

Committee on Academic Support and Student Affairs (ASSA)

Final Report, 2022/23AY

ASSA Committee Members

- Kate Leipold (KGCOE, chair)
- Melissa Warp (CAD)
- md Abdullah al Faruque (CET)
- Janice Shirley (CHST)
- Claudia Bucciferro (CLA)
- Deana Olles (COS)
- M. Mustafa Rafique (GCCIS)
- Dennis Andrejko (GIS)
- Mike Kane (NTID)
- Andy Lawrence (SCB)
- Hannah Davis (SOIS)
- Austin Gehret (NTID, at-large)
- Michael Radin (COS, at-large)
- Denton Crawford (at-large)
- Neil Hair (Provost's Delegate)
- Sandra Johnson (Student Affairs)
- Darcie Jones (Student Government)
- Yoni Lendermen (Student Government)
- Jacob Marinelli (Student Government)

Chair's summary

The committee met on Zoom approximately every other week. Due to only 2 charges, the committee did not have very strict sub-committees. Efforts were made to organize the past 3 years' documentation into a shared google drive for the committee to utilize going forward. [ASSA - Working Drive](#). A minutes summary is established within the folder as well as survey data and working documents from the semester. Hopefully, this committee has enough carry-over members and charges to get a solid start early in the fall semester.

Charges for 2022/23AY

1. Investigate and make recommendations related to reasonable expectations for provision of academic accommodations.
2. Review policy D08.0 (Student Academic Integrity Policy) and make recommendations on the deadline for faculty to notify students of suspected academic dishonesty.

Charge #1:

Investigate and make recommendations related to reasonable expectations for provision of academic accommodations.

ASSA Sub-committee: Andy Lawrence (SCB, chair)

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Our committee process

- External Benchmarking
We reviewed details available on public websites for 18 universities regarding accommodations. Links and results are captured in the ASSA working drive.
- RIT Faculty Survey
A qualtrics survey was circulated in December of fall semester. College reps were responsible for sending the survey link to their constituents. We received 118 responses across 9 colleges. There were some technical issues with the survey, but we were able to capture a lot of feedback via the written comments and Likert score.
- Approach
Comments were categorized by the sub committee members and separately by Catherine Lewis, director of the DSO. Several tools were used to develop and refine insights from the feedback. Many of these efforts are documented in the ASSA working drive or in Andy Lawrence's shared folder.

Findings

- Overall, Faculty want to work collaboratively with DSO and students to ensure that accommodations are effectively implemented and that all parties are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Faculty feel stressed about class disruption created by the number and diverse types of accommodations they are expected to manage.
- Faculty feel that they need more training and support from DSO on how to effectively manage accommodations in the classroom. They feel that they would benefit from clearer guidelines and more information on best practices.

- Catherine Lewis, Director of the Disability Services Office reviewed faculty comments.
Feedback included
 - The majority of the comments were one of these categories
 - Already being implemented
 - Heard and appreciated
 - Unable to implement - typically due to legal requirements
 - Some website clarification can be helpful
 - Faculty would benefit from education on DSO
 - A few comments revealed that some faculty have very concerning view of students that receive accommodations
 - Currently, about 2500 students receiving accommodations of some sort, and that number is increasing
- Going forward, with current support levels the DSO will not be able to meet all exam accommodations and faculty will need to either proctor themselves or work with their department / college to implement an alternate option.

Recommendation

Continue evaluation on this charge in collaboration with the DSO director

- Evaluate current educational materials regarding faculty expectations and determine if mandatory annual training should be implemented.
- Better understand faculty time spent outside of work providing accommodations.
- Review the capacity of the DSO to meet the increased number of students receiving accommodations.

Charge #2:

Review policy D08.0 (Student Academic Integrity Policy) and make recommendations on the deadline for faculty to notify students of suspected academic dishonesty.

ASSA Sub-committee:

- Kate Leipold (KGCOE, chair)
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Current policy states - - (<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d080>) 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.”

Our committee process

- Committee members solicited feedback from individual colleges.
- Student government was invited to have a representative on the committee
- Committee members reviewed website information available on benchmark institutions.
- The committee chair communicated with Jarron Mortimer, Director of Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution
- The initial proposal was presented to Faculty Senate on Apr 13, 2023.
- After some feedback and suggestions, the motion was tabled.
- Additional modifications included updating changed department names and emphasizing email communication.
- On May 4th an updated proposal was presented, and the motion was approved after a friendly amendment.

Committee Findings

In order to make the timeline as clear to interpret as possible, and keep the wording consistent with other Student Conduct timelines, we propose the following.

“The instructor will notify the student via RIT email as to the rationale for all actions taken pertaining to the breach of student academic integrity within 15 business days of discovery of the alleged incident. Business Day means Monday through Friday and does not include official RIT holidays. After this time, an allegation may not proceed. Copies of the email notification will be provided to the instructor’s academic unit head and the instructor’s Dean’s Office. The

Dean's Office will forward the email notification to the Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution and the student's home academic unit. In cases involving graduate students, a copy will also be sent to the RIT Graduate School."

The motion passed and a modified and clean version of the updated language was sent to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

Possible follow-on charge for AY23-24.

Audit college procedures in cases of academic misconduct, specifically reports to the Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

Jarron Mortimer has a form that could help maintain consistency across faculty and colleges.

Future Recommendations

AY 2021 Charge #2 was regarding the Experience of Female Students at RIT. Our takeaways at the end of that academic year were

- Acknowledge that experience of female students could be improved
- A number of existing programs and efforts on campus: various “Women in X” programs, President's Commission on Women
- Data from spring 2022 climate survey will assist with identifying areas in need of improvement
- Charge too large and vague to make specific recommendations

The committee recommends

- Recommend reviewing recent climate surveys
 - Climate survey had very low participation
 - National College Health Survey had a 38% response rate
- Charge for AY 2023 committee
 - **Review recent climate survey data to identify specific marginalized communities to focus on improving the classroom experience.**

Chair's Closing Remarks

Andy Lawrence was a superb leader on the Accommodation Subcommittee. I nominate that he continue in this role for the AY 23-24 committee. I recommend that another committee member lead the full committee - as I believe this subcommittee has a challenging, unpopular task to address next year. Andy may be able to call the meeting in the fall to elect the new committee chair.

While Zoom improves the possible meeting times and places for the committee, I found it enabled more members to not participate. I recommend at least 1 meeting a semester be held in person if possible.

I have enjoyed participating in this committee for the past 4 years, and feel it is left in capable hands. I am available to the committee in the fall if they have questions. - Kate Leipold