

RIT | University Council

Meeting Minutes: February 17, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m.

Approval of Minutes from January 27, 2021 Meeting

The minutes were approved by 28-0-1.

President's Report

This morning we had a wonderful staff award ceremony which is normally held in Ingle Auditorium with a lot of celebrating, clapping, hugging and many photographs. We missed some of those elements today. There was a huge number of staff nominated for their job performance, no surprise, especially in a pandemic year because our staff have been so critical to our success. Just absolutely outstanding awardees were selected by the committees involved and I thank everybody that had a hand and putting that ceremony together. I think we did the very best we could under pandemic circumstances and I hope that all the awardees feel properly recognized.

I'll comment a little bit on where we stand with COVID. If you check our COVID dashboard on the RIT website, you'll see that over the last two weeks we've had 23 students and 6 faculty/staff test positive. Now those numbers seem pretty large, but not for a community of our size. As you know, we're now testing every student, every week and so these 23 students across the two week period corresponds to about one positive in every 1,000 students or a positivity rate of about 0.1%, which is far lower than the surrounding community and I think something that we can be proud of and well as something that we really want and need to keep doing well. The student testing is being done with the Abbott BinaxNOW rapid antigen test. It's easily administered and the results are available in just 15 minutes.

Under the direction of Professor Andre Hudson, we also have been experimenting and working at bringing online a saliva testing methodology. We hope to offer saliva testing on a voluntary basis to faculty and staff in the College of Science, and this is just to further bringing this method online. An advantage of the saliva test is that it detects the prevalence of COVID almost right away unlike other tests. It is still not accepted as a diagnostic test, so if somebody tests positive, we have to run a PCR antigen test on that person.

There are new variants of the COVID virus circulating around the world and some are more contagious than the first variety that arrived in the U.S. We expect that it might be around the end of March or so, when these other variants will be much more common here and that is another reason we want to have some extra testing capability. I will say there is no current plan for any widespread testing of faculty and staff. I know some probably wish that we did provide testing on campus and others who really just don't want any more requirements in a difficult semester. But I can tell you right now, there's no current plan for widespread testing of faculty and staff but, that could change, depending upon the conditions with COVID. As you know, vaccine supply is still very limited, even for those who are eligible to get it and so we would like to have this testing methodology available if we think we need it. We will end up with at least some significant fraction of our faculty/staff population vaccinated, but that remains to be seen.

Things are going really well with new student recruitment for fall 2021. I think our fall 2020 Early Decision One and Early Decision Two deposits were a record by some substantial margin. Ian Mortimer reports that we have almost as many actual deposits as last year and even more impressive is that the quality of these students substantially exceeds the quality of last year's class as measured by the standard kinds of academic measures. And speaking of the fall, Ellen Granberg had a committee thoroughly study alternatives for fall calendar and we do expect to have a fairly traditional calendar. Ellen would you like to say anything more about the fall calendar?

Ellen Granberg: Thank you Dave, just a couple of things. At this point as Dave said, we're planning to follow the normal and pre-already approved fall calendar. We do have some flexibility if anything were to develop with COVID where we felt like we needed to respond. We would, for example, still have the option to have students leave at Thanksgiving and not return. But given, especially the recent news about the vaccine supply, there's reason to be optimistic that we can actually have a normal fall schedule. The one other thing I'll mention that's related to this is that the move out of the spring semester to start later. That means that the summer term is only going to be 10 weeks. Information is coming out about that now, but that's the one other shift to academic calendars.

Dr. Munson: The last thing I'll mention is the Rochester International Jazz Festival will occur on the RIT campus this summer. This is a big, somewhat sensitive deal. The City of Rochester certainly has benefited from having the Jazz Festival downtown, but the organizers felt that with COVID still around they were going to have difficulty in pulling off a festival with any substantial numbers of people within the confines of the city. They approached us and asked if we could make our campus available. They plan to have a lot of outdoor performance venues with people widely spread out. In addition, instead of holding the festival in June, it will start at the end of July and go through the first week of August, a 9-day festival including two weekends. They typically attract about 200,000 attendees. We may not attract that many, but certainly this is going to keep a number of our staff very busy because at that time, we'll be providing a fair amount of support. RIT will be compensated to some extent from the Jazz Fest organization for the efforts that we put in, so we're trying to be a good citizen and this is not intended to be a major money making operation for us. I do think it will be very, very good exposure for RIT. And by the time Jazz Fest is being held, the steel either will have gone up or will be going up on the IMLC. There'll be some exciting things to see on campus.

