

LRPEC Comments Broken Out

Q9 - Do you think there are any real or perceived barriers in the tenure and promotion process that would inhibit progress toward any of the difference makers in the strategic plan? If so, please explain.

1. Yes, Because of the university emphasis and priority on scholarship and research for faculty rather than on teaching, where do faculty find the time to become much more effective teachers? There are so many hours in a day and we can only do so much.
2. There is insufficient support for graduate programs and graduate student tuition and stipends, particularly at the MS level. This puts faculty at a disadvantage relative to peer institutions. Teaching and service loads remain quite high, particularly for associate professors, inhibiting progress towards full professor and leading to high burn out potential.
3. Administrative bullying leading to a culture of "don't make waves: do what we say you need to do to get tenure, or get promoted"
4. No
5. Until the tenure expectations recognize contributions to the above, pre tenure faculty will not be able to fully engage in supporting these difference makers.
6. Currently the focus in many colleges is on teaching not scholarship. This does impede progress in working towards tenure. We are either a research institute or a teaching institute. Perhaps values teaching in equal measure since we do so much of it.
7. One key issue is how to evaluate contributions of individual faculty members when they are working on collaborative projects 1) within their home departments, 2) within home college but across departments, and/or 3) across colleges--collaboration is VITAL to the furtherance of the university, and productivity is a critical factor for tenure and promotion.
8. Personal bias on committees. Deference to senior or longer-working faculty.
9. We have become too much a business and we measure our successes on how much money we bring in in grants. Everyone is supposed to publish to get at that money. What we are learning and teaching is lost for some bigger financial outcome. Students are tuition (money) providers and they are supposed to be here and gone on the 4 years timeline, even if the initially stated learning goals should continue and the outcomes have not been achieved. The work environment has become strained to the point of inevitable demise because of the pressures of big business, with countless hours of overtime to accomplish the ever increasing add on responsibilities that were not included in the job description at hire. STRESS is ever increasing. We are expected to more and more and more, with less and less time available. So sad.
10. The strategic plan asks faculty to fully commit to and be engaged in long-term research and curricular development/delivery that integrate innovative approaches instead of conventional, discipline-based, lecture/lab based teaching. Contrary to what the plan asks, more termed positions (lecturers) are created on campus, and incremental tenure-lines are getting more difficult to be granted. The University needs to invest in more tenure-line incremental hirings to achieve strategic plan goals.
11. Too much biased is currently being observed within some colleges. PTR should be awarded based on merit not how good someone looks nor how they manipulate student evaluations.
12. Are all faculty (and administrators) understand, appreciate, the dimensions and their elements before discussing their impact on tenure and promotion

13. The tenure process itself is dated and remains somewhat political. RIT's shift toward being a research university leaves the definition for appropriate research and scholarship to sometimes be at odds with the intention -- the why research and scholarship is vital to the university and its culture.
14. no.
15. Research growth (especially federally funded academic research, e.g. NSF, NIH) is essential to RIT gaining national prominence, which is important for future recruitment of students beyond the local area. However, there are still cultural changes necessary: some faculty and administrators still have a non-research mindset, which is not fully supportive of newer faculty who are expected to establish and grow strong research programs. The university needs to get everyone on board with the research university mission and communicate more effectively that greatness in research is not at odds with greatness in teaching or student centeredness. Faculty who are strong researchers are also great teachers. RIT's research prominence has huge benefits for the university's standing nationally (rankings) and also increases the value of our students' degrees. There are still a lot of folks who want to go back to a time before RIT had a research focus. It is essential to get everyone on board with the vision of where we are headed. It's unfair to faculty to receive mixed messages in regard to promotion and tenure. Plus, they need various resources and administrative/financial structures in place to support research. Clear leadership and communication is needed to truly set us on a course for success in regard to the "student-centered research university" dimension.
16. Research requirements negatively impact veteran faculty seeking promotion.
17. Silos still exist, and they are still hampering collaboration. Recent changes in leadership have helped, but reward structures (at the departmental and college level) are still set up to reward 'local' success at the expense of 'shared' success. Department heads, and especially deans, must be able to take credit for teams made up of faculty and students that cross college lines. Until a dean gets *more* credit for a contribution to a cross-college effort than to something that can be highlighted in his/her own 'viewbook,' we will be hurt by our odd nine-college structure, where each dean is fighting for resources. This doesn't happen at the same level at other universities with only a few deans, where "Arts & Sciences" are seen as one endeavor, and one dean fights for programs as diverse as computer science, psychology, and fine arts. Competition for resources don't disappear, but true interdisciplinary efforts have fertile soil and an advocate who recognizes and rewards faculty through T&P.
18. Inconsistent and unequal faculty workloads across colleges.
19. full professors who are not research-active are weighing in on promotion decisions for faculty who are research-active. Full professors' opinions should be given weight relative to their research accomplishments
20. No
21. There is still a very traditional mindset about academic rank, tenure, and promotion. You never know where the next great idea or brilliant mind will come from. Anyone who has the motivation to do research and scholarship should be supported. Those who love to teach should be able to do so. We should allow multiple pathways for obtaining tenure and promotion (like from a non-tenure track position to tenure track; some permanent appointments for non-tenured positions, etc.), not just the traditional model
22. In some industries professional experience is as valuable as terminal degree and sometimes more valuable in terms of creating diversity of experience within the faculty. NASAD, the accrediting body for CIAS, and the College Art Association recognize this and so should we.

