

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT  
2018-2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

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## MEMBERS

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Bailey, Reynold

Brewer, William

Christman, Jeanne

Cockburn, Juan

Eastman, Michael

Hudson, Andre

Lanzafame, Joseph [Chair]

Laury (Lauria), Dino

Licata, Christine

McGowan, Aaron

Thompson, Sarah

Worrell, Tracy

Zhang, Hao

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHARGES 2018-2019

## Academic Affairs Committee – Charges

### Carryover charges from 2017-2018:

- AA1. Assess the guidelines for contact time per credit hour in the case of laboratory intensive classes, from college to college, from both the students' and faculty's perspective (teaching load). Determine whether guidelines for contact time per credit hour and student work hours are being appropriately adhered to and, as necessary, suggest how these guidelines might change for more effective operation within the new calendar structure. Identify if this should be an Institute-wide initiative or whether this should remain under the purview of individual colleges or academic units.

**Carried over into 2019-2020**

- AA2. Per policy B05.0, review policy D01.6 – Protocols for Academic Centers (last reviewed in 2008). Senate agreed to move forward to next year *in conjunction with Research & Scholarship Committee on 4/05/18*.

**Carried over into 2019-2020**

- AA3. Review and summarize the report from the OTG Task Force and make recommendations for revision, as necessary, to Course Withdrawal Policy (D.05,IV) <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d050t> and Probation and Suspension Policy (D.05.1) <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d051>.

**COMPLETED: Passed Committee by a vote of 12 to 0. Policy revision passed by Senate January 23, 2019.**

- AA4. AA11 Draft policy to require that all media for courses be captioned in accordance with guidelines provided by the Provost and the Department of Justice. Specify a process to address student concerns regarding captioned media. And to consider implementation implications and edge cases (media heavy courses, assignment that include viewing videos).

**Carried over into 2019-2020**

AA5. Review RIT Policy D2.0 and modify as needed in order to clarify/update the amount of transfer credit allowable for an undergraduate degree.  
<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d020>

**COMPLETED: Passed Committee by a vote of 10 to 1 with 1 abstention. Policy revision passed by Senate in November 2018.**

#### **New Charges:**

AA6. Review policy D.08 and make recommendations for change as necessary. Also revisit D18.2 as there is a discrepancy between Policy D08.0 – Academic Integrity, section VII, which explains the appeals process – and a new policy, D18.2 –Student Appeals Process, which was approved on interim basis. As a reminder, D18.2 was endorsed by all the governance groups in May 2018 but not in time for final action by University Council. That policy includes the process for appeals in regard to D08.0, but outlines a different process than the information currently in D08.0. It may be a simple edit to D08.0 to refer students to D18.2 for information for appealing decisions under D08.0 or it may be more complicated. There is some urgency to this as D18.2 is scheduled for final action at the first meeting of University Council in September. If need be, D18.2 can continue as an interim policy until final action occurs.

In addition, clarify D.08, specifically section V.B. Here are the specific sections of the policy that could use greater specificity:

*V. B. The instructor will notify the student in writing (email is acceptable) as to the rationale for all actions taken pertaining to the breach of student academic integrity within three calendar weeks of the alleged incident. After this time, an allegation may not proceed. Copies of the written notification, either paper or electronic, will be provided to the instructor's academic unit head and the instructor's Dean's Office. The Dean's Office will forward the written notification to the Office of Student Conduct and the student's home academic unit. In cases involving graduate students, a copy will also be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies.*

Clarity needed re timing: Does the clock (3 weeks) begin when the student submits the assignment/test/etc. or is this when the faculty member discovers the potential infraction? I believe the policy makes it clear that it is within 3 weeks of the date that the paper was submitted, test taken, etc. and not three weeks from when the faculty member becomes aware of the potential violation. Even so, there seems to be confusion about this point. For example, if it is a violation on the final exam and students have left for the end of the term, does the policy require the faculty member to communicate over the break? Clarity also needed with regard to what is sent to the instructor's academic unit head and Dean's office. Is it just a copy of what the instructor sent to the student? If yes, then it should say that. If what is sent to the academic unit head and dean's office contains additional information, the student should also receive whatever

information is sent to the department head because the next steps in the process involve meetings between the student and the instructor, department head, and dean's designee. There have been instances when the documentation has not been the same.

**Carried over into 2018-2019**

AA7. Per policy B05.0, review D01.3 – Undergraduate Dual Degree Policy – and either affirm with no changes; make revisions or edits through the appropriate review process; or recommended for decommissioning because it is obsolete or superseded by another policy.

**COMPLETED: Passed Committee by unanimous consent. Affirmed with recommendation for no change.**

AA8. Per policy B05.0, review D11.0 – Final Examination Policy – and either affirm with no changes; make revisions or edits through the appropriate review process; or recommended for decommissioning because it is obsolete or superseded by another policy.

**COMPLETED: Passed Committee by a vote of 9 to 0. Policy revision passed by Senate on 4/18/2019.**

AA9. Per policy B05.0, review D13.0 – Diplomas and Degrees Certification Policy – and either affirm with no changes; make revisions or edits through the appropriate review process; or recommended for decommissioning because it is obsolete or superseded by another policy.

**COMPLETED: Passed committee by unanimous consent. Affirmed with recommendation for no change.**

AA10. Update C22.0 Records Management Schedule to match the various division schedules (owners of the documents) for example the Academic Affairs supplemental schedule. Or just provide the links to the various retention schedules and not have a table that can be misleading.

EXAMPLE:

Item	Retention Period	Official Repository
Academic advisement files	1 year after graduation/last date of attendance	Appropriate Academic Departments

**COMPLETED:** Passed Committee by a vote of 9 to 0. Policy revision passed by Senate on 4/18/2019.

AA11. Survey whether the MyCourses platform is adequate to accommodate different forms of assessment used by faculty.

**COMPLETED:** Results below

## CHARGES CARRIED FORWARD INTO 2019-2020

- AA 1** Assess the guidelines for contact time per credit hour in the case of laboratory intensive classes, from college to college, from both the students' and faculty's perspective (teaching load). Determine whether guidelines for contact time per credit hour and student work hours are being appropriately adhered to and, as necessary, suggest how these guidelines might change for more effective operation within the new calendar structure. Identify if this should be an Institute-wide initiative or whether this should remain under the purview of individual colleges or academic units.

Some thought should be given by Senate to splitting this charge between the Academic Affairs Committee and the Faculty Affairs Committee. The contact time per credit hour is clearly within the purview of AA. The issue of faculty teaching loads would fall with FA.

The Provost's Office was gathering data from the different Colleges. Ultimately, any progress in this area requires a commitment from the Provost's Office and they should probably take the lead on this issue.

- AA 2** Per policy B05.0, review policy D01.6 – Protocols for Academic Centers (last reviewed in 2008)

This effort continues to be a joint effort with the Research & Scholarship Committee. A framework was presented to Senate on 5/02/19 for continuing this work.

Please see documentation below for details.

- AA 4.** AA11 Draft policy to require that all media for courses be captioned in accordance with guidelines provided by the Provost and the Department of Justice. Specify a process to address student concerns regarding captioned media. And to consider implementation implications and edge cases (media heavy courses, assignment that include viewing videos).

This effort is ongoing with discussions with the Provost's Office, NTID, and ILI among others. The suggestion has been made that the policy should be expanded to include all access issues, not just captioning. So we will investigate other access issues including specifically visual impairment.

Please see suggestions below.

AA 6. Review policy D.08 and make recommendations for change as necessary. Also revisit D18.2 as there is a discrepancy between Policy D08.0 – Academic Integrity, section VII, which explains the appeals process – and a new policy, D18.2 –Student Appeals Process, which was approved on interim basis. As a reminder, D18.2 was endorsed by all the governance groups in May 2018 but not in time for final action by University Council. That policy includes the process for appeals in regard to D08.0, but outlines a different process than the information currently in D08.0. It may be a simple edit to D08.0 to refer students to D18.2 for information for appealing decisions under D08.0 or it may be more complicated. There is some urgency to this as D18.2 is scheduled for final action at the first meeting of University Council in September. If need be, D18.2 can continue as an interim policy until final action occurs.

During the investigation of the conflict between D18.2 and D08.0, it was noted that many of the people consulted had concerns about the entire process as applied to issues of Academic Integrity. The Committee feels, with Provost Office support, that it would be best to sit down with Student Government in the Fall Semester and come up with a new process.

Please see the documentation below for further details.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION FOR COMPLETED CHARGES:**

### AA 3

Review and summarize the report from the OTG Task Force and make recommendations for revision, as necessary, to Course Withdrawal Policy (D.05,IV)

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d050t> and Probation and Suspension Policy (D.05.1) <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d051>.

Much of the work on this charge was undertaken by Lynne Mazadoorian and Belinda Bryce with the Student Success Steering Committee. Much of this report is abstracted from their presentation to the Academic Senate on December 13, 2018.

The policy recommendations were arrived at after benchmarking with other schools and looking at the internal RIT withdrawal data.

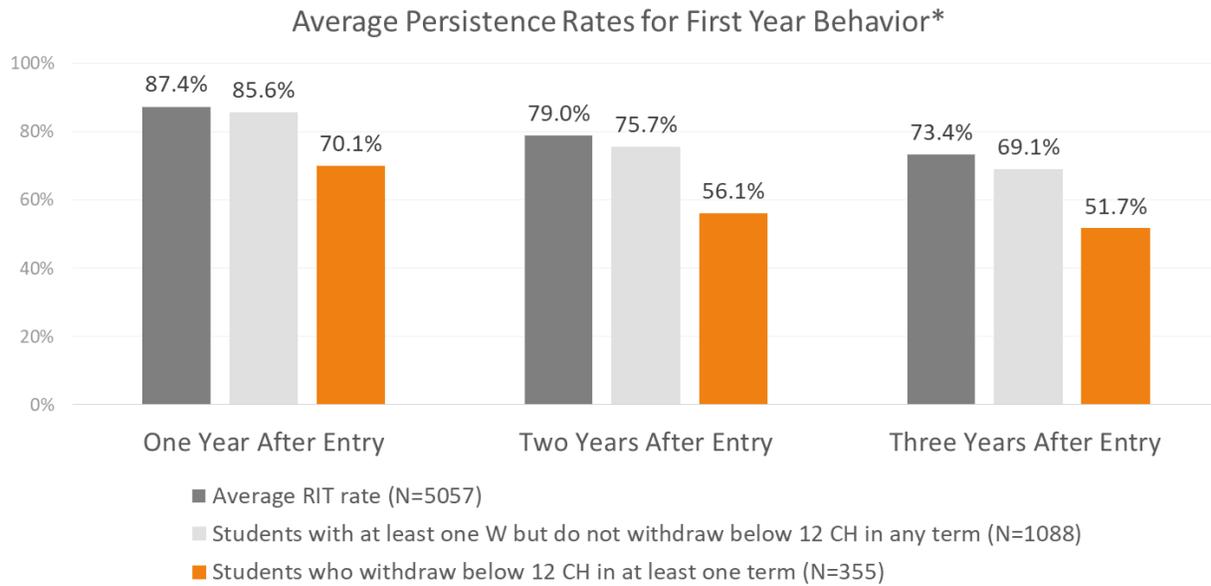
HR originally supplied a list of 21 benchmark schools. The list was narrowed down to 11 representative schools: CMU, Case Western Reserve, Cornell, Drexel, NYU, Northeastern, Purdue, Pace, Syracuse, University of Buffalo, and Virginia Tech.

Of the 11 benchmark schools investigated, nearly all of them have some form of limitation on withdrawals. 7 of the schools require a signature for course withdrawal and 5 of the schools have credit hour limits attached to withdrawal limitations. The deadline to withdraw varied among the benchmark schools, but most were between weeks 9 and 12 of the semester.

RIT's internal withdrawal data shows the following trends:

- Approximately 18% of full time degree seeking undergraduate students withdraw from one or more courses in a term.
- The majority of students who withdraw still maintain a full credit load for that term.
- Approximately 4% of full time degree seeking undergraduate students (or about 500 students per term) withdraw and fall below 12 credit hours.
- Persistence for students withdrawing below full-time status is significantly lower than that for students who do not.
- The issue is not that we allow students to withdraw; the issue is students who withdraw and fall below 12 credit hours.