Confirmation of Academic Calendar 2026-2027 (*presentation files available on [RIT Digital Archive](#)*)

Joe Loffredo, AVP Academic Affairs & Registrar

It's very strange to be talking about the 2026-2027 calendar when we're still making adjustments to current calendars but, here I am. So this time of year, I always remind everyone that we have an [administrative policy](#) for creating our calendar that was approved in 2017. It's been revised a couple times since, most recently in 2019, where we fixed the start of fall to the fourth Monday in August. I'm presenting the 2026-2027 calendar today. I encourage people to look at the policy, it's got agreed upon calendar characteristics and it charges my office to maintain a slate of six calendars and the present the newest one in spring of each year and essentially, it writes the calendar. The policy is pretty tight in that, following the policy I produced a calendar very quickly and there's really not a lot of flexibility in what the calendar is based on per the policy.

- Start classes, the fourth Monday in August. Exams end December 16.
- Spring starts January 11 and we have a day off for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- Commencement is that first weekend in May.
- Summer is a traditional 12 week summer.

We would add this calendar to our full slate of calendars and if anyone wants to see all the ones we've already approved, we've got them in one [chart](#).

This is always awkward because I don't know if I should walk people through the dates, I probably don't need to. I will pause for any questions. I will come to the governance groups to talk about this and receive each group's endorsement before coming back to University Council with an improved version of this.

C26.0 Protection of Minors on Campus – REVISIONS (*presentation files available on [RIT Digital Archive](#)*)

Cara Mulvaney, Director, Youth Protection and Compliance, K-12 Programs

Revisions to this policy have been endorsed by Academic Senate, Staff Council and Student Government and I am here seeking University Council's endorsement. My position at RIT is a newly created one. I started in April 2020, but have worked in higher education and compliance for 17 years. The field of youth protection in higher education is a relatively new one. I will be overseeing this policy, including implementation and the compliance with it.

RIT creates remarkable opportunities for children to engage with our people and our resources and this policy allows families and educators to feel confident in sending their children and their students here to our programs, knowing that we're truly looking out for the children's wellbeing and safety while they're in our care.

Aside from insurance providers lately wanting universities to take child protection steps, it is just the right thing to do, for a few reasons. For one we host a lot of minors on and off campus through academic camps, youth sports camps, internship programs, etc. A risk analysis from 2019-2020 revealed that child safety on campus was a high risk area. This policy enhances child safety across all programs and the policy also protects RIT employees who are involved with youth programs from false allegations of inappropriate behavior, as long as staff are following this policy. And then, finally, the policy protects RIT, the university has vicarious liability for its employees who are working in these programs, and for the students in the programs and there are reputational risks if something were to occur.

Basics of the policy

- Members of the RIT community who are aware of, or suspect child abuse or neglect or sexual harassment on campus need to report it.
- Youth programs, which are defined in the policy, must register with the Office of Youth Protection Compliance.
- We want youth program staff to be screened. This is very much in line with what K-12 schools and other youth serving organizations require of adults interacting with minors, including volunteers. We want everyone to go under undergo background checks annually.
- We will have program staff go through youth safety training that addresses identifying recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect and harassment and an acknowledgement that the individual has completed training and that they understand standards of conduct for appropriate behavior with minors.
- The policy also addresses expectations for the supervision of minors during the program, specifically that they must be supervised at all times while in our care. Staff in these programs should also make a reasonable effort to avoid being alone or private prep contact with the minor that it's out of sight or sound of others.
- And finally I plan to create a Youth Protection Advisory Committee to periodically review issues that are arising, whether in our programs, nationally, or more broadly questions or trends, new laws that may pertain to youth safety, and to ensure that our policy is still addressing those issues.

