

RIT | Faculty Senate

Standing Committee Report

Long Range Planning Committee

Standing Charges

Current AS Charge:

Original language: Assess and revise campus academic policies pertaining to pandemic(s) both current [covid; monkeypox;..] and future, to improve transparency and ensure fairness for all RIT communities impacted by them. Should address ventilation, masking, and safety requirements for teaching and faculty workspaces; workload requirements (as the accommodation policy is not accommodating and faculty have minimal recourse); course delivery mechanisms (both overall and transitions needed during outbreaks); and quarantine/vaccination requirements for faculty and students. Additional discussion of impact on faculty evaluation metrics and tenure/promotion appreciated but not the priority of this request.

Suggested by FSEC: Review and make recommendations related to campus policies pertaining to pandemic(s) both current and future, to improve transparency and ensure fairness for all RIT communities impacted by them.

Added by LRPC: Assess and revise campus academic policies pertaining to pandemic(s) both current and future, to improve transparency, communication and ensure fairness for all RIT communities impacted by them.

Rationale: Pandemic(s) are widespread, poorly contained, and have a dramatic impact on the ability of instructors to deliver courses, students to learn, research programs to maintain continuity, and staff health etc.

Suggested by FSEC: Review and make recommendations related to campus policies pertaining to pandemic(s)/SIGNIFICANT DISRUPTIVE EVENTS both current and future, to improve transparency and ensure fairness for all RIT communities impacted by them.

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

Chair's Summary

This is an optional heading, available for the Chair of the Committee to present a narrative on the activities of the year. This is also where the Chair may add comments, opinions and suggestions on how to improve processes in the future or address challenges faced that year.

The LRPC took the charge(s) and created 4 subgroups. These were:

- Financial Exigency
- Business Continuity
- Emergency Action
- Emergency Management

Each subgroup referred to current documents which describe policies in place for each of the above items. These reports are found in the appendix, the conclusions/recommendations of each are contained in "Committee Findings".

Recommendations for Future Charges

A succinct list of charges that have emerged from the work of this year. If these are continuing charges, please only add Charge and Rationale. Additional information should be included in the headings below.

None are recommended at this time

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

Previous and Continuing Charges

List any charges that have carried over from the previous year and the charges which have continued for longer (but are not standing charges).

There are no carryover charges other than the Standing Charges

Charge #

Description. – N/A

Committee Findings

A description of the committee's findings and recommendations for action (or not). Respond to the charge keeping the original Rationale in mind.

Current AY Charges

See Standing Charges

Charge #

Description.

See Standing Charges

Committee Findings – Current Standing Charge

A description of the committee's findings and recommendations for action (or not). Respond to the charge keeping the original Rationale in mind.

The Appendix contains the full reports of each sub-group. In this section, “Committee Findings”, is presented as a summary of findings and recommendations based on these reports.

Below are recommendations of this committee.

1. Financial Exigency

Concerns and suggestions for improvement

- It would be helpful to provide a definition of financial exigency and scope of activities/units included.

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

- In addition, communication of thresholds that indicate when financial exigency is required, and how rationale for how those metrics are calculated.
- The policy does not reflect adequate preparation to prevent a financial exigency. We can recommend a committee to work with the president to determine if a financial exigency is forthcoming and make arrangements for possible alternatives to terminating faculty appointments.
- Also, can faculty be offered reallocation to a different unit within RIT where there might be a vacancy or need for their skills rather than being laid off?
- The academic impact of the financial exigency should also be assessed.
- The university can consider involving representatives from tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty in the committee that decides on faculty that would be affected by the financial exigency. The policy currently includes members of the tenure committee and department heads.
- A more general assessment of who should be in the committee involved in termination recommendations should be conducted.

In comparing the policy E22.0 with E20.0, the decision period provided for an offer of reinstatement is significantly shorter. In E22.0, a tenured faculty member is provided just 10 days to consider an offer of reinstatement, while in E20.0, the tenured faculty member is

2. Business Continuity

Recommendations

- Promote the use of the continuity plan template to the campus community. It's not clear if most departments/college on campus are aware that such a template exists.
- Make it clear what the process is for invoking and overseeing the business continuity plan.

Questions

- Is the plan invoked by the President?
- By the VP of Finance & Administration?
- Is there input from Academic Senate or the Deans' Council?