If you look at the persistence data for First Year students (2013/2014 data), the following trend is observed:



There is some difference in persistence between students who do not withdraw and students with at least one withdrawal. However, there is a significantly lower persistence for students who withdraw below 12 credit hours in at least one term. As a result of this data, the recommendation from the Student Success Steering Committee was to focus on this population of students.

In addition, there are other potential ramifications for the student if they drop down to part-time status due to withdrawals. For student athletes, their NCAA standing is jeopardized. Federal aid students are receiving may be jeopardized as well. As a result, there are serious issues that a student should consider before dropping below 12 credit hours.

The current policy (AY 2018-2019) reads:

#### D.05. IV. COURSE WITHDRAWAL

Students are strongly advised to consult with their academic advisor and instructor before they withdraw from any courses. A student may not use the drop with a grade of “W” option to avoid charges of academic dishonesty or after the instructor has officially submitted the final grade.

Prior to the end of the eleventh week of fall or spring term, a "W" will be assigned upon the student's online request. Students are strongly advised to consult with their academic advisor and instructor before they withdraw from any courses. In processing the request, the student, course instructor, advisor and the home program or department head will be notified via e-mail.

After the eleventh week and up to the last official class day of fall or spring term, a "W" will be assigned only with the approval and written signatures of the student, course instructor, the home program or department head, and the dean from the student's home college. For a student whose program is housed outside the college structure, the approval of the director or director's designee of the student's academic unit is required.

In all other academic sessions and for courses offered in time frames different from standard terms, course withdrawal is available upon the student's request until 80% of the session or course as determined by the Registrar's Office has been completed. After this point and up to the last official class day, a "W" will be assigned only with the approval and written signatures of the student, course instructor, the home program or department head, and the dean from the student's home college. For a student whose program is housed outside the college structure, the approval of the director or director's designee of the student's academic unit is required.

In unusual situations, a "W" may be granted after the last official class day. Such an extraordinary request is administered through the Provost's Office, in consultation with (if possible) the student, course instructor, home program or department head, and dean from the student's home college. For a student whose program is housed outside the college structure, the approval of the director or director's designee of the student's academic unit is required.

While a "W" will appear on the student's transcript, it carries no credit and does not affect GPA.

When a student chooses to drop a course with a grade of "W", full tuition is charged. Courses with a "W" assigned do not count toward the residency requirement.

The rewritten policy as presented and passed by Senate on January 23, 2019 reads:

**D.05. IV. COURSE WITHDRAWAL** (Proposed policy revisions 1.23.19)

Before 80% of a term is completed (eleventh week of a 14 week semester), undergraduate and graduate students will follow their respective processes as outlined below in D.05.IV.A. After 80% of the term is complete, all students will follow the same process described in D.05.IV.B.

**A. BEFORE 80% (11 WEEKS) OF THE TERM IS COMPLETED:**

**A. 1. UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

Students are strongly advised to consult with their academic advisor and instructor before they withdraw from any courses. A student may not use the drop with a grade of "W" option to avoid charges of academic dishonesty or after the instructor has officially submitted the final grade.

Prior to the end of the eleventh week of fall or spring term, a "W" will be assigned upon a full time student's request, providing the student maintains full-time credit status. In processing the request, the student, course instructor, advisor and the home program or department head will be notified via e-mail.

In order for a full time undergraduate student to withdraw below full time status, a student must request for special permission from primary program or department leadership. Undergraduate degree seeking students who are enrolled less than full time may not withdraw from any courses without the approval of primary program or department leadership. (RIT's definition of full time can be found in policy [D02.0.III.E](#))

If approved, the student, advisor, and course instructor will be notified. If denied, the student has the right to appeal the decision to the dean of their primary college in accordance with the college's appeal process.

**A.2. GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Prior to the end of the eleventh week of fall or spring term, a "W" will be assigned upon the student's online request. Students are strongly advised to consult with their academic advisor and instructor before they withdraw from any courses. In processing the request, the student, course instructor, advisor and the primary program or department leadership will be notified via e-mail. A student may not use the drop with a grade of "W" option to avoid charges of academic dishonesty.

**B. AFTER 80% (11 WEEKS) OF THE TERM IS COMPLETED:**

## B.1. ALL STUDENTS

After the eleventh week and up to the last official class day of fall or spring term, a “W” will be assigned only with the approval and written signatures of the student, course instructor, the home program or department head, and the dean from the student’s home college. For a student whose program is housed outside the college structure, the approval of the director or director’s designee of the student’s academic unit is required.

In all other academic sessions and for courses offered in time frames different from standard terms, course withdrawal is available upon the student’s request until 80% of the session or course as determined by the Registrar’s Office has been completed, providing undergraduate students enrolled full time maintain the credit status outlined above in A.1. After this point and up to the last official class day, a “W” will be assigned only with the approval and written signatures of the student, course instructor, the home program or department head, and the dean from the student’s home college. For a student whose program is housed outside the college structure, the approval of the director or director’s designee of the student’s academic unit is required.

In unusual situations, a “W” may be granted after the last official class day, but this must occur before a final grade is posted. Such an extraordinary request is administered through the Provost’s Office, in consultation with (if possible) the student, course instructor, home program or department head, and dean from the student’s home college. For a student whose program is housed outside the college structure, the approval of the director or director’s designee of the student’s academic unit is required.

While a “W” will appear on the student's transcript, it carries no credit and does not affect GPA.

When a student chooses to drop a course with a grade of “W”, full tuition is charged. Courses with a “W” assigned do not count toward the residency requirement.

The main change is that a student dropping below full-time status must get approval from their program leadership.



**AA 5 Review RIT Policy D 2.0 <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d020> and modify as needed in order to clarify/update the amount of transfer credit allowable for an undergraduate degree**

This is a continuation of charge 2016-17 AA 5 and AA 7 2017-18.

Background: Questions have arisen with respect to the amount of transfer credit a student can receive for completion of a two year degree. Policy D 2, Section 1.A, last paragraph, indicates that “Under no circumstances can a recipient of a two-year associate's degree from another institution receive more than two years' transfer credit for that degree. However, applicable courses successfully completed beyond the associate's degree at the upper division or equivalent level may transfer to the student's intended program. RIT residency requirements must be satisfied. (See Policy D.12) degree”.

The question posed by department chairs is what the unit of measurement is here for deciding what ‘two years’ transfer credit for the degree is in terms of actual semester credit hours. Most associate degree programs are 60-66 credit hours. The way some interpret the language of this policy is that you can only transfer in 30 credit hours. Another way to look at it would be to say:

Programs which require 120 semester hours for a bachelor’s degree may transfer at most 60 semester hours from courses associated with the two-year associate’s degree. Programs which require more than 120 semester hours for a bachelor’s degree may transfer at most 50% of their program total from courses associated with the two year associate degree. So, for example a program that requires 126 semester hours could transfer a maximum of 63 semester hours; a program that requires 129 semester hours could transfer a maximum of 64 semester hours. Review is needed to determine if a modification to current policy language is warranted in order to provide clarity of intent and consistency in interpretation.

Policy D 2, Section 1.A, Transfer Credit reads:

“Under no circumstances can a recipient of a two-year associate's degree from another institution receive more than two years' transfer credit for that degree. However, applicable courses successfully completed beyond the associate's degree at the upper division or equivalent level may transfer to the student's intended program. RIT residency requirements must be satisfied. **(See Policy D.12)**”

D.12. AAC does not recommend any changes to Policy D2.0. However, the confusion lay in

Policy D 12, Section II.C, Part of Graduation Requirements currently reads:

“A minimum of 30 credit hours shall be successfully completed in residence at the university in the college granting the degree (inclusive of service courses). If the student has successfully completed 30 credit hours in residence, a petition may be submitted to the dean to study 10 credit hours in absentia in the final year of the degree; at a minimum, 20 of the final 30 credit hours are to be completed in residence.”

Essentially, this policy has three parts:

1. A minimum of 30 credit hours shall be successfully completed in residence at the university in the college granting the degree (inclusive of service courses).
2. ...at a minimum, 20 of the final 30 credit hours are to be completed in residence.
3. If the student has successfully completed 30 credit hours in residence, a petition may be submitted to the dean to study 10 credit hours in absentia in the final year of the degree.

The confusion lay in the numerous numbers present in the policy. Different academic units were interpreting the credit restrictions in different ways. Chris Licata had brought this forward as a charge hoping to establish clarity in the policy.

During 2016-2017, we also discovered that SOIS would like flexibility in the residency requirement. SOIS is helping students complete their degrees when they have left RIT but were close to completion. Their effort requires structuring individualized programs which may include courses not specifically “in residence” at RIT. They require greater flexibility than the current policy implies.

[NOTE: SOIS Executive Director James Hall enthusiastically supported our recommendation saying “Perfect. We love it.”]

A few transfer credit basics [<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/registrar/transfer-credit>]:

- RIT awards transfer credit for courses completed at other regionally accredited colleges and universities only.
- Transfer credit is evaluated by the degree granting unit and the College of Liberal Arts.
- Transfer credit at the undergraduate level will only be granted for course work completed with a grade of "C" or above.

- Regardless of the total amount of transfer credit awarded, a minimum of 30 semester credit hours needs to be completed at RIT in the college granting the degree for Associate and Baccalaureate degree candidates.

Our basic philosophy:

- Add clarity to D12 and simplify where appropriate.
- No significant change to existing residency requirement.
- Maintain flexibility for the degree granting unit to determine which courses count towards the minimum residency requirement.
- Maintain the authority of the degree granting unit, which is fully capable and obligated, to ensure the integrity of their degree.
- Use a percentage of the degree requirement rather than 30 credit hours to broaden applicability to Associate and Bachelor UG degrees.
- Aid SOIS in helping students complete their degrees.

D12.0.II [Current]

A minimum of 30 credit hours shall be successfully completed in residence at the university in the college granting the degree (inclusive of service courses). If the student has successfully completed 30 credit hours in residence, a petition may be submitted to the dean to study 10 credit hours in absentia in the final year of the degree; at a minimum, 20 of the final 30 credit hours are to be completed in residence.

D12.0.II [Mark-up]

A minimum of ~~30 credit hours shall be successfully completed in residence at the university in the college granting the degree (inclusive of service courses). If the student has successfully completed 30 credit hours in residence, a petition may be submitted to the dean to study 10 credit hours in absentia in the final year of the degree; at a minimum, 20 of the final 30 credit hours are to be completed in residence.~~ 25% of the total semester credit hours required for the degree shall consist of successfully completed RIT courses. The degree-granting program shall decide which specific courses shall count to satisfy this requirement.

D12.0.II [Clean, as passed]

A minimum of 25% of the total semester credit hours required for the degree shall consist of successfully completed RIT courses. The degree-granting program shall decide which specific courses shall count to satisfy this requirement.

**AA 7** Per policy B05.0, review D01.3 – Undergraduate Dual Degree Policy – and either affirm with no changes; make revisions or edits through the appropriate review process; or recommended for decommissioning because it is obsolete or superseded by another policy.

**COMPLETED: Affirmed with recommendation for no change.**

Committee members reached out to the Registrar’s Office, the Assistant Dean of Student Services in Saunders COB, as well as Academic Advisers in Saunders for input. No one felt there were any pressing issues that required policy changes.

**AA 8** Per policy B05.0, review D11.0 – Final Examination Policy – and either affirm with no changes; make revisions or edits through the appropriate review process; or recommended for decommissioning because it is obsolete or superseded by another policy.

**COMPLETED: Policy revision passed by Senate on 4/18/2019.**

The current (FY 2018-2019) policy is:

## **D11.0 FINAL EXAMINATION POLICIES**

If the method of student evaluation includes a formal final examination, this exam must be scheduled during exam week as specified in the university calendar. Instructors should make clear in their syllabi whether they are giving a final exam, or if they are planning an appropriate educational activity for the exam week. Instructors will notify their college scheduling officer to include their course in the final examination schedule.

The Registrar's Office will provide the final examination schedule no later than the first day of each term, and make it available to the entire RIT community. Instructors may not change the official date and time of the exam. In extraordinary circumstances, instructors may request their department head for a change in time. The department head will work with the college scheduling officer in an attempt to change the time of the exam. The decision of the department head shall be final.

In case of conflict where the student has two finals scheduled at the same time, service course examinations will take precedence over home department examinations. If both examinations are service course examinations, the class with the larger enrollment will have precedence.