- Offering a potential faculty member with 20 years experience in the film or game industry a ridiculously low salary because they don't have a terminal degree, does not serve us well.
23. Given that publication venues for interdisciplinary work are often nascent, RIT should broaden its notion of impact and make alternative impact measures more transparent.
 24. changing workload expectations; changing culture of research expectations impacting associate professors; changing teaching model (i.e., dramatically increased enrollments without similar increase in tenure lines)
 25. a "blanket" requirement for faculty to procure grant funding as part of tenure and promotion could be a barrier for those teaching in some programs. This affects difference makers related to funding, including in dimensions 2 and 4.
 26. While collaboration is encouraged (within and between colleges at RIT), there is no way to reward collaboration in the tenure and promotion process. For example, with grant proposals - the PI gets the bulk of the "credit" for the award - F&A etc. - rather than splitting it with coPIs
 27. I think "student-centered" and "research university" are two distinct entities (unless one is solely considering graduate students). Faculty are put under unrealistic and ill-defined pressures to provide student-centered teaching while also attempting to engage in "R-1" scale research. Leveraging difference is a great goal, but one must consider that this entails more efforts by faculty and support staff to meet the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student body. Both Dimensions require substantial increase in faculty and staff to be realistically achieved.
 28. External Review
 29. Research is valued more than pedagogical effectiveness in the tenure and promotion process. This directly impacts dimensions 1, 2 and 5.
 30. 1. There is no tenure path for new hires who see themselves as educators first and researchers second. This inhibits any of the curriculum- or student-focused initiatives. 2. Significant course releases and startup packages for new hires, necessary so that they can establish their research agenda and have a chance at tenure, increases our costs and inhibits Dimension 4.
 31. There remains a tension between RIT's past focus as a teaching university and RIT's current focus on becoming a research university: we need to keep the teaching aspect as strong as it used to be because that is what distinguishes us as we prepare our students for careers.
 32. The culture of some colleges with respect to what could be perceived as unrealistic expectations to achieve tenure. This is not university policy driven but college policy driven and based in the culture of the college.
 33. Yes, we need more effective collaborating deans.
 34. Not sure
 35. If you strive for excellence you will achieve tenure and promotion
 36. Too much emphasis on research at the expense of teaching.

37. Research that involves student training is inherently slower than research produced by labs or lab networks with access to multiple PhDs and full-time research personnel (i.e., not students). In the first case, training students is at the center of the research activity, while in the second case, student training is done outside of the main research activities.

The student-centered research university is an interesting, and I think useful goal. Assuming that 'student-centered' envisions faculty contributing directly and substantially to student training, at RIT this will require faculty to engage in much more education and mentorship than normally expected of internationally-visible researchers. Such researchers often delegate training to Post-docs and PhD students out of necessity, due to a scarcity of time. Organizations run in this way are hard to consider 'student-centered,' as their focus is on research output and results, with training as a necessary but peripheral activity.

For faculty, evaluation of their research output will need to be tempered by a deep understanding of the very large additional efforts needed to train students in research while having them assist with research projects of high quality. I think this will be perceived by many junior faculty as a significant barrier to tenure and promotion. The 'student-centered' aspect could potentially be defeated if junior faculty feel they will only be assessed on research output, without consideration of efforts and successes in student training, which often do not produce publishable results.

Also, the prioritization of multi-disciplinary programs and faculty participation within them will be perceived as a very real barrier to tenure and promotion. Successful research, even multi-disciplinary research generally requires deep specialization for individual research team members. Students with broad training will also be much slower to train than students trained within a narrow, well-defined specialization.