3. Emergency Action

Recommendations

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

- Any and all communications must be fully and seamlessly accessible to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community
- Make it clear through all communication, web pages, etc, for “who” is the FIRST point of contact (FPOC) for any disruption or emergency. These personnel may be the FPOC for several disruptions/emergencies – for example Campus Safety. Once campus safety is alerted, RIT administration will instruct further. This may be through RIT alert System.
- Creation of a campus status dashboard as a menu option/tab ON the main site. The option/tab should be easy to locate and should contain all categories listed in the EAP. (See Appendix – Emergency Action)
- The dashboard should always be available to allow the RIT community access to current information and status with links to more specific information if needed to eliminate the need for one to remember a COVID dashboard, a NEWVIRUS dashboard, etc.
- It should be noted on the EAP Dashboard that once campus safety is alerted, RIT administration will instruct further. This may be through RIT alert System.
- These items listed in the EAP relate to the campus. It is suggested to have protocols in place for these same items (or as many as are applicable) as these items relate to an off-campus scenario.

Example – A home fire involving a student, faculty or staff.

Armed Intruder

- More visible campus safety presence as a deterrent. Is Campus safety not armed – they do not carry side arms.
- RIT has the capability to deploy armed personnel ahead of Monroe County Sheriff dispatch.
- Gary Moxley is available to hold training courses.

Ventilation

Ventilation is important in any situation. Fresh air and movement of air is critical. Classrooms and meeting spaces often become “stuffy”.

- Door stops need to be accessible, available and not be missing from any room on campus – instructional, faculty and staff work and meeting spaces.

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

Quarantine, Masking and Vaccination

This recommendation is tabled until next Academic Year

4. Instructional Continuity

Conclusions/Recommendations

- Plans and recommendations of continuity of instruction have been developed in the past.
- No policy was in place during COVID-19. An ad-hoc approach was used where Provost sent recommendations and dept. heads were responsible for reporting.
- Opportunities exist to require COI plans by policy, add to syllabus, including training, audit plans and have yearly reviews.
- COI plans should include immediate emergencies and long term disruptions.
- RIT should have a emergency response team who should meet regularly and create/provide guidelines and recommendations based on reviews and national/international trends.
- Talk to Chris Denninger, the director of Threat Assessment and Management Services (chris.g.denninger@rit.edu or (585) 475-6620) to discuss preparedness.

APPENDIX

Financial Exigency

The policies below were used as a basis and reference for this section of the report.

- <https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/e220>

Assessment and summary of “E22.0 policy on the impact of financial exigency on faculty”

The policy outlines the procedures that would be followed in case of a severe financial crisis where other approaches in E20.0 Policy on Discontinuance, Reduction, or Transfer of Academic Programs, fail to address the issue and a financial exigency had to be declared. The scope of this policy is limited to all tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty on multiple-year contracts. The decision to declare a state of financial exigency lies with the Board of Trustees. The priority is to protect the university’s academic mission first and faculty would need to support this mission.

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

The Board of Trustees and senior administration have ultimate responsibility on the financial health of the university, but faculty can analyze and recommend actions on institute financial matters.

Concerns and suggestions for improvement

- It would be helpful to provide a definition of financial exigency and scope of activities/units included.
- In addition, communication of thresholds that indicate when financial exigency is required, and how rationale for how those metrics are calculated.
- The policy does not reflect adequate preparation to prevent a financial exigency. We can recommend a committee to work with the president to determine if a financial exigency is forthcoming and make arrangements for possible alternatives to terminating faculty appointments.
- Also, can faculty be offered reallocation to a different unit within RIT where there might be a vacancy or need for their skills rather than being laid off?
- The academic impact of the financial exigency should also be assessed.
- The university can consider involving representatives from tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty in the committee that decides on faculty that would be affected by the financial exigency. The policy currently includes members of the tenure committee and department heads.
- A more general assessment of who should be in the committee involved in termination recommendations should be conducted.
- In comparing the policy E22.0 with E20.0, the decision period provided for an offer of reinstatement is significantly shorter. In E22.0, a tenured faculty member is provided just 10 days to consider an offer of reinstatement, while in E20.0, the tenured faculty member is provided 1 month. These policies should be consistent with each other, and it would seem that the longer policy for consideration of 1 month is more reasonable when considering an offer of reinstatement.

Emergency Action

The policies below were used as a basis and reference for this section of the report.