Students have the right (if they wish) not to take three or more final exams in one day. In a case where the student does have three or more finals scheduled on the same day, service course examinations will take precedence over home department course examinations. If two or more of the examinations are in the home department, the department head will resolve the issue. If two or more examinations are service course examinations, the class with the larger enrollment will have precedence over the others.

In all cases by the last day of the 10th week of classes during fall or spring term or in the case of summer term or other sessions less than 16 weeks by the last day of 2/3 of the session, the student should submit a written request for rescheduling to the head of the

home department, with a copy to the instructor being asked to provide the rescheduled examination. By the last day of the 12th week of classes the department head will, after consultation with the parties involved, notify the student of the date of the rescheduled examination. The decision of the department head shall be considered to be final.

If the instructor chooses not to give a formal final examination, it is the expectation that the instructor will treat the exam week as a full component of the academic term. During this exam week, appropriate educational activities should be scheduled, including the opportunity for students to benefit from the instructor's professional counsel.

Our basic approach was to focus on three areas for correction or improvement:

1. Clarify the expectation that Final Exam week is an instructional week.
2. Clarify the language referring to deadlines for rescheduling exams.
3. Leave it better than we found it.

We did not make any significant changes to the general procedures in the policy referring to changing of an exam either by request or to alleviate conflict. The outline of the changes include:

1. Final Exam Week is a MANDATORY instructional period.
2. You are NOT restricted to a traditional seated Final Exam – but it MUST be spelled out in the syllabus.
3. Students cannot be expected to take 2 exams simultaneously or be overly burdened with exams on any one day.
4. There is a process for exceptions which is unchanged but with a simpler to understand timeline.
5. Multi-section courses with a common examination time are treated as one merged section for purposes of the policy.
6. Reading Day is SACRED.

The new policy, as passed by Senate on April 18, 2019

## **D11.0 FINAL EXAMINATION POLICIES**

Final examination week is a mandatory component of the academic term designed to meet New York State and regional accreditation requirements for instructional hours.

The University scheduled final examination time periods meet this requirement. Final examinations are to be given during this time period and instructors must make clear in their syllabi how they will meet this requirement. If the final assessment is not conducive to a scheduled classroom format, the alternative must be clearly stated on the syllabus,

disclosed to the department head, and satisfy the course instructional credit hours as defined in policy D01.V. Under no circumstances shall a final examination or final assessment be scheduled on Reading Day.

The Registrar's Office will provide the final examination schedule and make it available to the entire RIT community no later than the first day of each term. Instructors may not change the official date and time of the exam. In extraordinary circumstances, instructors may request a change in time from their department head. This request must be received by the end of week three. The department head will work with the college scheduling officer in an attempt to change the time of the examination. The decision of the department head shall be final.

If a student has two final examinations scheduled at the same time, the student must request a scheduling change.

Students shall not be required to take more than two examinations or more than twelve (12) hours of exams on a single day. In such an instance, the student may request a scheduling change.

Whenever a scheduling change needs to be made, service course examinations will take precedence over home department course examinations. If two or more of the examinations are in the home department, the department head will resolve the issue. If two or more examinations are service course examinations, the class with the larger enrollment will have precedence over the others. Multi-section courses with a common final exam scheduled will be treated as a single class for these purposes.

In all cases requiring a scheduling change, the student should submit a written request for rescheduling no later than four weeks before the first day of final examinations. The written request should be submitted to the head of the home department with a copy to the instructor being asked to provide the rescheduled examination. The department head will, after consultation with the parties involved, notify the student of the date of the rescheduled examination no later than two weeks before the first day of final examinations. The decision of the department head shall be final.

During our first appearance in Senate on April 4, 2019, several helpful suggestions were raised by Senators. One of the changes was made to the policy ultimately passed: the need to state how multi-section courses with a common exam time would be treated for purposes of this policy.

The other issues raised did not end up being incorporated into the policy, but it is worth recording them for posterity.

The question was raised as to how specific types of capstone events should be treated by the policy when they are not traditional seated exams. For example, the idea of group presentations was mentioned. The nature of the exam certainly should be considered by the Department Chair when she is deciding on how to accommodate the student. However, we felt that the policy would become cumbersome if we tried to address the wide variety of possible evaluative methods used across the University.

Another excellent suggestion was made to come up with a mechanism for faculty who are not having seated finals to communicate that to the Registrar. The Registrar would then have greater freedom in scheduling the courses that do have seated Finals. In the end, the Committee decided not to put such operational details into policy mandates. However, the Provost's Office in concert with the Registrar is looking into changing the Course Outline Section 8D to allow the faculty to designate their alternate means of assessment and opt out of a scheduled final examination period.

The final issue that was raised was the 12 hour maximum in policy. It should be noted that the two exam limit is effectively a 5 to 7 hour limit for most students. The only real issue arises from students who have extended time accommodations which are most frequently 1.5 times the exam period but can be 2 times or more. For a student scheduled to take a 2.5 hour exam and a 3.5 hour exam with a 2x accommodation, the total exam time could stretch to 12 hours which is how we arrived at that number. For most students who have a 1.5 times accommodation and even two 3.5 hour exams, they would not exceed 10.5 hours. Any number less than 10.5 hours would effectively be a one exam per day limit for a 1.5x student with a 3.5 hour exam. Any number less than 12 would effectively be a one exam per day limit for a 2x student with a 3.5 hour exam. The hope would be that faculty would voluntarily accommodate a student with more than 10 hours of scheduled exams, but we were unwilling to make it a hard cap.

**AA 9** Per policy B05.0, review D13.0 – Diplomas and Degrees Certification Policy – and either affirm with no changes; make revisions or edits through the appropriate review process; or recommended for decommissioning because it is obsolete or superseded by another policy.

**COMPLETED: Affirmed with recommendation for no change.**

Committee members reached out to the Registrar’s Office, the Assistant Dean of Student Services in Saunders COB, as well as Academic Advisers in Saunders for input. No one felt there were any pressing issues that required policy changes.

**AA 10.** Update C22.0 Records Management Schedule to match the various division schedules (owners of the documents) for example the Academic Affairs supplemental schedule. Or just provide the links to the various retention schedules and not have a table that can be misleading.

EXAMPLE:

Item	Retention Period	Official Repository
Academic advisement files	1 year after graduation/last date of attendance	Appropriate Academic Departments

**COMPLETED: Policy revision passed by Senate on 4/18/2019.**

No operational changes were made to the policy. Ultimately, two main changes were made within the policy: the conflicting table was removed and the introductory language was streamlined.

The original retention table was an excerpt of the official retention table maintained by the Office of Legal Affairs. The table excerpt was replaced in policy with a reference to the official tables on the Legal Affairs website. Since OLA is the responsible party for this charge, this seemed reasonable.

The Office of Legal Affairs then rewrote the introduction to the policy to omit references to the table and remove language not required for execution of the policy. The original policy with inline changes tracked is located in the appendix to this document as is the new policy, as approved by Senate.

**AA 11.** Survey whether the MyCourses platform is adequate to accommodate different forms of assessment used by faculty.

The Academic Affairs subcommittee added two questions to the RIT Faculty Use of Technology 2018-2019 survey that was distributed in November 2018. Faculty were sent multiple reminders to take the survey throughout the following months. The information that follows was gathered in early March 2019 and includes the information from 263 respondents. The two questions that were added to the survey were the close-ended (responses were yes, no, or don't use MyCourses), "Does MyCourses accommodate the assessment process you use for student work?" If individuals selected "No" they were taken to the open-ended question, "How is MyCourses not meeting your assessment process needs?"

In addition to the added questions the subcommittee also reviewed two questions on the original survey to add additional, informative information to answering this charge. The first was the close-ended (yes, no, don't use MyCourses) question of "Are you satisfied with MyCourses as RIT's Learning Management System (LMS)?" Respondents that answered "No" were then taken to the open-ended question of, "Why are you dissatisfied with MyCourses?"

With a total of 263 responses it was found that 159 (60.5%) of respondents were satisfied with the LMS and 103 (39%) were not with one person reporting that they did not use MyCourses. After examining the comments several themes regarding why people seemed to be dissatisfied with the system were discovered. The full set of comments are contained in the Appendix.

While several comments seemed to be centered on the overall functionality/usability of the system, some specific aspects of the system were discussed as well. Individuals were dissatisfied with the lack of visual display capabilities, the difficulty in grading within the system, and there were specific tab dissatisfactions focusing on quizzes, email, and the dropbox. Additionally, people were dissatisfied with the fact that they were now mandated to use the system and that there were often mid-semester changes/upgrades to the system.

When asked if MyCourses accommodated the assessment process used for student work 155 (60%) of respondents said yes, 96 (37%) said no, and 8 (3%) individuals reported not using MyCourses. Themes identified here include people stating that they did not use MyCourses with some providing reasoning as to why. Concerns also centered on the additional steps required to use the system or the increase in time that using the system would or does create. The overall lack of usability/functionality was discussed here again as well as the lack of flexibility within various parts of the system to meet assessment needs. Specific functionality issues concerning the gradebook, rubrics, providing feedback and with the quizzing system were also

addressed. The lack of integration with other types of software and programs was also brought up multiple times.

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**\*Data from the survey\***

**N = 263**

**Are you satisfied with MyCourses as RIT's Learning Management System (LMS)?**

Yes = 159 (60.5%)

No = 103 (39%)

Don't use MyCourses = 1 (.4%)

**Why are you dissatisfied with MyCourses?**

*Themes presented:* Lack of visual display capabilities, Functionality/Usability, Difficulty Grading, Mandated Use, Mid-semester changes/upgrades, Specific tab dissatisfactions (Quizzes, Email, Dropbox functionality), Other/Misc.

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**Does MyCourses accommodate the assessment process you use for student work?**

Yes = 155 (60%)

No = 96 (37%)

Don't use MyCourses = 8 (3%)

**How is MyCourses not meeting your assessment process needs?**

*Themes presented:* Simply isn't used for assessment, Creates additional steps/time spent, Lack of flexibility, Overall lack of usability/functionality, Lack of integration, Gradebook functionality, Rubric functionality, Feedback, Quizzes Other/misc.

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Looking at some of the comments indicates that training might help alleviate some of the concerns. As a rough approximation, it appears that somewhere between one-quarter and one-half of the identified shortcomings of MyCourses are actually things that can be accomplished within the system. Some respondents actually noted the need for a better understanding of how the system works.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION FOR CARRYOVER CHARGES

**AA 2** Per policy B05.0, review policy D01.6 – Protocols for Academic Centers (last reviewed in 2008)

## **CONCEPT PAPER: NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY FOR RIT CENTERS, INSTITUTES, AND LABORATORIES**

**Authors:** Callie Babbitt (Sub-Committee Chair), Reynold Bailey, William Brewer, Manuela Campanelli, Brian Landi, Larry Villasmil, Richard Zanibbi

### **Background**

The Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) and the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) have been jointly charged with evaluating “Protocols for Academic Centers” (D01.6; last revised in 2008) according to policy B05.0, which calls for review of university-level policies on a five-year cycle. This charge, and the initial formation of the RSC, stem from a 2014 charge to the AAC to evaluate the process by which faculty may affiliate with RIT Research Centers of Excellence. Research carried out in support of these charges revealed broader challenges associated with defining, creating, evaluating, sustaining, and sunseting centers across RIT. The purpose of this background paper is to summarize the identified challenges and the proposed approach to establishing new policy regarding centers at RIT.

### **Challenges**

RSC and AAC sub-groups have researched this charge via meetings with and requests of input from the RIT VP of Research (responsible for “Research Center of Excellence” designation), members and directors of current named “centers,” and the RIT Office of the Provost (responsible office for D01.6), as well as web search of RIT sites and of comparable policies at select benchmark universities. Three key challenges were identified through this process:

Definition of centers: No comprehensive and definitive list of RIT centers exists. In fact, ‘official’ lists have significant variability. Entities labeled “Centers” (which is used to also encompass Institutes or Labs for the purpose of this concept paper) range from broad interdisciplinary research initiatives which may also include academic programs (e.g., Center for Imaging Science, Golisano Institute for Sustainability); to programmatic organizations (e.g., Wallace Center); to

Research Centers of Excellence organized under the VP Research (e.g., Center for Computational Relativity and Gravitation); to faculty-led virtual centers organized around an individual's or group's research program (e.g., Center For Applied Psychophysiology and Self-regulation, and the Center for Accessibility and Inclusion Research).