Programs that are not focused around specific disciplines will have a harder time developing the necessary intellectual and cultural capital needed to regularly publish and present work in top venues - again, due to a lack of specialization. In terms of producing high quality research and other creative outputs, I have much more faith in encouraging multi-disciplinary collaboration across well defined (and often, traditional) disciplines than in the creation of multi-disciplinary degree programs and departments.

38. Time and effort expended in graduate student advising and mentoring do not have commensurate weight in T&P considerations
39. I'm not ranking these "difference makers" since I find this exercise rather stultifying. It's a shame that RIT is as parochial and bush-league in its attitudes and aspirations, and surveys like this, sadly, only reinforce the culture of mediocrity. Some of us have degrees from universities that are far beyond what RIT even aspires to be, and it's depressing to be reminded of the difference. I'm also surprised that there's practically no mention of the value of liberal arts and science, or of general education.
40. need to address finances -- need to raise salaries, increase start-up packages, create more R&D space
41. The Centralized Management system is a barrier.
42. Minority women do not get recognized for their accomplishments and are not mentored effectively, often having to spend more time gaining traction in their fields and their departments. Male colleagues often reach out to each other and help one another but

women are left to develop solo projects or search for contacts outside of their departments/schools. This directly affects the cv and review process of tenure, because committees only see the number of achievements listed, not how much extra work/time it took those women to get them compared to male counterparts.

43. Perceived, yes. Real, No. Some perception of barriers to collaboration, but not convinced. Disciplines have a right to articulate priorities. Departments (or colleges or research groups or interdisciplinary centers) can articulate shared standards and priorities. Some barriers are requirements.
44. Yes - pressure to bring in research dollars and publish journal papers could make faculty look less favorably on time spent with undergraduate students and focus their efforts more on graduate student work.
45. No
46. Yes. I think faculty being linked to a school can impede faculty's ability to be in the correct line. There is not strong mentoring for young/beginning faculty. Lecturers are not encouraged to engage in research, though they often would like to and have opportunity to. There is not opportunity for Lecturers to change to tenure-track as they develop in research.
47. If we are to focus on education and on developing students who are ready for the work force, then research that appears in applied or education journals should be equally recognized with traditional theoretical research.
48. Yes. Faculty should only be tenured and or promoted if their work is impactful to the strategic initiatives of the institute.
49. Yes, all they care about is research - not important to be a good teacher, have credentials outside of academic performance.
50. The tenure and promotion process inputs are limited to departments, not including all faculty who could provide input on interdisciplinary work or even cross-department programs. The POW process has a single gatekeeper: the department head. The process of negotiating POW outside of a department or school requires a prohibitively high overhead; even inside the department, faculty POW bend to the interests of the department chair. These limitations impede faculty agility to respond to university and school initiatives.
51. This has been a flawed survey, and I don't know if additional questions will allow me to address it, so I'll express my views here. This survey is so freighted with jargon that it is incomprehensible. "T-shaped." What does that mean? Does it mean breadth and depth? But how does it mean doing things differently? It seems to be a code word for business as usual, which over the last 15 years at RIT has meant reducing gen ed breadth to increase depth while bemoaning lack of literacy and critical thinking skills. Could there be options that are not fad-driven. The jargonese reappears at every stage of this survey. I'd like to actively say that some of these goals are vacuous or wrong-headed. Why the assumption that research feeds into industry? A great deal of the best research on this campus is in the humanities and social science, involves creative production, furthers scholarship, and contributes to the public good. The strategic plan should highlight service to the community, environmental stewardship, thinking critically, and incorporating the meaning investigated by the arts and humanities into technical education.
52. Yes, must do scholarship regardless of being told 2 out of 3 for promotion- teaching, service and scholarship. need time to accomplish this Provost control through a faculty committee that he provides the requirements to is a sham.
53. only space and collaboration opportunities across colleges.
54. Yes, for many of these difference makers, the culture of RIT will have to radically change to counteract the current lack of administrative and organizational transparency and to install a

replenishment of the Deans, VPs and associated administrators is the most important implementation plan for RIT.

