these records. Surely, this was not the intent of Academic Senate.

   • A mechanism be created to increase participation in student evaluations (i.e. not releasing final grade until evaluation is complete; or enrollment suspended until evaluation is completed). Participation can be low, <50%, and the common incentive for those to participate might be a negative assessment. In addition, examine the cost of operating SmartEvals and make that amount known to the faculty. In addition, determine the
validity and reliability of SmartEvals and to what extent administrators use it to evaluate faculty teaching.

Faculty Affairs Committee – Approved as amended

1. The FAC subcommittee will continue to work with the Office of Legal Affairs and the Administration to complete the work on revisions to the policies listed below and bring the revisions to Senate for action.

   a. E22.0 Policy on Exigency
   b. E23.0 Dismissal for Cause
   c. E24.0 Faculty Grievance
      - Faculty submit grievance materials electronically
      - A deadline be imposed on applications submitted during the spring semester to avoid the possibility of summer hearings
      - Academic Senate determines how advocates for the administration are compensated and equal compensation be provided to faculty advocates. In other words, advocating for both parties should be symmetrical.
   d. E4.0 Faculty Employment Policy.
   e. E6.0 Policy on Rank and Promotion in the early fall.
   f. E12.0 University Professor - E12.X – New policy
   g. E14.0 Appeal Committee on Faculty Salaries
   h. E20.0 Discontinuance of Academic Programs
   i. E21.0 Transfer of Tenure-Track Faculty

2. Revise and clarify RIT’s family leave policy, as it applies to parental leave for faculty, to bring the RIT policy more in line with benchmark institutions.

   Background Information:
   RIT’s current parental leave policy is based exclusively on the federal Family Medical Leave Act of 1993, which consists of 12 weeks unpaid leave (http://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/statutory-benefits). The AdvanceRIT team has conducted benchmarking on parental leave policies at other universities (Parental Leave Policy Benchmarking Dec 12, 2013). In addition, groups within the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Science have recently reviewed best practices and made recommendations for college policies on parental leave (CLA Parental Leave Taskforce Memo April 21, 2014).

3. Clarify the processes and rights & responsibilities associated with extended part-time faculty appointments.


   Very few faculty are currently in extended part-time positions, but interest is rising. In the College of Engineering, one faculty member recently wrote a successful proposal for such a position, including benchmarking of part-time
policies at other universities (Beth DeBartolo, Part-Time Proposal, Oct 2013).

In her proposal, DeBartolo notes:

*The RIT Policies do not seem to include any information related to conditions of extended part-time employment, such as who initiates the request, how long is the term of the appointment, and under what conditions does the extended part-time designation revert to full-time, if at all. Additionally, RIT does not specify faculty governance roles for extended part-time faculty. Finally, there is no clear workload model established within KGCOE from which to scale full-time employment to extended part-time employment.*

4. FAC subcommittee will continue to work with the Office of Legal Affairs and the Administration on the definitions for academic units.

5. Determine the extent of faculty and student evaluation of chairs, associate deans, and deans. Are faculty given enough input into performance, and/or is faculty feedback adequately taken into account in these evaluations? In other words, in light of constant faculty evaluation, are administrators being equally evaluated?

6. Explore the idea of making deans and associate deans’ self-evaluation and plan of work available to the faculty of their respective colleges. Consider a bi-annual release of deans’ and assoc. deans’ plan of work and self-evaluation.

7. Given the recent turn-over of deans, is it time to evaluate the search firms used in finding candidates for these positions? Search firms represent a significant investment, yet has the choice of firms ever been open to the faculty? Conduct a review of Policy E8 and recommend revisions as the committee deems necessary.

8. Consider a new Policy E.21.1 *Transfer or Elimination of Tenure-Track Positions.* In part, the policy protects tenure-track position from being reassigned to contingent faculty. Faculty Affairs has already completed a draft of such a policy.

**Graduate Council – Approved as amended**

1. Expand Glossary of Governance Policy (work with ICC towards this effort). GC believes that the current RIT Policy Manual is in need of a major overhaul. Over time, many small changes have been made to the policy manual to address specific concerns. Changes are made where needed to clarify a policy, making the manual wordy and redundant. Less attention has been given to assuring internal consistency when an addition is made, giving rise to contradictions. The manual is in need of a complete overhaul and reorganization of subject matter

2. Review and recommend new programs as they are advanced by the colleges.

3. Continue efforts on unfinished work.
   a. Graduate Grievance Policy
   b. Graduate Residency
   c. MS on the way to a PhD
d. MS & PhD Thesis Quality
e. Graduate Assistant Definitions
f. Graduate Advisor Terminology
g. Graduate Education Website - Establish a portal for communicating with program directors
h. Establish guidelines for proposing programs or certificates to GC

**Inter-College Curriculum Committee – Approved as presented**

**Inter-College Curriculum Committee**

1. Study undergraduate curricular proposals from an institute-wide perspective, maintain appropriate inter-college relationships with regards to curriculum, assure that existing undergraduate curricula are periodically reviewed, and make proposals to the Academic Senate for undergraduate curriculum approval or discontinuance.

**General Education Subcommittee**

1. ICC will work to realign student learning outcomes for general education and investigate ways that critical thinking can be included in the General Education Framework, with special attention given to the way that proposals impact courses with large enrollments.

2. Review proposed general education courses and immersions, and make recommendations to ICC regarding the designation of said proposals (e.g., acceptable as general education only, acceptable as a general education course in one or more perspective categories).