Purpose of centers: An entity designated as a "Center" may be viewed by internal and external audiences as having a high degree of official organization and support, and as a result, will directly reflect on RIT's brand and reputation. Thus, the designation of Center should be consistent with a purpose aligned with advancing RIT's educational and research mission, and any policy or procedure proposed must include processes and provisions to achieve this aim. However, we must also consider the wide spectrum of activities that Centers may undertake and sufficiently balance competing needs for oversight and efficiency in policy implementation. Therefore, some degree of differentiation will be required, between "University-level" Centers, which would have the highest degree of university support, permanence, and autonomy as well as the greatest responsibility to carry out activities in line with RIT's strategic priorities, and Centers that are formed more flexibly at college, program, or faculty levels with more near-term aims of obtaining external funding, creating new collaborations, or enhancing student opportunities.

Funding of centers: Proposing a mechanism to fund centers is not within this joint committee's charge. However, our research underscored the importance of funding mechanisms, particularly for entities like "University-level" Centers, but also for Centers situated in smaller units (e.g., colleges or departments), which would require funds for equipment maintenance or administrative and technical staff support -- necessary operating expenses that cannot be funded by sponsored projects alone. Currently, Center funding is limited to the designated Research Centers of Excellence, via an overhead return mechanism managed by the VP Research or the current investment in Signature Interdisciplinary Research Areas (SIRAs). This mechanism is imperfect; but more germane to our charge, it is also fundamentally disconnected from University Policy D01.6. Therefore, the challenge is to revise the Center policy to include linkage to procedures governing funding, while leaving adequate flexibility if and when this funding model evolves. In addition, some types of center activities may not require direct institutional funding, and the proposed policy cannot exclude this possibility.

## Proposed approach

The Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) and the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) are jointly recommending that D01.6 be overhauled and re-written. We propose to take the approach of a broad, umbrella Policy that lays out the guiding principles of why Centers are formed and how they advance RIT's mission. The Policy would also include:

- A clear taxonomy that defines different categories\* of Centers based on their scope and purpose
- Principles/Policies for the formation and designation of "University-level" Centers
  - Establishment based on purpose, alignment with RIT strategic priorities, rationale for formation, organizational structure, etc.
  - Management based on by-laws, budget, oversight, etc.
  - Continuation and/or closure based on reporting, performance, and sustained fit with RIT priorities
  - Approval and management of such centers would remain at the university level, e.g., between the Provost and VP Research
  - Designation of center membership and impact of center affiliation on faculty plans of work
- A broader set of principles that describe the purpose and approach to creating, managing, and supporting/funding other Center categories, but which would refer/link to procedures describing oversight and management to the level of college, school, program, department, depending on the nature of the Center and the faculty, staff, and students involved.

### Categories\* of Centers

Benchmarking research highlighted the varied levels at which centers may be organized and the distinct purposes they may fulfill. Following a taxonomy used by the University of Michigan, broad categories of centers are detailed below, along with an example entity at RIT that currently represents each type.

Type of Center	Attributes and Purpose	Examples at RIT
University Center	Participants from multiple schools or colleges organized to carry out high-impact research or education activities that are well aligned with university strategic aims and that would not be possible in normal programmatic operations. Typically characterized by interdisciplinary aims, organizational permanency, program autonomy, and an annual operating budget.	Research Center of Excellence and Signature Interdisciplinary Research Areas (e.g., NPRL, CCRG, MAGIC)
College / School Center	An organization contained within a single academic unit; carrying out research and education efforts in alignment with that unit's academic strategy. Likely to have longer-term funding arrangements.	Center for Imaging Science
Faculty / Virtual Center	Carrying out the teaching, research, or service program associated with a specific faculty member or small group of faculty and students. May be created as part of a recruitment effort or as a way to seek funding or promote efforts to external audiences. May be within a single academic unit or cross multiple units.	Center for Accessibility and Inclusion Research; Document and Pattern Recognition Lab
Sponsored Research Center	An entity formed to carry out efforts related to a grant or sponsored research contract. The activities are primarily dependent on continuation of this funding.	New York State Pollution Prevention Institute
Administrative Center	A unit that plays a supporting role in the university's teaching and research mission but does not carry out their own research activity. Membership may be faculty and/or staff members.	The Wallace Center, Multicultural Center for Academic Success

### **Recommended Next Step (to be endorsed by Academic Senate):**

RSC and AAC sub-groups will draft a revised policy D1.06 in partnership with the Office of the Provost (Provost, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, or delegate) and Vice President for Research and solicit stakeholder input at all levels from individual faculty to current RIT Center Directors, department heads, as well as Deans. The present concept paper will be used as a framework to guide the revised policy.

### **Supplemental Information: University Benchmarks Assessed**

(selected by a priori determination and by web search for university center policies)

Case Western Reserve University  
Clemson University  
Cornell University  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Marquette University  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Texas A&M University  
University at Buffalo  
University of Michigan

### **Supplemental Information: Entities identified as “Centers” via RIT Web search**

*Centers listed on <http://www.rit.edu/centers.html>*

Center for Advancing the Study of CyberInfrastructure  
Center for Bioscience Education and Technology  
Center for Computational Relativity and Gravitation  
Center for Electronics Manufacturing & Assembly (CEMA)  
Center for Excellence in Lean Enterprise  
Center for Imaging Science  
Center for Integrated Manufacturing Studies  
Center for Materials Science & Engineering  
Center for Quality & Applied Statistics

Center for Remanufacturing & Resource Recovery  
Albert J. Simone Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship  
Center for Urban Entrepreneurship (CUE)  
English Language Center  
Golisano Institute for Sustainability  
Image Permanence Institute  
Institute for Business Ethics and Social Responsibility  
IT Collaboratory  
Multicultural Center for Academic Success (MCAS)  
Printing Applications Laboratory (PAL)  
The Simone Center for Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship  
The Wallace Center

*Labs and Centers listed on <https://www.rit.edu/research/labs-centers>*

Albert J. Simone Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship  
Analog Devices Integrated Microsystems Laboratory  
Assistive Technologies Research Group  
Bioengineering Systems Research Group  
Biomechatronic Learning Laboratory  
Biomedical and Material Multimodal Imaging Laboratory  
Brinkman Machine Tools and Manufacturing Lab  
Cary Graphic Arts Press  
Center for Applied and Computational Math  
Center for Bioscience Education and Technology (CBET)  
Center for Electronics Manufacturing and Assembly (CEMA)  
Center for Excellence in Lean Enterprise  
Center for Integrated Manufacturing Studies  
Center for Quality and Applied Statistics  
Center for Remanufacturing and Resource Recovery  
Center for Sustainable Mobility  
Center for Sustainable Production  
Center on Access Technology  
Chemical Analysis Laboratory  
Chester F. Carlson Center for Imaging Science  
Computer Graphics Research Lab  
Digital Image Restoration  
Digital Imaging and Remote Sensing Laboratory  
Document and Pattern Recognition Lab

Golisano Institute for Sustainability  
Granular Materials Laboratory  
Image Permanence Institute  
Imaging Products Laboratory  
Imaging Systems Lab  
Interactive Collaboration Lab  
Interactive Games and Media  
IT Collaboratory  
Lab for Social Computing  
Laboratory for Environmental Computing and Decision Making  
Laboratory for Multiwavelength Astrophysics  
Magnetic Resonance Laboratory  
Multidisciplinary Vision Research Laboratory  
Munsell Color Science Laboratory  
NanoImaging Laboratory  
Nanolithography Research Laboratory  
Nanophotonics Group  
NanoPower Research Labs  
New York State Pollution and Prevention Institute  
NTID Center for Education Research Partnerships  
NTID Department of Research and Teacher Education  
Occupational Safety and Ergonomics Excellence Program  
Open Publishing Lab  
Packaging Science Dynamics Lab  
Print Research & Imaging Systems Modeling Laboratory  
Printing Applications Laboratory  
Printing Industry Center  
Semiconductor and Microsystems Fabrication Laboratory  
Spaceweather Technology and Research (STAR) Laboratory  
Sustainable Energy Systems Research Group  
Sustainable Print Systems Lab  
Systems Modernization and Sustainment Center  
The Center for Detectors  
The McGowan Center  
Thermal Analysis, Microfluidics, and Fuel Cell Laboratory  
Venture Creations Incubator

**AA 4** AA11 Draft policy to require that all media for courses be captioned in accordance with guidelines provided by the Provost and the Department of Justice. Specify a process to address student concerns regarding captioned media. And to consider implementation implications and edge cases (media heavy courses, assignment that include viewing videos).

During the course of working on this charge, many different parties were asked for input including RIT student government (B. Moakley), NTID-NFC (J. Trussel/M. Rosica), RIT ILI (I. Weber/N. Hair), NTID Chairs Council, and Office of the Provost (C. Licata). A tentative draft of the motion is far from being completed; however, we think the proposal could be introduced and exist in Section C: General University Policies from the Governance Policy.

Several other parties need to be included due to the nature of the University Captioning policy that impacts every stakeholder at RIT. The parties that Academic Affairs needs to solicit information, resolve questions to finalize the motion for the plan. Open questions include:

1. Do we need an ad-hoc/task force to complete the motion language? Two different venues were suggested during discussions. First, shall the Office of the Provost revive the former Provost-DPAC (Deaf Professionals Access Committee)? The second venue was to assign the associate deans of each college and solicit information.
2. There are several remaining questions the committee needs to resolve before finalizing the policy. Who will be the responsible party for the policy? Depending on the obligations of a steward, shall the Provost's office, Compliance Office, DSO, ILI, or others to take on the responsibility of the policy?
3. The compliance/legal affairs office (Erin Druthers) has not been contacted as of this writing.
4. It makes sense to expand the policy to include all access issues beyond just captioning.
5. ILI has the resources to resolve/assist captioning (average turnaround is currently 3-4 days).

AA 6 Review policy D.08 and make recommendations for change as necessary. Also revisit D18.2 as there is a discrepancy between Policy D08.0 – Academic Integrity, section VII, which explains the appeals process – and a new policy, D18.2 –Student Appeals Process, which was approved on interim basis. As a reminder, D18.2 was endorsed by all the governance groups in May 2018 but not in time for final action by University Council. That policy includes the process for appeals in regard to D08.0, but outlines a different process than the information currently in D08.0. It may be a simple edit to D08.0 to refer students to D18.2 for information for appealing decisions under D08.0 or it may be more complicated. There is some urgency to this as D18.2 is scheduled for final action at the first meeting of University Council in September. If need be, D18.2 can continue as an interim policy until final action occurs.

**Summary of the charge:** The initial charge had several suggestions for review. The concerns included:

- Request for clarity on the timeframe requirement for notification to student. The existing policy states the instructor will inform the student of an academic integrity breach “... within three calendar weeks of the alleged incident. After this time, an allegation may not proceed.”
  - o It is unclear if this timeframe commences when the assignment is submitted by the student, when the assignment is returned to the student, when the faculty initially grades the assignment, or when the faculty member discovers the potential breach of academic integrity.
  - o Can this timeframe extend beyond a semester break? Beyond graduation?
- The existence of a conflict between D18.2, which describes the appeal process and D08.0, which includes a section that describes the appeal process.
- Request for clarity regarding information provided to department chair and dean from the faculty member. Does this only include what the faculty member provided to the student? If what is provided to department chair and dean contains additional information, the student should receive that additional information. However, this is not addressed in existing policy.