59. Few of the items in this plan directly support faculty success in terms of promotion and tenure.
 60. CoLA faculty, particularly jr. faculty, cannot sustain a TT research agenda while teaching a 3/3, discussion/reading/writing based classes, and 90+ students per semester.
 61. The tenure and promotion process in some Colleges prefers discipline based research and teaching over interdisciplinary research and teaching. That means that faculty involved in interdisciplinary work may do so at their own detriment.
 62. Yes - unequal faculty workloads across the colleges with some faculty having very low loads while others are much higher. While this has an impact when calculating by credit assignment, for faculty that are in a laboratory intensive curriculum, contact hours also contribute to the problem. Although some adjustment is made for new hires, workloads increase after third year review and after receiving tenure. This has an impact on both tenure and promotion.
 63. yes, with fewer tenure track position hired more faculty are seeing this as a "empt" or "day job" rather than a career investment. With promotion and search committees anonymity comes the freedom to let grudges and personal issues reign. I am certain that if i do not keep quiet when my opinions are different than the current politics I will find myself with a more difficult class schedule, less support for out of classroom projects and other ways to make me wish to leave
 64. A lot of the goals in the strategic plan can only be carried forward through an important increase in the service from faculty. This needed extra service can only come at the expense of teaching and research which are the focus of tenure and promotion.
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65. I see professors who work less, with less gusto and less time spent on research, after receiving tenure.
A number of professors work less, and with less gusto in research, after receiving tenure.
 66. There is a need to demonstrate institutional commitment to our Lecturer ranks by establishing a separate tenure-track for faculty that have teaching and service as their only responsibilities. This will promote instructional continuity and bring in talented faculty who want to focus on teaching as their primary contribution to the RIT strategic plan.
 67. We don't value interdisciplinary work in the T&P process. It should count just as much as disciplinary work!

68. Tenure is going the way of the dinosaur unless there are efforts to unionize. Otherwise, plan for the majority of work to be completed by the lecturer class with a small number of tenured positions being maintained.
69. The heavy use of adjuncts and lecturers means that a large percentage of faculty the students meet have less than a full investment in RIT. We need more tenure-track faculty.

70. Perceptions of faculty being "less than" or "better than" colleagues in other colleges impedes elimination of silos.

Unequal financial and space resources and teaching responsibilities for new faculty in different colleges. Better sharing of resources would minimize some of the challenges of limited financial resources in all colleges.

71.

72. Yes. Tenure and promotion is completely siloed (no letters or contributions from relevant interdisciplinary faculty). The POW process has the department head as a gateway. Faculty are therefore tied to their department head's priorities.

73. For promotion to full, there is currently a trade-off for faculty who were hired under previous expectations. Very little recognition of the sacrifice of scholarship productivity in order to assume leadership positions.

74. The Institution continues to say it values interdisciplinarity and even risk, but cannot seem to make cross-college teaching work and fails to honor risk-taking in any formal way.

75. -

76. Not actually defining the criteria for tenure and promotion will ultimately cause the fall of the system and the reliance on non-tenure track faculty for the success of education
77. Inequity of resources across colleges make cross-college collaboration (and hence organizational agility) more challenging since faculty from resource-poor colleges have little to offer financially.
78. Tenure is a gimme. People get it who don't deserve it. Encouraging mediocrity discourages excellence. TOUGHER STANDARDS FOR TENURE and a willingness to deny tenure to nice people if they're not excellent are needed if we want to achieve these goals.
79. Yes, there is not enough integration among regular tenure track faculty, research faculty, visiting faculty, school versus department faculty, etc. This leads to insular decision making. All faculty should be fully engaged in the academic life of RIT. To help achieve that all faculty should be on an equal footing in the tenure and promotion process, as well as all other decision-making.
80. There are perceived barriers that grow from our increasingly fear-based culture. I'm not sure how we can address that.
81. not meeting 50th percentile ranking for salary because of shortfalls
82. The contributions of women and gender minorities are undervalued.
83. no
84. Innovative and transdisciplinary teaching and research takes a lot of time and energy. If this investment is not rewarded at tenure/promotion, there is little incentive to engage in it.
85. Buzzwords conflict with faculty opinion about academic excellence.
86. Yes!!! The portfolios need to be better followed and described. Right now, some colleges (COS) do not take into consideration the portfolio (blended, scholarship?) when candidates are up for tenure. Also, please enforce guidelines. There are some faculty who do little to no research, yet are on balanced portfolio, putting more pressure on early career faculty.
87. Problem with a bias toward the status quo and Intertia - programs currently in growth are at odds with those in decline. There is also a need for greater annual retraining of faculty (and the need to give them the time) in order to achieve greater success moving forward due to the speed of tech change and technology multi-field convergence