- Emergency Information
- <https://www.rit.edu/emergency-information>
- Emergency Action Plan - EAP
- <https://www.rit.edu/sites/rit.edu/files/docs/eap.pdf>

Any and all communications must be fully and seamlessly accessible to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community

Make it clear through all communication, web pages, etc – “who” is the FIRST point of contact (FPOC) for any disruption or emergency. These personnel may be the FPOC for several

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

disruptions/emergencies – for example Campus Safety. Once campus safety is alerted, the ADMN will instruct further. This may be through RIT alert System.....email , Voice Mail, text. Creation of a campus status dashboard as a menu option/tab ON the main site so it's easy to find and which contains all categories listed in the EAP and listed below.

1. Fire.....	7
2. Medical Emergencies	8
3. Medical Emergency Involving Hazardous Materials	9
4. Hazardous Materials Release	10
5. Utility Failure	12
6. Severe Thunderstorm	13
7. Armed Intruder	14
8. Bomb Threat	15
9. Suspicious Letter/Package or Object	16
10. Civil Disturbances	17
11. Earthquake	18
12. Water Emergency	19
13. Tornado

The dashboard should always be available to allow the RIT community access to current information and status with links to more specific information if needed. This is to eliminate the need for one to remember COVID dashboard, NEWVIRUS dashboard, etc. Noted on the EAP Dashboard – that once campus safety is alerted, the ADMN will instruct further. This may be through RIT alert System.....email , Voice Mail, text.

These items in are in the EAP and included above relate to the campus. It is suggested to have protocols in place for these same items (or as many as are applicable) as these items relate to an off-campus scenario.

Ex – A home fire involving a student, faculty or staff.

Specific Recommendations

Armed Intruder:

- More visible campus safety presence as a deterrent. Is Campus safety not armed – they do not carry side arms.
- RIT has the capability to deploy armed personnel ahead of Monroe County Sherriff dispatch
- Gary Moxley is available to hold training courses.

Instructional Continuity

The policies below were used as a basis and reference for this section of the report.

Guidance on continuity of instruction.

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

<https://www.rit.edu/provost/sites/rit.edu.provost/files/documents/InstructionalContinuity.pdf>

Provost's Spring 2021 letter to Maintain continuity of instruction.

https://www.rit.edu/provost/sites/rit.edu.provost/files/document_library/Instructional%20Continuity%20Spring%202021.pdf

2009/2010 Continuity of Instruction recommendations

<https://www.rit.edu/provost/sites/rit.edu.provost/files/presentations/Continuity%20of%20Instruction-%20Emerging%20Leaders%20Presentation.pdf>

COVID-Specific Instructional Continuity (DSO)

https://www.rit.edu/provost/sites/rit.edu.provost/files/document_library/2022_01_First_Spring_Message_FINAL.pdf

March 2018 Emergency Action Plan

<https://www.rit.edu/sites/rit.edu/files/docs/eap.pdf>

Conclusions

- **Plans and recommendations of continuity of instruction have been developed in the past.**
- **No policy was in place during COVID-19. An ad-hoc approach was used where Provost sent recommendations and dept. heads were responsible for reporting.**
- **Opportunities exist to require COI plans by policy, add to syllabus, including training, audit plans and have yearly reviews.**
- **COI plans should include immediate emergencies and long term disruptions.**
- **RIT should have a emergency response team who should meet regularly and create/provide guidelines and recommendations based on reviews and national/international trends.**
- **Talk to Chris Denninger, the director of Threat Assessment and Management Services (chris.g.denninger@rit.edu or (585) 475-6620) to discuss preparedness.**

Business Continuity

What follows is simply a download of the information currently on RIT's Business Continuity Program website (see link below). Although nothing on the website seems to relate directly to any policies regarding campus disruption, the website suggests that RIT has a robust and comprehensive plan for business continuity in the event of disruption. The plan involves coordination among many RIT departments and external agencies. It is reassuring to know that RIT has a staff person (Chris Denninger) dedicated to threat assessment and emergency preparedness.

The website includes a link to a Continuity of Operations/Disaster Recovery Plan PDF form that serves as a template for other RIT departments to develop their own continuity plan.

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

The subcommittee has two minor recommendations regarding the business continuity plan:

1. Possibly promote the use of the continuity plan template to the campus community. It's not clear if most departments/college on campus are aware that such a template exists.
2. Make it clear what the process is for invoking and overseeing the business continuity plan. Is the plan invoked by the President? By the VP of Finance & Administration? Is there input from Academic Senate or the Deans' Council?