**Findings:** In speaking with academic leaders, the ombudsperson, and the Associate VP for student affairs, we came to understand overall concerns with this policy stretch well beyond the concerns identified in the original charge. Our meetings confirmed concerns introduced in the initial AA charge in addition to:

- A concern that too many levels of meetings exist; may intimidate student, making a student feel that (s)he is being “ganged up on”. In the current meeting hierarchy, the student alone meets with one or more faculty/administrators.
  - o First meeting with instructor
  - o Second meeting with Instructor and Department Head/Chair
  - o Third meeting with Instructor, Department Head/Chair, Dean
- A desire for student advocacy earlier in the process. Currently, there is no consideration for advocacy until the Academic Integrity Committee Hearing
- The current policy states that email is sufficient “... form of communication for all contact regarding a breach of academic integrity” and “Meetings can be face to face or through technology”. There is a concern that student should be able to have a face to face meeting if desired and that “technology” does not provide enough clarity.
- The current policy lacks a standard of evidence to identify academic dishonesty. Terms such as ‘clear and convincing’, a ‘preponderance’ of evidence have been suggested.
- The current policy is not followed. This is most evident in that student conduct receives a dearth of academic dishonesty evidence.
- Should policy provide guidelines for consistency of faculty response for a first offense? In other words, should the offense result in an ‘F’ on the assignment? A written warning only? An ‘F’ in the class? Expulsion?
- No between-meeting timeline is established in current policy. Guidelines or requirements for moving to the next step of the appeal process should be provided.
- Should the timeframe for a student grade dispute be similar to the timeline for identification and notification of when an incident of academic dishonesty occurred
- There is no mechanism provided in policy that requires long-term tracking of academic dishonesty. As such, we as an institute do not truly know if we have a problem with academic dishonesty.
- Should the institute create a form to document academic dishonesty that would aid in the tracking issue?
- An overarching question exists about the appeal process. Should academic dishonesty appeals be processed in a similar fashion to other academic action (e.g. Student grade dispute), or should the appeals process go through the academic affairs side of the house (student conduct) as current policy dictates.
- Currently, when a student receives an academic suspension, the department/college can decide whether or not to permit that student to return to his/her original department. This is not the case for academic dishonesty. At least some academic administrators feel the policy should give explicit authority via policy to the college to not accept an egregious or repeat offenders back into the college.

Note: to align policy D08 and D18.2, changes will be required in both policies. If D0.8 ultimately references policy D18.2 for the appeal process, provisions for the faculty side of the appeal process will need to be addressed.

Recommendations: It is our recommendation that policy D08 receive a complete revision well beyond the scope of the original charge. The revision should include input from appropriate constituents including student government, faculty, administration, student conduct, the ombuds office, and student affairs.

## APPENDIX

## COMPLETE MYCOURSES SURVEY RESULTS

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### \*Data from the survey\*

N = 263

Are you satisfied with MyCourses as RIT's Learning Management System (LMS)?

Yes = 159 (60.5%)

No = 103 (39%)

Don't use MyCourses = 1 (.4%)

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### Lack of visual display capabilities

I have two issues with the current system. It is very challenging to incorporate color for deaf users. Modifying the visual display is almost non-existent.

It does not allow use of color to make items visually clear for deaf users

I use MyCourses extensively and it is not flexible or easy to use. It is very difficult for faculty in art and design and does NOT support what we are trying to do with your students. Students hate it and faculty hate it. I use it but hate the lack of interface design and lack of support for art/visual course work.

I produce a lot of videos and I want to be able to integrate formative assessments into them. There are a lot of applications that would allow us to do it but they do not play on our LMS. Please address this.

It does not offer a good solution for large media projects or version control for source code. Both things our students are required to do on assignments. So usually assignments end up split between a version control system such as git with final written reports being submitted to MyCourses.

Would like better analytics on student use of course materials, videos specifically. Would love better connection of MyCourses to SIS to RIT Assessment system for continuous improvement/assessment efforts and program accreditation. Better connection of systems!!

Students have difficulties uploading videos to MyCourses. It would be nice to have video threads for a discussion board.

## Functionality/Usability

When courses are copied it currently creates duplicates. In the older system it did not.

Too much tedium in the use of the many features. Managing a large class and grading submissions of 80+ students, with multiple clicks required to open and close windows &c. adds substantially to instructor workload. MyCourses also has too many features, mastery of which seems to require too much effort from the students and hence go unused resulting missed communication and assignment and poor instructor ratings.

Clunky interface. The current system where I have to pin things to see them easily is annoying. For those of us here for years there are dozens (hundreds) of items to view to find a course or group.

It's easy to drag and drop files to put material on for a course, but everything after that is clunky.

The UI is terrible and even the simplest tasks such as setting up discussions with random groups of students or responding to student work in the dropbox requires about twelve more clicks than necessary. Nothing is intuitive and is so cumbersome I forget how to do things from semester to semester. I tried uploading the syllabus and schedule to Content as HTML files and it was a disaster as the WYSIWYG editor glitched out--I wasn't able to edit text in a table or add hyperlinks for example--and frequently wouldn't save changes or crash the browser. I thought this might be a Chrome issue but it was equally bad with Microsoft Edge. I suppose it must be great for big lectures and standardized tests, but that's the exact opposite of how I teach and MyCourses frustrates my aims. I will use MyCourses as little as possible in the future. While I've heard Blackboard is no better, I have heard great things about Google Classroom and it's a shame that it isn't in our suite of Google apps.

There is too much unnecessary information that is thrown at the user. Navigation is difficult and not intuitive. Users would like to click one or twice and get what they want.

I am dissatisfied for the reason that essentially everyone is. It's awkward software in an era in which almost all software is convenient and easy to use. The fact that I am now required to use it is particularly irksome.

Web interfaces are painful. Integration with Excel is poor.

Painfully slow; extremely poor UX; emphasis on visual appeal rather than functionality; kludgy integration between assignments/discussions and gradebook; incredibly cumbersome interface for viewing and evaluating discussion submissions. Slow response (or, as is more frequently the case, no response at all) by vendor to critical and reasonable feature requests. No capability to export content into Common Cartridge or other cross-CMS format.

It's clunky AF. To do even simple tasks like setting up a dropbox assignment, with a deadline, and Turnitin requires multiple clicks on multiple pages. Doing a quiz is even worse.

Copying schedules from one semester to the next is more work than redoing it from scratch.

interface feels clunky sometimes (better than it was two years ago, still clunky)

Everything takes too many clicks, and bulk edit doesn't actually allow bulk editing (like setting many files to draft or deleting many files).

PDF display inside MyCourses is terrible, ugly, inconsistent; downloading is the only solution.

MFA times out waaay to quickly - why do I need to do that multiple times per day??

It wastes too much of my time. E-mail and SIS wastes less time.

The biggest frustration, and it's not Ken Kindler's fault, but when I have a serious issue the most common response is that's something we can ask about or that's a known issue.

For example, after copying a course over I suddenly had someone else's question library associated with my exams - not mine. Any attempt to fix it did not work. The folks behind MyCourses (not our RIT folks, the vendor) seem in no hurry to answer this question from July...

Or if you do copy a complete course over you need to manually update every discussion, every quiz etc for when they open and close... how hard would it be to set a number of days and time-shift the whole course? Apparently this is impossible - creating a lot of busy work between semesters. Now multiply this by four or five courses every semester. you see the frustration?

It takes too long to login and do something quickly, like enter or edit a grade, etc.

The courses I teach are set up as project-based courses CAD - VCD & New Media. Sharing student work with other students, off-line discussions & review are instrumental to project development. MyCourses does not support work sharing in an effective way. I have been using MyCourses to cover the requirements of use for RIT, but have been distributing course information and having students post process work via dropbox paper and have been using other applications like Notion or Basecamp as these are more closely aligned with industry standards for project management. Students are able to develop professional practices as well as meet our course needs for information and work sharing.

I'm dissatisfied because I find myself getting angry with it for a number of reasons. I wish it were better, more responsive, easier to use, more flexible, more powerful, less buggy, more robust, etc, etc. But I may never be 'satisfied' with the service... I hope it's continually improved. It needs to be, that's for sure.

Cumbersome; doesn't have the necessary functionality; requires extra steps that aren't always the most efficient and direct way to communicate with the entire class.

In many ways, MyCourses is not terrible. But, I am often very frustrated with its lack of transparency for controls and the inconsistencies across functions for the different features. Improving the usability by even just 20% would make a huge improvement on the site overall.

Having seen Canvas in use, and being reasonably familiar with Blackboard, it seems clear that while every LMS software has its quirks, most provide more functionality than MyCourses.

Cumbersome. Students don't really use it consistently, even though the SG is forcing us to for grades. (But that is not what you are asking.)

Too cumbersome and visual noise!

I'm quite capable of crafting my own means of distributing material to students. I find MyCourses to be ill-suited and cumbersome. For example, I write a shell script to send individualized emails to each student. I upload content to my RIT web site, allowing students to simply download it using their favorite browser. I only accept hardcopy assignments (for pedagogical reasons).

It is very cumbersome to use. There so many layers to go through just to get one action done. Just not user friendly nor intuitive to managing academic content online

We can do better. Creating files in HTML is kludgy, showing grades to students is cumbersome, copying courses makes all items visible, deleting a course and starting over creates double grades and drop boxes, there is no way to view student activity - how long did they study or what things did they view?, embed video? auto caption? where is history of faculty use if another faculty member deletes something(yes it happens)

It's a very poorly designed web application. It has major usability issues, lacks the sophistication of contemporary web tools, lacks the flexibility to support different classroom scenarios and is generally a full on piece of shit. I use it, but only because it's mandated. Otherwise I'd use another online collaboration tool.

The interface is difficult/confusing to use and inconsistent among similar tasks. The software is buggy.

Too difficult to do simple things; not enough flexibility to do the things I want to.

Copying material from one semester to another or from one section of the same class to another in a semester is so difficult that I just don't do it. I retype things by hand. Why is this so hard? If there is an easy way to do it, please make training available.

Everything is at least twice as difficult as it ought to be. I avoid using MyCourses as much as possible for a variety of reasons. When I download student work, why is there a long numeric code before their last name? I have to manually change each file name to sort alphabetically. Why do dropboxes and other features appear hidden? It's counterintuitive to create something and then make it visible? Why is it so difficult to see all the messages in a discussion board and navigate between them? Why do I need to click on each post title to indicate I've read it, when I usually scroll down through responses? Why does the visual editor refuse to save and crash my browser when I'm trying to use the HTML feature to get the page to look like I want? Why are we paying so much for a system that literally no faculty member I know finds satisfactory? Why can't we enable Google Classroom as another option?

Not user friendly. I can do everything I need to do electronically without MyCourses.

Somewhat clumsy and constrained user interface.

It is not user friendly and seem limiting.

MyCourses has the worst User Interface of any LMS on the market. It is the opposite of intuitive. If any of our students handed in something that looked like MyCourses - we would fail them. Extremely SLOW when going from page to page even course to course as I teach more than one class. Does not make any difference what browser I use!

Not very user friendly. Prefer other LMS such as Canvas.

Porting between terms is full of bugs.

Slow. HTML editor is very poor, Hard to use (not intuitive). I am sure it has capability I am not using, but I do not have the time to figure it out. The course support information/tutorials are too time consuming. Overall, it is really quite poor.

It is better than Blackboard, but worse than Canvas. The usability of the website is horrendous -- why are there so many frames/windows for assignments, and why can't we adjust the size of them, for example? There is little consistency within the site across things like uploading and publishing documents or making materials available. The inability to order and manage how items appear means that I and students must scroll endlessly when there is a lot of content. And after 15 weeks of lectures, there tends to be quite a bit. (For reference, when selecting a content item on the left that is at the bottom of the contents list, the main window--in the center--should scroll to the top if that list of items is short, but not scroll the left navigation. Oftentimes, selecting content on the left doesn't change anything because the change is too far up on the main window. Users can't distinguish the difference and can't tell that anything was even selected. This is bad usability).

It is a pain to use.

Technology is supposed to make things quicker and easier for the user - and this platform does the opposite. I have used Blackboard at other institutions and it is lightyears ahead of MyCourses. I actually enjoyed using Blackboard. MyCourses makes me angry every time I have to use it.

Feels very primitive. Not smart. Google, Canvas, and other LMS is much better than MyCourses. Easy to use. Less steps. Need LMS to be more interactive and user friendly.

Overall it is a very powerful system which only the top 5% of users can exploit. The rest of us just curse and guess until it finally relents.

I say I'm dissatisfied not because I want to scrap it and use something else, but that I just want it to work better than it does.

Certain tasks have safeguards in place while others do not. For example, when copying over course elements from one course to another, the button for Copy all elements is highlighted in blue - usually a highlighted button signals to the user This is the button you want to use! I have accidentally clicked it several times in the past, and there is no safeguard (no pop-up asking if I'm sure I want to copy over all elements to this course). Once an entire course is copied over, you have to individually delete every. single. thing. that was copied.

default settings are clunky, takes way too much time to set up and use

Challenging to use for the most part

It is not intuitive to set up and organize, students rarely go on there to look at anything (even when it's required to do so), there are not enough detailed grading options (I've called many times to ask/request this to no avail), and it does not promote group work/discussions adequately for my course needs. Shared documents in Google Drive or on Dropbox Paper are 100x times better and easier for both students and faculty to use.