**Institute Writing Subcommittee**

1. Monitor and report to Academic Senate on the implementation of the IWC plan to increase the number of available Writing intensive GE course seats, including:

   - Develop a protocol for implementing section-by-section WI course designations (e.g. through communication with the Registrar’s Office and the SIS system).

   - In gen-ed writing and program writing intensive courses that could be satisfied by AP exam credit, determine whether a 3 on an AP exam necessarily implies the exposure to writing that was the spirit of the writing requirements. Further, examine the AP exam credits applicable in light of the semester conversion.
2. Identify meaningful practices for assessing Writing Intensive courses, including:
   - Gather feedback about the experience of teaching WI Courses to inform the design of the Institute Writing Policy, Incentives for offering courses for WI instruction, etc.

Long Range Planning and Environment Committee- Approved as amended

1. Suggest inclusion of all governance groups in the formation of the Master Plan. Recommend process and membership of a task force that would begin the creation of a Campus Master Plan that addresses the various kinds of space across campus, academic and otherwise. The master plan should include our natural resources, taking into account a data-driven assessment and adaptive management of our natural areas.

2. We have a campus cyber-infrastructure plan as required by the NSF. Investigate whether we could modify it to take into account big data mining, infrastructure experimentation, protocol design, etc. Many questions will have to be addressed: What are the benefits of utilizing campus data? What are the risks? Privacy concerns? How engaged is the CIO’s office?

3. Is it feasible to include representation from each governance group on the Board of Trustees and all of its subcommittees?

4. Explore mechanisms for the faculty, staff, and students to evaluate the Ombuds office.

5. Explore whether the Ombud’s office is adequately staffed, especially since Lee Twyman noted that we no longer have a mediator on campus. Should additional resources be considered given the increased demands and importance of this position?

6. What are steps that we can take to make RIT the most attractive place possible to work for top tiered faculty? Lines of inquiry might begin with determining whether or not RIT loses potential top job candidates, and if so, whether there is anything that the university could do to rectify the situation.

7. Study the percentage of non-tenure track faculty we have at RIT (by which is meant adjunct instructors AND lecturers) and compare this percentage to that of our peer and aspirant institutions of higher learning and recommend appropriate percentages of non-tenure track faculty.

8. The previous Campus Environment Committee determined that the best practice for improving coordination and communication among sustainability-oriented groups and activities on campus, particularly those related to academics where we currently fall short, is to establish a rotating Faculty Fellow in Sustainability. To that end, define the job description and logistical considerations for this position.
Nominations Committee – Approved as presented

1. Craft a slate of nominees for the Executive Committee for elections in April.
2. Nominate at-large positions in the Senate Standing Committees.
3. Propose nominees for Institute Faculty Grievance Committee for Senate ratification in April.
4. Maintain a list of available faculty for appointment to committees as they arise over the course of the year.

Resource Allocation and Budget Committee – Approved as amended (Additional charge #5 added)

1. Evaluate the salary of administrators at RIT, especially in lieu of what faculty are earning. Is the balance in line with national trends? Is the balance rather skewed one way or the other? Further, given the perception of administrative bloat nationally evaluate the total budget allocation for administrative function and the total budget allocation to teaching, and how this has changed over time.

2. Ask the benefits Advisory Committee to report on the recent changes in employee benefits as they relate to “co-pays.” Is it the intention to use co-pays to push employees to the RGHS, and is there an agreement between RIT and RGHS to try to use market mechanisms to convince employees to use the RGHS as opposed to any other systems.

3. Explore the issue of RIT’s faculty salary benchmarking process through the Human Resources Department. Issues to be addressed include: why is the 50th percentile the stated goal for faculty salaries? What is the reality of faculty salaries actually achieving even the 50th percentile? Is there a rubric by which salaries are being brought up to benchmark? Are there instances in which it would be acceptable for faculty salaries to remain below benchmark?

4. Evaluate and report to Academic Senate on the resource component of the Strategic Plan as it is released to the campus community.

5. To examine any and all monetary amounts in RIT policies for faculty and staff pertaining to promotions, prizes, awards, recognition, etc. and develop a strategy so that these amounts are: 1) updated for 2014, and 2) indexed with inflation from this point forward.

Global Education Task Force

1. Evaluate the forthcoming Strategic Plan as it pertains to International Education. Does the strategic plan envision, for example, proactive action to ensure, at a minimum, that our students have had some sort of significant international experience before they graduate? Fluency in a foreign language?
2. Conduct a review of courses being taught at RIT’s global campuses, particularly if they are courses that are also offered on RIT’s main campus. What level of faculty input is involved in courses offered at our global campus, and, with respect to sections of existing courses taught abroad, are course materials developed at RIT Henrietta being used? If so, are these materials being used with faculty permission? In cases in which our global campuses offer degrees that we also offer at RIT Henrietta, what level of input does the RIT Henrietta campus have into faculty hiring, course materials, and the like?

3. Conduct a review of Governance and process issues for the Global Campuses.

4. Recognition of international activities and instruction in faculty plans of work and for purposes of tenure and promotion: This topic has been regularly raised by faculty who want to develop study abroad programs, teach at a global campus, or conduct international research. There is a general sense that these activities are not properly valued in the tenure and promotion process. It would be very helpful to have some guidance and recommendations from the Academic Senate on these issues.