

Academic Affairs Committee – 2021-22

CHARGES & FINAL REPORT

CHARGE #1: COMPLETED – Program Flexibility – Recommend joint task force next AY

CHARGE #2: NOT COMPLETED – RIT Online profile - recommend continue next AY

CHARGE #3: NOT COMPLETED – changes to D08.0 Academic Integrity policy - continue next AY

CHARGE #4: COMPLETED – Changes to D05.0 Grading policy

CHARGE #1: COMPLETED & Expanded for further work next AY

Explore ways to allow students to take more electives, including but not limited to a review of our current 18 credit hour limit policy, removing specific general education requirements that are not prerequisites for program courses, and other means of adding curricular flexibility, and report findings to Senate with motions for action as appropriate.

Rationale - All stakeholders in the RIT academic affairs community (faculty, students, staff) should seek to achieve a balance between strong program structure for proper disciplinary training while at the same time building sufficient flexibility to allow student agency in the parts of programs that can accommodate greater choice, all the while without compromising program integrity.

Greater program flexibility (in all its forms), is a win-win for all program stakeholders by facilitating more faculty input on program content, and also achieving more student opportunity and choice during their program participation.

Guiding Principles

AAC recognizes that we likely have NOT identified all the restrictions on program flexibility. AAC also recognizes that there may be significantly less program flexibility than reflected in our preliminary analysis of the program directory alone. These additional limits on flexibility can be severe in some cases and can include:

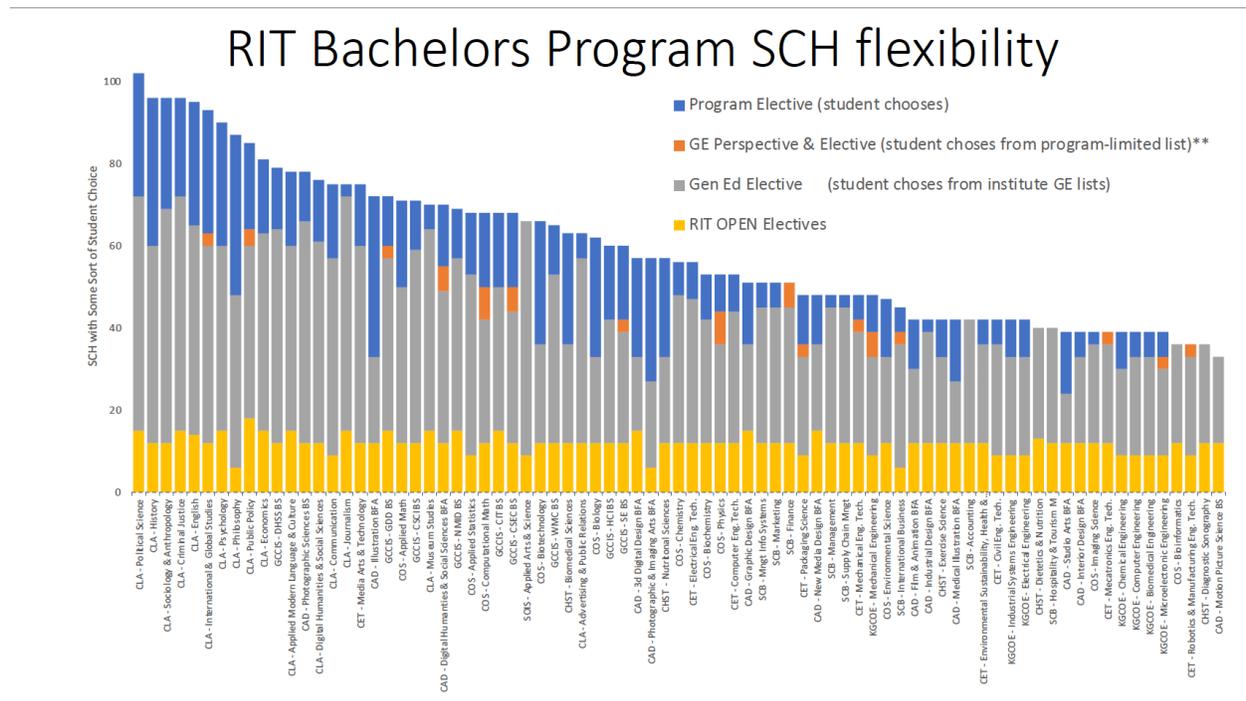
- Limited availability of program core & elective choices (number, scheduling, etc.)
- Limits on general education choices (programs usurp perspectives & GE electives with required courses)
- Course pre-requisites and timing (infrequent offerings, particularly in upper-division courses)
- Course scheduling (AM, PM, weekends, etc.)
- Faculty workload limits & availability
- Additional course costs (additional materials needed, electronic access required outside of RIT myCourses)
- All future analyses and resulting recommendations must take into account all existing program requirements and limitations, particularly those imposed by outside accrediting or certifying bodies (ABET, medical licensure, etc.).

- Given the diversity of patterns in the data gathered so far, the process for further evaluation of program flexibility would benefit from an more detailed description of specific standards and/or thresholds RIT would like to achieve. Toward this end, this effort needs more partners such as Student Government, curriculum experts, program experts, NYSED & admin experts.
- There are areas of the curricula in which greater flexibility has already been achieved (e.g. open elective SCH recently increased) such that additional change is unlikely in these areas for many programs.

MOTION to Senate: PASSED

Faculty Senate endorses the formation of a 2022-23 joint task force made up of representatives of the Senate and the Provost’s office to examine issues surrounding program & curricular flexibility including but not limited to program core options, general education choices/limits, course scheduling and availability, and any other limiting factors. This task force should recommend sound goals to increase flexibility in our bachelor’s programs where it can be achieved without sacrificing existing program stability and quality.