The mechanics of the policy will be detailed in a guidance document that is separate and will allow us to be flexible in adapting implementation to changes in law, technology, whatever it may be. The information is all on the [K-12 website](#).

The policy was endorsed 28-0-3.

Overview of Major Capital Projects (*presentation files available on [RIT Digital Archive](#)*)

John Moore, Assoc. VP Facilities Management

Jim Yarrington, University Architect and Dir. of Planning and Design

If you haven't been on campus and heard the noise, the Innovative Maker and Learning Complex (IMLC) is under construction. The piles are going in and we expect that sometime late spring/ early summer the structural steel will be rising up out of the ground. The project creates a vibrant hub of activity for the entire RIT community. The atrium, which we call the Hub, interior and exterior creates a dynamic center for the campus and links Wallace Library and Monroe Hall. It also links the west campus interior walkway system with a central campus walkway system. It preserves the walkway from the transportation nexus on the south side of campus to the Quarter Mile and the southern current Quarter Mile, so one can cut through the building. It provides remodeled academic support space in Wallace and links other academic support in Monroe Hall. We're achieving Dr. Munson's goal of displaying the essence of RIT in to users and visitors in 15 minutes or less, we hope. That also provides an exciting contrast with the existing mid-century modern structures around it, it has multiple layered transparencies and exciting new

architectural forms that provide major new spaces for collaboration, student gathering, and use by student organizations.

The building creates just exceptional maker spaces to support our students and the pursuit of all their innovative ideas, as well as many of our award winning student teams. There is there's more than 25,000 square feet of maker space being developed in the project, the Atrium and the glass walls, provide a view to the projects and all the activities. The building also provides a significant addition to our spaces for performing artists at RIT. The project will have more than a 14,000 square foot performing arts practice and learning facilities within it. This is an image of the new Black Box Theater that will really be a big highlight of the building. It's on the south side and has views toward the Polissen Center, as well as transparency and views into the space.

The innovative design by our architects is so that we can have multiple uses in this facility as a Black Box Theater, a presentation hall, an event space, a lecture hall, whatever we want to do in there. The glass has the ability to be darkened to have an interior for private events, as well as open public events. The walls will actually open up and allow you to direct access to the outside.

Classroom space is a priority for the project and the inventory of 44,000 square feet of classroom space developed by this project will support RIT for many years. It provides 1,600 new classroom seats throughout the new construction and renovations and the Wallace Library. The projects being designed by the nationally ranked William Rawn Associates and HBT Architects of Rochester and another regional firm Welliver, as the construction manager for the project. The building is expected to be open for our students in fall of 2023.

The Music Performance Theater is a project being designed by the firm led by Michael Maltzan, an award winning and nationally recognized architect. This Los Angeles based firm has partnered with SWBR Architects of Rochester. The vision for the music performance facility is to provide the finest higher education venue for musical theater across the upstate New York region. The design team chose this location for the facility, which is along the northern quarter mile and conveniently located within the academic center of campus. On the slide, it's the right triangle here the left. It's interesting to note just in passing that the concept for performing arts facility at this exact location was originally identified in a 1975 RIT masterplan study as a long range project. So, it certainly was a long range project at 45 years. The building is in its early stages of design, but we hope these concept renderings help you to see the vision of the project.

The Performing Arts Complex is ultimately expected to have two venues in its final construction. The first project that we're working on now is a large stage and seating for 750 people. With all of the appropriate spaces to support very high level performances, lectures, and events. The future project is intended to be a larger stage and seating for about 1,500 people. The current project is moving forward in design. And we hope that we'll be able to start construction sometime soon.

As shown here, the initial design concepts include spaces for exterior performances and large displays, which are going to make this such a uniquely RIT building. And again, why we're so proud of the partnership with the Michael Maltzan firm on this project. Transparency again is very important. So you see the lower level entry level is very open and transparent. Some of those windows actually look into the back of house spaces, so you can pass by and see the talents of our students at work. The projects going to continue to the summer in design and hopefully will be breaking ground sometime this fall. It's expected to be open in the fall of 2023.