Comprehensive Business Continuity Program

<https://www.rit.edu/fa/buscont>

RIT is potentially subject to natural and man-made incidents that could threaten its community and resources. In an overall effort to protect the university's mission, RIT has developed the Comprehensive Business Continuity Program as a proactive means of preparing for and responding to unplanned interruptions both small and larger scale.

Priorities

1. Protection of Human Life
2. Support of Health, Safety and Basic Care Services
3. Protection of University Assets
4. Maintenance of University Services
5. Assessment of Damages
6. Restoration of Operations

The program is a combination of emergency management and continuity of operations, as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). RIT uses FEMA standards and guidance for two reasons: to better interact with governmental agencies (state and local emergency management, police, fire, EMS, HAZMAT), and to meet NIMS compliance standards due to receiving federal funding.

Emergency Management

Emergency Management

Emergency Management protects the RIT community by coordinating and integrating activities (both internal and external to RIT) needed to build, sustain and improve capabilities to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to and recover from threatened or actual natural or human-caused disasters.

- Mitigation - actions taken to prevent future emergencies or minimize their effects
- Preparedness - ongoing activities, tasks and systems taken in preparation to handle emergencies and their consequences
- Response - Assignment of resources and personnel to take action in order to save lives, prevent further damage and deal with the immediate consequences of an emergency
- Recovery - Actions taken to return to "normal" operations after an emergency

Continuity of Operations

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

Continuity of operations are those plans and actions to ensure that essential functions continue to be performed at acceptable levels during and emergency. Essential functions are prioritized overall by their need in supporting the program priorities (life safety, health/basic care, asset protection, services, damage assessment, operations).

Key Results Areas

1. Community First

- Understanding that people are the most important element to any program, encourage participation and understanding at all levels of the university
- Provide communication and education programs that provide useful information and that encourage trust in the organization as well as in themselves
- Ensure that the needs of all community members are taken into account

2. Resilience

- Promote a culture that values community bonds and capability of self-organization, minimizing the top-down, hierarchical approach to response and recovery.
- Promote the idea that individuals are the first, first responders who will not panic at the onset of a disaster
- Base planning for response and recovery on capability development using an all-hazards approach

3. Mutual Aid and Support

- Engage with community responders and planners to the fullest extent possible
- Participate in local exercises and training programs

4. Integration and Alignment

- All elements of the program including response, incident management, crisis communications and recovery will be integrated ensuring the full continuum of an incident is addressed
- As no operation works in a vacuum; the program will ensure that the enterprise is viewed holistically, connecting vertical and horizontal dependencies across all operations

Early Alert

RIT Alert is used to immediately notify the campus community upon the confirmation of a **significant emergency or dangerous situation** involving an **immediate threat to the health or safety** of students, faculty and staff **occurring on or near campus**. Please visit [RIT Emergency Information](#) for additional information.

Links

Official Links

- [RIT Continuity of Instruction](#)
- [RIT Emergency Information](#)
- [National Weather Service \(Buffalo\)](#)
- [Monroe County Office of Public Safety](#)
- [Monroe County Public Health Department](#)
- [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#)
- [Ready.gov](#)
- [NY Citizens Preparedness](#)

Standing Committee Name

RIT | Faculty Senate

Newsletters

- [Preparedness at Home](#)
- [Phishing](#)
- [RIT Alert, Emergency Notification System](#)
- [Winter Weather Safety](#)
- [Prevent the Spread of Illness](#)
- [Reporting Emergencies and Getting Help](#)
- [Tornado Response](#)
- [International Travel Readiness](#)
- [Early Intervention](#)
- [Responding to an Armed Intruder Incident](#)

Continuity of Operations/Disaster Recovery Plan

See attached PDF

Contact Us

The Business Continuity Department facilitates guidance to Colleges and departments developing their plans and capabilities that enable RIT to respond to incidents quickly and return to normal operations as soon as possible with the least amount of impact to the campus community. The effectiveness of this program is dependent on the preparedness of Colleges and mission critical service departments for unexpected events and disasters that could impact the mission of RIT.

[Chris Denninger](#)

Director Threat Assessment and Emergency Preparedness

Global Risk Management Services

Finance and Administration

chris.g.denninger@rit.edu

585-475-6620

Location

Threat Management & Emergency Preparedness Office

120 Lomb Memorial Drive

Rochester, NY 14623-5608

Standing Committee Name