Data collected from Program Directory pages on RIT web (raw data available)



Trends in the data

Program SCH

- Required (core) courses range from <20 SCH to over 70 SCH
- Elective options range from 0 SCH to almost 40 SCH

General Education SCH

- “Required” GE courses range from 3 SCH to 46 SCH
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- “Required” GE credits are those program requirements satisfied with GE courses, typically Math/Science requirements.
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- “Elective” GE courses range from 12 SCH to 57 SCH
- “Elective” GE credits are those allowed from any institute General Education courses.

Institute Open SCH

Range from 6 to 18

47 programs (60%) have 12 Open SCH

16 programs (20%) have > 12 Open SCH

16 programs (20%) have < 12 Open SCH

Total SCH - Min = 120 to Max = 129

Percent SCH choices

% Total (Prog+GE) choice range – 27-85%

% Program choice range – 0-65% (10 programs have no program SCH choices – 12.7%)

% GE choice range – 31-95%

CHARGE #2: NOT COMPLETED

Benchmark with other institutions that have robust online learning policies to develop, in consultation with AAC and with the Associate Provost for Online Education, policies and responsibilities specifically for online classes, programs, students and faculty at RIT.

Rationale - Online courses/programs need their own category to take into account the differences between in-person and online modalities. To currently search online-only policy matters within the RIT policy library is cumbersome. The policy draft should address the following matters:

- a. For faculty – RIT Section E: Faculty and Staff Policies
 - i. Course enrollment limits; and minimum
 - ii. Virtual office hours
 - iii. Synchronous activities
 - iv. Course timetable – same as in-person courses
 - v. Credit hour worksheet
 - vi. Course evaluations
 - vii. Compensation?
 - viii. Support/training
 - ix. Intellectual property – RIT Section C: 03
 - x. Syllabus – required; includes Academic Integrity/honor code; ADA; Title IX
 - xi. Due dates/late work policies
 - xii. Grading policies RIT – Availability of grades and course materials D05-VIII
 - xiii. Email, Q&A, grade turnaround times
 - xiv. Final exam
 - xv. Proctored test information
 - xvi.
- b. For students (in the form of an online guidebook) – RIT Section D: Educational policies
 - i. Computer/Software requirements
 - ii. Tech support/training
 - iii. Honor Code: Academic Integrity; Code of Conduct for Computer Use
 - iv. Admission/Registration: degree seeking vs non-degree
 - v. Online readiness survey
 - vi. Participation in orientation
 - vii. Authentication policy
 - viii. Attendance/participation Guidelines
 - ix. Proctoring information
 - x. Tuition and Fees
 - xi. Financial Aid
 - xii. Prerequisites
 - xiii. Academic Advising
 - xiv. Time management (9 hours/3 credits; 12 hours/4credits)
 - xv. Support Services (Resources)
 - xvi. Disability statement (ADA policy)
 - xvii. FERPA

CHARGE #3: NOT COMPLETED

Review policy D.08 – Student Academic Integrity with the view to ensure consistency between section VII and policy D18.2 – Student Appeals Process, and in collaboration with Grad Council sections IV. and V. whether this policy is appropriate and adequate in the present research / publishing environment, especially as RIT moves more towards being a research and graduate education institution. **In-process. Carried over to 2020-2021 and now 2021-22. A revision has been drafted and needs to receive final vetting by concerned parties before going to Senate. This charge was not completed in the 2021-22 Academic year and will need to be carried to the 2022-23 AAC.**

CHARGE #4: COMPLETED

D05.0 and Coordinated & Team taught courses.

On another note, Senate has asked us to look at another topic and make a recommendation(s) on the proper relationship between grading [policy D05.0](#) and the need for consistency & equity in coordinated courses taught by multiple instructors. The request stems from a need for course coordination of large, multi-section courses that serve as important pre-reqs for our BS programs that typically involves the need to have faculty coordinate their efforts in many ways (agreed upon topics to cover, common exam questions, etc.) that can sometimes infringe upon what individual faculty see as their purview under D05.0 (i.e. statement of standard).

- AAC needs to get feedback from college constituencies.
- Add reading day to prohibition

Examine current D05.0 language and make recommendations in two areas:

1. Incorporate input from multiple instructors in team-taught and coordinated courses (current language lists authority for individual, but not groups of faculty who work together).
2. Prohibit assignment due dates during within-term breaks (including weekends confluent with breaks).

Current D05.0 language

I. STATEMENT OF STANDARD

At the commencement of the course, and as appropriate throughout the course, it is the instructor's responsibility to:

- A. Define criteria for evaluation.
- B. State the process for converting the professor's evaluation criteria to the RIT grading system.
- C. Identify timelines for announcement, submission, and the return of graded work either at the beginning or during the progress of the course.

Proposed change to D05.0 language: MOTION #1 - PASSED

CURRENT:

At the commencement of the course, and as appropriate throughout the course, it is the instructor's responsibility to:

PROPOSED:

At the commencement of the course, and as appropriate throughout the course, it is the responsibility of the instructor(s) to:

Proposed change to D05.0 language: MOTION #2 - PASSED

CURRENT:

- C. Identify timelines for announcement, submission, and the return of graded work either at the beginning or during the progress of the course.

PROPOSED:

- C. Identify timelines for announcement, submission, and the return of graded work either at the beginning or during the progress of the course. No deadlines for work that contributes to any course grades shall be set during breaks (including reading days) recognized on the official RIT academic calendar, nor weekends attached to those breaks for courses whose official scheduled meeting times do not include weekends.