MyCourses is not intuitive and I have been using this system for over 10 years. It has not kept up with the learning platforms that students use in k-12. It would be a good idea for the next platform to mirror what students are using in k-12. These k-12 platforms are light years ahead of MyCourses. Learning in real time, ability to text, ability to create portfolios... MyCourses did not keep up!

Doing anything in MyCourses is about twice as many steps as it should be, and the whole experience is very clunky. There are too many options, too many steps to do simple things, and it's rarely clear what actions will do or how students will see the end result. Conveying calculated

grades to students should be a default, not a ludicrously complex task that doesn't even make sense. The pinned courses need to be in some semblance of order. Uploading content should be two steps shorter. Downloading batches of content shouldn't rename all the files to an unintelligible sequence of numbers. Many repetitive tasks should be either automated or more easily batch-processed, like changing start/end dates or changing quiz submission defaults.

generally things are clunky and not easy to move around

lots of clicking to get to functions that feels slow and redundant

Far too much clicking to get things done. Text editing is super clumsy. MFA times out waaay too often and thus gets in the way. Managing multiple courses is a pain because I can't simply keep multiple tabs open. No way to move an attached document (such as in a Discussion) to the course content area (for example, making a student-provided PDF an assigned reading).

The tool is not flexible and it does require a lot of extra work to navigate in comparison to Blackboard or similar platforms.

We should certainly update. We do look real bad for an institute of technology. Sorry!

Lack of flexibility. What flexibility it does have is convoluted and non-intuitive - it requires me to reach out to tech support to figure out. Reporting is downright primitive. This is 2019 and it seems like we're still using a 2014 LMS.

The process for deletion is different in quizzes, grade items, dropboxes, news items. Sometimes you need to check the boxes next to each item before pressing delete. Othertimes, you press the boxes after pressing delete. And yet other times, you need to click the small down arrow next to the item to delete items individually. It can be infuriating - and one more task to add to our plates - to choose the wrong process or remember the process for every delete task.

Groups are maddeningly confusing to set up.

The set-up takes far too much time. The unhelpful updates mean work that I've done is wasted, and I have to spend time learning the new requirements. Faculty should NOT be asked to waste time on ineptly developed software.

It is clunky and slow. It is far far easier to send students information via email.

Extremely slow..... The above issue is worsened when you consider how long it takes to load any page on the way to MyCourses.

Many clicks + super long loading times means that the best option is to avoid using MyCourses as much as possible.

It is a pain to set up for each class each term. I've moved to GitHub repos, Google Docs and a Trello board for most of my classes.

Mostly satisfied. Managing the courses is my biggest issue. It is a pain to change the dates on multiple items at once. Creating submodules where I want them is a problem. I have to move them once I create them. Copying course materials from one course to another is a pain if all I want are the content headings but not the actual content.

Between all the features available on MyCourses, there are very few that help me. For everything else I have to put in more time rather than it helping me. The incompatibility between SIS and MyCourses makes instructors do the entire work twice.

We need linking within a course to be a LOT easier. There are still things that can't be linked to from a Schedule, for example.

We need the ability for wiki to exist within MyCourses instead of sending students out of MyCourses.

It wastes massive amounts of time. First of all, it is really slow to load. And since the mobile version came out, it now takes numerous clicks and endless scrolling up and down on your laptop screen (even when you make the text so small you can hardly read it) when you try to give feedback, enter grades, or respond to discussion posts.

It is very BUGGY on my iPad

Bloated system that does not always work properly for large assignments

All in all, I appreciate the idea of MyCourses, and it has made grading and distribution of content easier, but it's a huge headache to do lots of things, and we have no choice but to deal with it.

default to repeat discussion post needs to be eliminated.

default to display 20 students/persons should change to 200.

cannot enforce names of submitted files.

cannot create scripts that process submissions.

the CS dept has a better submission system designed specifically for submitting, testing and grading software that I prefer to use instead of the drop boxes.

Ultimately, web based applications are inferior to native applications.

When selecting custom images to use as the thumbnail for each course, MyCourses switches them on me twice a semester, every semester - once in the beginning, and once more in the middle of the semester.

### Difficulty grading

MyCourses makes a number of assumptions about the way one is grading and weighting assignments to create a final grade. I use my own spreadsheets to do this work, and simply want to send the final results -- a single column of numbers, one per student -- via MyCourses. It is difficult to set up MyCourses to permit this; the system assumes that one will perform all the grading work on MyCourses, and use the total grade computed in that way as the final grade.

Grade input is not smooth even with spreadsheet uploads.

Uploading grades is difficult. For example, the output that we get from Scantrons are not easily uploaded to MyCourses.

The grading piece is the worst -- not at all intuitive and therefore not user friendly

It is not integrated with the registrar's system so we can't easily submit final grades.

can't combine different grading metrics (qual and quant)

It is slow and very counterintuitive/ difficult to use from the instructor perspective. Grading section is not worth time to set up for some course types.

Pretty much entirely due to grades/grading. Depending on the section, I give 3-4 exams per semester, but I also offer OPTIONAL writing assignments. I tell students on my syllabus that, but also that if they do do these assignments, they can pick up extra points. I don't feel there's a place for these. In MY mathematical scheme, any points received get added ONLY to the lowest exam grade, which is then added to the remaining exams and the total is divided by 3 or 4. If it's 3 exams/semester, then the exams are 90% of their grade; if it's 4 exams, it's still 90% (each exam is 22.5% i/o 30%). But I can't add/won't/don't add those points in on MyCourses because (1) their lowest grade could be the final; (2) it's why too much work to do for classes that typically range between 75-100 students each; and (3) even if a student has handed one of these writings in, I don't typically even read it until the end of the course because that's when they are all due. But because they see it as a graded assignment, they expect it to be included somehow. But this is where things get really ugly: that remaining 10%, as is posted on my syllabus, is for participation and/or improvement. it's not much but it could be the difference between a +/- . The problem with MyCourses and the fact that grades HAVE TO BE POSTED is that it takes away my ability to reward a student's EFFORT, even if maybe the points don't add up. And it's probably going to end up taking away the optional assignments with extra points because

students are making it way too unpleasant to grade with their expectations that everything is supposed to be now and transparent. And, if that were not enough, I still do not find the platform user friendly. Just setting up grades, forget my crazy criteria, is a huge and unpleasant, unintuitive pain.

Also, making the grading simpler to input would be great.

Setting up grading is a nightmare. Especially as we are now mandated to set up grading in it. Enter grades is awful and often I have to re-enter grades because the system erases grades I have entered. MyCourses is one of the worst things about working at RIT.

Transferring the gradebook to Excel always brings along column headings I don't want.

The grade book doesn't work very well. Maybe I haven't figured it out but the gradebook forces me to say how much each quiz counts toward the total quiz score. But I don't know, in advance, how many quizzes I'll give, so I don't know, in advance, how much each is worth.

Also, I haven't figured out how to, say, have the gradebook automatically drop the lowest two quiz scores. Can it do that?

Since we're now required to use MyCourses to report grades, I would have hoped that the gradebook section would be better.

Grades have been wiped out in the past. An entire column that I entered grades for (and saved!) were missing later that day.

grading system can't handle mixes of kinds of scores

I keep grades in a spreadsheet on my computer. It is difficult to convert the information in my spreadsheet into a format that MyCourses will use.

Why is the gradebook so clumsy to use if you're not using a strict numeric grading system?

I would prefer to have more control over the environment and how things are going to be presented to the students. I would like to have the ability to modify my gradebook more easily as a spreadsheet or make interactivity with Excel (or other external software) more seamless.

The import/export tool, along with the built-in grade calculation functions, do not meet my needs. The import format is too restrictive for me. I want to be able to write my own functions for grade computation in Excel without having to click a bunch of buttons in MyCourses. I want to be able to use a spreadsheet to track average scores on individual assignment or exam problems and then use the spreadsheet to add up the point totals. The features I am looking for (which would convert me to a MyCourses advocate) are as follows: (1) an embedded full-

function spreadsheet, such as a Google docs spreadsheet, that I could open up inside of MyCourses. I understand that this would require extra features or work on my part to indicate which parts of the gradebook should be displayed to students. (2) if #1 isn't possible, the next best thing would be to be able to directly copy and paste a column of spreadsheet numbers from Excel into a MyCourses grade item, rather than entering scores one at a time, or using the import/export tool.

The grade book does not provide the options I used to have when I kept my grades in a spreadsheet. As just one example, when I want to have a voluntary extra credit assignment I run into difficulties that technical support people could not solve. I wanted to permit averages for a particular category to go beyond 100%, but not beyond 105%. I was told that if you permit averages to rise higher than 100%, you can not also set a limit beyond which they should not rise. As a result I must keep two grade books and warn students that the grade they see in MyCourses is possibly lower than their true grade, since it does not include extra credit.

The grading construct is so confusing, I don't ever use it.

Would like better online report grading, marking up and commenting with standard comments, highlighting areas, adding references and then feedback on student usage of comments/links.

feedback using the feedback box is clunky, too small, and doesn't migrate into grades area

Simple tasks like editing the grading scheme for a new semester are stunningly complex.

Nightmare grading module, and just overall poor quality system. If only we worked at a place that understood the use of technology....

can't give feedback in feedback boxes on assignments that auto-populates into the grading area

### Mandated Use

I use MyCourses for only two purposes: to send E-mail to the entire class, and to transmit grade information -- the latter only because RIT has mandated all faculty to do so via MyCourses. I have other means to transmit grade information which are easier for me.

The problem is only in part due to the assumptions made in the MyCourses grading tools. The real problem is that RIT has mandated that all faculty must use MyCourses to transmit grade information.

When students ask about grades or send email, I, personally, respond. MyCourses automates away personal contact. I lose a chance to discuss matters with individual students when they show interest in their grades.

When students would come to my office to ask about grades, it was a chance to discuss their progress. Technology makes that much less frequent.

We are now required to use this awful product. Why are we paying for it? Why not use a free alternative, such as Moodle (used at NTID), which has no license fee but does have paid support available? With an open source alternative, we are assured we will not be forced into another platform change as we had been in 2005 when we had to migrate from Blackboard to D2L (now Brightspace). We would save hundreds of thousands of dollars, and have better response from the developers.

It's not user friendly and it takes up too much of my time. The fact that it's now mandatory for our college CAD is bothersome. This is exactly the kind of corporatization of RIT that I find so troublesome. I don't teach science or engineering or anything that can actually be measured by a rubric. I teach art courses, whether they're more technique or theory depends on the class but MyCourses is much more of a hindrance than any help.

#### Mid-semester changes/upgrades

Changes to the Drop Box mid-semester did not work well and should have been delayed until between semesters. All changes to how the system works should be delayed until between semesters.

Tired of wasting my time relearning how to do the same task after each upgrade; leave it alone.

Major reason: The [expletive deleted] who work at D2L decided to update our version of MyCourses and remove functionalities \_in October\_, halfway through the semester. The functionalities that they deleted (particularly the ability to score long-answer essay quiz questions with a rubric) were ones that I was using this semester, and eliminating them without warning meant that I lost midterm essay grades for three courses. I was eventually able to recover the scores (although it was time-consuming), but updating and removing things mid-semester should be unacceptable.

It changes all the time, is NOT intuitive at all

I am not satisfied with the transitions from year to year.

#### Quizzes

Quizzes are not well suited to anything other than multiple choice.

The quizzes area doesn't allow students to upload pictures as answers, and couldn't make multi-person quizzes (for team assignments) work

Quizzes have to be constructed using third-party utilities in order to have a robust set of randomized questions.

Certain types of quiz questions allow you to choose options when you first make the question. After the question is created, you cannot edit those options. You have to delete and re-make the question. For example, if I make a short answer question and need to change it to written response before I save, I can. But once I complete making the short answer question and go back to edit the question, the drop-down menu to change to a written response is there but grayed out.

Can't incorporate not text into quizzes and tests

I am mostly satisfied, but there are a few features that are pretty clunky. And mostly, it is extremely slow to respond and it takes much longer than it should to do simple tasks, such as upload files, or enter and manage grades, or set up new grade items. I'd like to see improvements to the Quizzes tool. I find it time consuming to create quizzes, and awkward to copy a quiz from one course section to another section. I'd like to see the News tool have an option to additionally email all the students as well as post the new item. (Like they have on Blackboard).

Random events such as my quiz library disappearing when I copy a course and someone else's question library being attached to my courses...

Managing and creating quizzes is cumbersome and clunky at times. It is not easy to review and edit and import questions.

### Email

A single email can take widely divergent amounts of time to arrive to recipients. Some will receive the message immediately, and others after an hour. This is independent of where they receive email.

Also, sending emails to the whole class is a problem. I wish there was an email address that could be used directly from our email address instead of doing it within MyCourses.

Email editor is crappy; many times a stray keystroke deleted an entire composition that had to be restarted.

Too many clicks required to get to any meaningful action. For example, if I want to send an email to all students in one of my classes, I have to click many many times before I get to the screen from where this can be done. This is true for almost any meaningful action that needs to be performed.

## Dropbox functionality

Minor reason: I'd like a dropbox that allows for multiple gradable assignments. I have students submit seven reading responses to weekly reading assignments (giving them some flexibility, since they only have to respond half of the weeks of the semester). I would like to score these with a simple 3-point rubric, but unless I set up 15 weekly dropboxes, this is impossible.

Using dropbox and grades have to enter Score Out of Twice

About 30% of the time it can't show the (Word/PDF) assignment (length of assignment not a factor) and wants me to download it. I don't want to download them, just read them and grade them.

MyCourses has become very slow over the years. I have students submit weekly reading response to ensure they read and reflect on the readings, so they are prepared for class discussions. Currently, I have them submit these responses through the dropbox. However, opening/downloading every single response takes considerable time; in addition, I have scroll down in two different window frames so that I can finally enter the grade through the dropbox. The grading would be much quicker if the responses were submitted on paper, and I just had to flip the paper. I am seriously considering going back to paper submissions.

In addition, for my double section, I assumed it would be possible to automatically give points for dropbox submissions (for the mere submission, not an evaluation). It turns out this is not possible.

There's no easy way update open and close dates for assignments and dropboxes that repeat from semester to semester - having to manually change each date is a huge waste of time. I'd like to say to the entire course change all open and close dates by XX days and then edit the few outliers...

We need the default when creating a Dropbox to be visible to students (the way it was in the previous iteration) - why is not visible to students a good default?

Additionally, it's easy to miss making an assignment dropbox public because the default is that students can't see it.

Setting up assignments using Dropbox takes too many steps. Few things can be cloned

## Other/Misc.

Student activity tracking could be improved.

Inconsistent ways to edit and set restrictions within different parts of a course. I've been told, for example that the difference between Discussions and Dropboxes is because those parts are managed by different folks at MyCourses. Why do I care? I just want everything to work the same.

I have to rely on someone else to merge my sections of the same course. And then I don't know which students is in which section.

I merging classes with each other would be helpful. I don't feel like the people who design and implement its features are in touch with what academic needs really are. It is possible that I just don't have a good grasp on the features and how to get them to do what I want, but if the way to get them to behave how I want are inscrutable to me (and I need to have complicated instructions to make it work) then it strikes me that the design must not be very good.

Several reasons - a big one is that there are many times when I think that a date is inputted correctly and it's not; the feedback system is awkward and not very flexible; doesn't play well with other systems.

When a student withdraws from a course all record of their existence seems to disappear. Including work that they have submitted and I have graded, and a record of that should continue to exist. 3. The duo login system is awkward.

There are far better platforms with which we would be far better served. Blackboard is one that works quite well. Instead of trying to tweak to fit our needs look into other platforms.

There are no options to remove past courses from yourself. MyCourses shows courses that I took here as a student in 2004 and 2005.

if going to continue using, RIT should make shell templates available for courses that have MWF / T TH dates by week already built out - so much faculty time wasted having to create and recreate content

There is no unifying theme/procedure to the interfaces. Sometimes you click at the top, sometimes the bottom, sometimes you can drag/drop sometimes you can't. Very annoying. Unclear option for affirming a post made by a student without having to respond directly. Also, students prefer the option to (like with other social media apps) react to a post without having to make a specific comment. Sometimes this is a sufficient way to interact and in other instances, substantive posts are required.

Multi factor authentication of MyCourses is a pain (it assume we all walk around with mobile devices attached to our hip); I teach fully online so this is a huge inconvenience.

It's one more reason that students aren't as engaged in classes and in actual time in front of faculty. Too much screen time is wasted and there's not enough 'in person' contact with students. Office hours are hardly ever utilized, the opportunity to get to know students outside of class is stifled. MyCourses is a passive and often times aggressive way to 'communicate' with students. I am there in front of them and available to them outside of class. Because of MyCourses, that opportunity is often missed.

Importing rubrics should not be locked. This makes it challenging to modify rubrics.

When making comments in a rubric, it is a pain if one wants to change the rubric score since the comments are erased. Make the comments independent of rubric score.

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### **Does MyCourses accommodate the assessment process you use for student work?**

Yes = 155 (60%)

No = 96 (37%)

Don't use MyCourses = 8 (3%)

### **How is MyCourses not meeting your assessment process needs?**

*Themes presented:* Simply isn't used for assessment, Creates additional steps/time spent, Lack of flexibility, Overall lack of usability/functionality, Lack of integration, Gradebook functionality, Rubric functionality, Feedback, Quizzes Other/misc

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#### Don't use it for assessment

No interest in using it for assessment

I keep track of grades myself using a spreadsheet, with input from one on-line homework system and from a number of items handed in on paper. I don't need MyCourses to do any assessment.

I'm not actively using it as an instrument. I'm only using it to record outcomes.

I use my own assessment.

I find it easier to simply use excel, which I trust more and can manipulate more easily than MyCourses.

My students in PHYS316 create lab notebooks that I assess on paper. I don't need MyCourses for this.

I do not use MyCourses for assessment. Excel on my office desk is enough and easier to use. I am required to recopy grades into MyCourses. In addition it is especially awkward for bonus points on quizzes.

I only use MyCourses for keeping track of and communicating grades. I do all my assessment offline.

I have no idea how I would use MyCourses for assessment.

I can't have students submit all pieces of their assignments to MyCourses, so obviously I am assessing things that aren't in a dropbox.

I can't use it for assessment or don't know how

Because I don't give numeric grades, I don't want all grades to be resolved into percentages, I want to be able to quickly and smoothly open and comment on student work without having to open each record, upload my comments on their work, save it, and then move on to the next student.

I like to work offline and MyCourses does not facilitate that

Creates additional steps/time spent

It duplicates time spent on Excel.

The setup effort is not worth the limited benefit.

I give timely feedback (within a few days) in the feedback area - so that I can read assignments and comment immediately. No ability to formally post a grade there (according to MyCourses) so I have to migrate manually all the grades from there into the grades area (for all assignments, every class, every semester - huge waste of time)

It's easier and faster to grade hard copies of most things. That's fine; I prefer it that way.

It's just garbage. Does not work well in that there is a lot of setup for little outcome.

It's an extra step that's required by my college, that's all. I'm perfectly capable of assessing and letting my students know where they stand without out MyCourses

Lack of flexibility

For some courses, students may have variable numbers of points available depending on what assignment they choose. The grade book does not have enough flexibility.

I want to be able to incorporate formative assessments into the instructional videos I use.

I use a combination of peer, self, and faculty evaluations for some projects. MyCourses cannot accommodate this.

Grade items in some courses may have variable points for each assignment, and students then choose a specific number of points from the options. MyCourses does not accept that degree of flexibility.

Also, when we have numerous discussion forums/topics, it is hard to assess individual student participation in the forums.

It's a tall order to meet every grading scheme, so I don't hold this against MyCourses. But, the fact is, it does not handle the cumulative points system I use for grading discussions.

#### Lack of usability/functionality

Cumbersome and confusing. Threaded discussions are a nightmare and if I scroll down a thread instead of clicking on each post, it doesn't count them as read. It's great to project MyCourses on my screen and it shows my class that I have 99+ unread messages. Uploading feedback to submitted work in the dropbox takes almost as much time as commenting on the work itself.

Also MyCourses does not seem to support multi-instructor courses (such as allowing faculty to upload grades separately there and review them before determining the official grade on an assignment--right now we must do this offline).

In general, it does... except when I was using it for more complicated situations. I was giving grades to groups, I can't remember the details because it was two or so years ago, but MyCourses was unable to handle grade assignments to groups that were submitted in paper, I believe. I asked someone in TLS but found out that it couldn't support what I was doing at the time. Most things are pretty good, I think, but some of these details are a bit lacking. Getting to it quickly (especially with MFA) on a mobile device when I need to send a quick email (for example, if I'm going to be late to office hours) is REALLY annoying. There should be a quick and easy way for faculty to do this.

MyCourses is okay, but could be better. The process of downloading and the format for grading is clunky, and the same is true for the mobile format. Assessments of student discussion strings are difficult given the way the strings are presented.

We in GCCIS often have students submit code. We have to pull down the submissions to test it. In addition the directory structure we get in the downloaded zip file is very awkward to work with.

Material loads slowly. The screens are cluttered.

When students submit handwritten work to my Turn-it-in enabled dropbox, I am unable to open it in Turnitin. I seem to only be able to score it if it is mostly a typed document. I want to accept it either way.

My courses require students to develop/deliver many projects and presentation (often as videos) and so it would be very useful to have the ability to tie specific comments and critiques to the actual point in the presentation where it is relevant (instead of providing a summary paragraph of two of assessment for the entire presentation). It would be very helpful to have the equivalent to the MS Word track changes the comments tool for other forms of media.

GROUP PROJECTS are impossible to assess until the LAST submission. Collaboration and assessment of that collaboration is NOT possible with this program. Neither is project management.

Some of the UI is cumbersome, the grading system and the discussions work well but are not as easy as they could be to set up and customize.

It has no facilities for evaluating computer programs.

#### Lack of integration with other software

I sometimes use WebAssign for online math homework, and MyCourses is not integrated with that.

As the department assessment coordinator, I would like to have some easy mechanism for faculty to export rubric data and feed into the assessment management system, currently Taskstream.

It's a poor tool for evaluating programs and it is painful to get the materials out of MyCourses.

My students in PHYS211/212 use a third-party online homework system. It is not yet integrated with MyCourses gradebook.

It is not integrated with SIS. I grade first on MyCourses and then on SIS again.

Also, writing basic text is ok using MyCourses but writing math formulas is cumbersome. I am using Piazza as a discussion forum as it provides integration with latex (and it also provides several other useful features).

Interface not reliably compatible with Safari and not at all compatible with Numbers.

I would like it to be able to automatically test submitted code against a set of provided test cases, including the possibility of timing out when a code takes too long to execute. I want to be able to decide how long is too long.

Currently we are unable to port assessment data from MyCourses to Watermark. The ability of faculty to share data from key assessments from MyCourses to Watermark would put everything in one space. The focus could then be on analysis and continuous improvement and not multiple incompatible systems that we are expected to use.

When you ask about assessment I am thinking of assessment for continuous improvement and assessment of student learning NOT JUST GRADING. I would like a system that allows me to input the Learning Outcome linked question on a specific test score and have MyCourses link with SIS, and link with RIT's assessment system to allow me to see analytics on student learning of key learning outcomes with demographics. Are my transfer students not doing as well in learning XXX or my program students versus external to my program students. I would like our LMS to connect more with our SIS, and Assessment systems not independent systems!!

Also, I regularly receive code submissions which I would like to run through the similarity check, but it seems this is no longer possible due to file extension restrictions.

#### Gradebook functionality

I see the gradebook as part of the assessment process and I find the gradebook cumbersome and challenging to use. It does not provide a good layout and the set up wizard is limited.

Perhaps I haven't figured out how to do this but when I create a new grade item (a quiz, say) I'm asked to assign it a weight. But since I don't know how many quizzes I'll give over a semester (they are often pop quizzes, plus I want flexibility.) I can't really assign it a weight. So I give it an approximate weight but this gives students an inaccurate picture of their current grade.

The grading function is user unfriendly.

For more than a decade I graded papers by hand, wrote each student's grade for the exam or assignment and for the course so far on his or her paper, recorded the grade in a spreadsheet on my computer, and handed the paper back. Now I have to log on to MyCourses, wrangle with their awkward mechanisms for recording grades, and enter the grades there. Pointless make-work.

Assessments do not automatically populate gradebook items, even when a gradebook item is associated with a discussion item or assignment (dropbox item) and all the right boxes appear to be checked. I have been forced to return to dead-tree assignment submission because of MyCourses' bad design.

The constant assigning of letter grades in the student accessible grade book is really irritating (I get tired of explaining to students that a 4/5 on a reading response isn't \_really\_ a B- and a 3/5 isn't \_really\_ a D). I'd really like to be able to turn that feature off for individual grade items.

The other problem is that if I choose a grade calculation scheme that MyCourses does not inherently support, I have to go to the formula method, and no one at RIT seems to know how to help me learn that; I have tried.

MyCourses tends to broadcast grades which is not always desirable. Also I sometimes only want to give students a letter grade on an assignment. I convert it to a number later but I think some assignments do not need a number. MyCourses accommodates text grades but treats them very differently and that makes it difficult to work with.

It makes it difficult to use bonus problems.

not about to mix quant scores (test scores) with qual scores (participation) for the grade sheet

I do not get the same calculated grades in my excel spreadsheet and MyCourses. I do not understand how MyCourses calculates grades. So i only use MyCourses to show a copy of the students' grades but not the final average.

I can't grade a wiki into MyCourses, for example

Grade book is very complex and if not totally linked to the correct Dropbox it is extremely difficult to enter grades.

It does not allow me to examine what if scenarios when calculating grades... This is especially useful when consulting with a student about whether or not they can still succeed for the semester... I want to plug in example grades and see the result, but doing so makes the assignment appear to be suddenly graded and potentially informs the student with an email or other notification. I definitely want to know what notifications are going out based upon my actions and be able to prevent them if I need to.

the grading formula is too restrictive. For example, if a grade is blank the only options are ignore or zero. I want to be able to insert some formula with max or min functions

I assign 6 essays and drop the lowest grade. I can't figure out how to make MyCourses do this.

I use a paper notebook with handwritten comments that I can access when I am not on my computer. Eyesight issues. Difficulty uploading and downloading grades.

I would like to be able to upload files with comments in the Grades section, but am limited to doing this in the Dropbox area

## Rubric functionality

Beyond that, they make it far too difficult to build custom rubrics (where different criteria have different scoring levels),

First, I should say I have not learned to use the rubrics; that could help

I am unable to combine multiple rubrics into a single assignment. For instance, I have a rubric for writing quality I want to use across multiple assignments and courses. I want to, but am unable to, combine it with a rubric specific to the technical content of the assignment and possibly other rubrics such as global or ethical considerations. Being able to do this would allow for sharing common rubrics across all relevant courses within the department and allow for easier holistic views of student learning. Additionally, it is not easy to set relative weighting of individual items within the rubric to reflect different emphasis for the aspects on a rubric.

It does, but clunkily. I would like students to be able to make direct input toward their project submission through a questionnaire of sorts... Which would pre-populate a grading rubric with estimated scores which I could then go through at grading time and respond to with further comment and final scores.

Rubrics are needlessly confining - no way to make different categories worth different amounts.

The rubric feature is a blunt instrument and actually encourages bad teaching practices.

Our grading rubrics for team projects are a conglomeration of project design grades, project implementation grades, and project presentation grades, each with their own sub-scores, and all adjusted for individuals based on student peer evaluations of teammate performance.

## Feedback

Feedback on written submissions requires multiple steps

Feedback is given on work process as well as final deliverables - rubrics are used as a baseline, but are not informative enough to give students actionable feedback on their work.

No direct way to annotate submissions

MyCourses is not designed to facilitate feedback on student writing in ways that are consistent with the field of writing studies. For example, it does not deal well with multiple drafts of assignments, and does nothing for peer review.

I would like to have an easier/better way to give feedback to them.

I would like to be able to open the assignments on my courses and post my comments there directly rather than having to download the papers-grade them-and upload them again and then add feedback on the system as well. Grading discussion posts is not easy as well...keeping track of the threads in large classes is a challenge. The LMS is useful in many ways but, there is certainly scope for improvement.

Additionally, no way to export all that feedback into spreadsheets (e.g. download into an excel spreadsheet) to back up the grades in case of a system error - a huge problem

The method for creating and receiving feedback on assignments is confusing for both the TAs and students. I'm never sure where to look for feedback - Grades area? Dropbox area? And it's extremely slow and tedious to scroll through the grades.

Detailed feedback is required for project evaluation, most of which is not digital work, so MyCourses is not conducive at all in that regard.

There does not seem to be an option in Dropbox to have a dialogue in the assessment function. I can leave feedback and many students wish to respond and they have to send me an email. It is nice to have those interactions documented in the same area.

Capabilities of feedback for student work is not ideal. I'm not trained on all capabilities

It does not permit me to make in-line comments on students' written work. It does not make it easy to punctuate comments correctly.

### Quizzes

When I use MyCourses for a quiz the grades are too high and the standard deviation is too small.

Quizzing is clunky

Exam formats are clunky and difficult to extract question level data from;

Quiz grading is very confusing.

It is time consuming to design and execute tests and exams with MCQs or multiple short answer questions. It does not automatically link the test grade to the grade book.

Too hard to track data for individual quiz questions, etc. Limited submission types that are screened by TurnItIn.

I use hands on as well as quizzes so the answer must be no

Other/Misc.

because I use my heart and my head for this!

would like the University level assessments to be built in to MyCourses

Probably as much to do with how I use it, but commenting on work in situ doesn't work for me.

The ploap is more associate with hands-activities.

I do not give quiz or test, I review portfolios of work. Can students post photo portfolios?

I use a point system where students can attain levels of points for mastery.

# C22.0 RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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This Policy will be effective on May 13, 2009 ("Effective Date"). It will apply to all divisions, departments and academic units of RIT.

## 3. Definitions

Terms not otherwise defined herein have the meanings listed below.

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**B. Archival Record** means a record that is inactive, not required to be retained in the office in which it originated or was received, and has permanent or historic value. Archival records are retained and preserved indefinitely in the University archives.

**C. Hold Notice** means a communication issued by the Office of Legal Affairs as a result of a current or anticipated government regulation, investigation, litigation or other matter that warrants the suspension of this Policy.

**D. Record** means any document, communication, or similar item generated or received by RIT, by RIT personnel, or on RIT's behalf.

**E. Official Repository** means the division, department, or academic unit designated as having responsibility for retention, timely destruction of particular types of official University records, or forwarding to RIT Archives. Such responsibility is assigned to the division, department, or academic unit's vice president, director, dean, or designee.

**F. RIT Archives** means a department of the RIT Wallace Library that promotes knowledge and understanding of the University's origin, aims, programs, and goals; and facilitates effective record management.

**G. RIT Record** means the original or copy of any record which must be held for official business or regulatory purposes in accordance with the university's Records Retention Schedule. RIT Records do not include records that are not created in the official course of business, serve no legitimate or necessary business purpose, or are created for personal purposes only.

**H. Personnel** means all RIT staff and faculty, full-time and part-time, including student employees acting within their scope of employment, non-employee consultants, visitors, adjuncts and others using university resources.

**I. Scope of Employment** means all activities related to the employment responsibilities of personnel.

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## 4. General Provisions

### A. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to require consistent treatment of Records. This Policy is intended to ensure that RIT meets legal standards, preserves RIT's history, and destroys outdated and useless records.

### B. Scope

All personnel shall comply with this Policy, as amended from time to time. This Policy is considered part of the conditions of employment for RIT personnel.

### C. Management of University Records

Divisions, departments, or academic units that are Official Repositories for RIT Records are responsible for establishing appropriate records retention management practices.. Each division, department, or academic unit's vice president, director, dean, or designee must:

1. Implement the division, department, or academic unit's record management practices;
2. Identify a records custodian for the division, department, or academic unit with responsibility to ensure that these record management practices are consistent with this Policy;
3. Educate staff within the division, department, or academic unit in understanding the record management practices;
4. Preserve inactive records of historic value and transfer those records to the RIT Archives;
5. Ensure that access to confidential files is restricted; and
6. Destroy inactive records that have no archival value upon passage of the applicable retention period by the Office of Legal Affairs.

**D. Suspension of Policy / Legal Holds.** This Policy may be suspended for any Record due to a requirement by a consent order, private or governmental contract, pending or anticipated litigation, investigation, or audit requirement. Such suspension supersedes the requirements listed in this Policy and shall be made by the Office of Legal Affairs, which has the authority to suspend and revise any retention schedule. The Office of Legal Affairs will implement such a suspension by sending out a Hold Notice for relevant records to affected divisions, departments, or academic units. This Hold Notice shall be in effect until rescinded by the Office of Legal Affairs.

## 5. Implementing Record Management Practices

**A. Retaining of Records.** In establishing appropriate record management practices, each division, department, or academic unit's vice president, director, dean or designee will be responsible for setting up a process for the identification of RIT. In addition, in connection with setting up record management procedures, the following should be considered and incorporated:

1. Archival Records. Generally, Records which document the history of administration, academic programs, and the social and cultural life of RIT should be preserved. To decide if the RIT records are of historic value, consult the RIT Archivist, who has the authority to designate which records are Archival Records.
2. Electronic Records. The retention and preservation of electronic records shall be in accordance with this Policy. If an electronic record falls within one of the retention schedule's categories of records, then the record must be treated the same way as a similar hard copy record.
3. Email. In considering the nature of email for retention purposes, an email and its attachments should be considered as a whole. If one retention period applies to an email and a different retention period applies to the email attachment(s), the entire email with attachment(s) should be retained for the longer of the two retention periods. If a person is merely copied on an email (either listed as a "cc" or "bcc"), he/she should treat the document as a duplicate in accordance with sub section 5 below.
4. Disaster Recovery. Electronic records maintained by the Information Technology Services (ITS) for disaster recovery and backup purposes only shall be retained and preserved by ITS in accordance with a uniform rotation schedule. This uniform rotation schedule shall require that no ITS backup of electronic records shall be maintained for longer than thirty (30) days.
5. Duplicates. Generally, only one copy of each record shall be retained. A duplicate is an exact replica of the original and shall be destroyed as soon as it does not serve a legitimate business purpose and as long as is not subject to a Hold Notice indicating otherwise. Prior drafts, revisions, or original documents that have additional hand written notes are not considered duplicates of the original and shall be subject to the same requirements as an original record.

**B. Destruction of Records.** Records that are neither Active Records, Archival Records, RIT Records, nor the subject of a Hold Notice should not be maintained. In addition, when the

required retention period for RIT Records has passed, a determination of whether to preserve the record as an Archival Record or to dispose of the record must be made. The division, department, or academic unit's vice president, director, dean, or designee should make this determination, in consultation with the RIT Archivist. The division, department, or academic unit's vice president, director, dean, or designee shall certify annually in writing to the Office of Legal Affairs that compliance with this policy has been achieved for the prior academic year.

**C. Using the Retention Management Schedule.** Divisions, departments, or academic units may establish their own records management policy, with the approval of the Office of Legal Affairs, to determine the retention period for the Records created and/or kept in their respective areas. **Current retention schedules for RIT divisions are located on the [Office of Legal Affairs website](#).**

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3. The default retention period for records whose retention period has not been specifically determined shall be six (6) years.

**D. Exceptions.** Requests for exceptions to this Policy should be granted rarely and only with good cause. Requests for exceptions to this Policy should be submitted to the Office of Legal Affairs.

**E. Training.** Each division, department, or academic unit's designee or records custodian will be responsible for ensuring their personnel are informed of the Policy and procedures established pursuant to the Records Management Program and devising the appropriate training to ensure appropriate implementation.

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**Responsible Office:**

Office of Legal Affairs

**Effective Date:** Approved

May 13, 2009 **Policy**

**History:**

Edited August 2010

Edited September 2012 (conversion edit)

Edited September 22, 2014 (ICEC) – sections III.G, H.; IV.B, C; V.A, C, G, I; VI.A, C **Edited**

**06 March 2019 (AAC)**

## C22.0 NEW POLICY AS APPROVED

# C22.0 RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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