Populous is another nationally recognized firm in athletic facilities and we are working with them to improve our athletic facilities. The initial projects from this plan will focus on improving facilities on the outside in our fields, to ensure consistent access to the fields. Our current project creates a new track and field facility on the north side. You can see this #1 on the north side of Andrews and also improves the fields for baseball and softball with new artificial turf playing surfaces.

Our next project after that will be to install an artificial turf surface for our current stadium field and then a future project will be to build a new stadium facility around that field.

Research spaces are a priority as part of our strategic plan. We're working on two projects - one is in Brown Hall to create a research facility for College of Science and Kate Gleason College of Engineering. This project is currently in design and we hope to be in construction sometime in the fall of 2021. Marketing and Communications Division currently resides in a significant portion of Brown Hall and is being relocated to 125 Tech Park Drive. So, we hope to have renovations completed for them at Tech Park and to move them sometime this spring.

In Engineering Hall, we are working on a grant funded project for the expansion and upgrade of our Semiconductor & Microsystems Fabrication Laboratory in the MicroE building. This project is also in design and is expected to start construction sometime this fall.

In the College of Art and Design, we have a project for School of Photographic Arts & Sciences renovation, supported by gift funds from Chance Wright, a recent graduate of CAD and Saunders College of Business. This project is under construction now. It will create new computer and media labs, sound motion, and 4D capture labs, a new equipment depot, technologically enabled meeting spaces, a Student Commons and informal workspace nicknamed the Airport Lounge. We're also looking with CAD at a School of Film & Animation renovation project on the A-level of Gannett. It's needed to support additional enrollment in animation programs. It supplements the scope of renovations that were completed for the program in 2007. It's in the early stages of design and is expected to be in construction later this year.

And then NTID...we've got three major projects currently in construction. We are currently renovating classrooms, renovating and improving access and ADA access in the restrooms and we are replacing the 1972 windows in Johnson hall. These projects are currently in construction. And we've got a number of projects that are being moved forward in design. The program improvements and renovations for NTID Performing Arts spaces are in the conceptual design phase. These renovations in LBJ building will complement the Performing Arts spaces that we've looked at the IMLC and the Music Performance Theater and the scope there includes re-arrangement of spaces to achieve better efficiency, new spaces for dance, improved changing and green room areas, and a new experimental theater.

Saunders College of Business is sponsoring a project to enlarge Lowenthal Hall, to allow increased enrollment and provide state of the art facilities for our graduate programs. This project is being funded through generous donations, including a significant donation by Mr. Saunders. The project is also expected to receive a grant from New York State. The addition to Lowenthal is currently in design with Labella Associates of Rochester. The architectural challenge for this project is to balance the vision of the addition with the existing building architecture restrictions due to wetlands and the more modern architecture of the IMLC building. These renderings depict the current architectural concept. Programmatically, the addition will provide a large lecture hall, with more than 140 seats, graduate student spaces, labs, teaching spaces, and executive level event space. The addition, will add about 36,000 gross square feet to Lowenthal Hall. The design is continuing to progress. Once we have confirmation of the all of funding, including the New York state grant, we will be able to develop a more accurate construction schedule. We do expect the addition to take about 18 months to build. We're going to be moving forward as quickly as we can, once all the funding is secure. And that's the show. Are there any questions?

Dr. Munson: One thing I will mention is with the NTID renovations, they have their own funds acquired from the Federal Government, to pay for what they're doing in the performing arts.

New Business: None.

Meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Attendance February 17, 2021

Name	Relationship to UC	Attended	Name	Relationship to UC	Attended
Buckley, Gerard	Member-Dean	x	Lindsay, Susan	Member-SC	
Castillo, Jaime	Member-SC	x	Liu, Manlu	Member-AS	
Castleberry, Phil	Non-Voting Member		Loffredo, Joe	Non-Voting Member	x
Clarke, Cathy	Member-SC	x	Maggelakis, Sophia alt. Larry Buckley	Member-Dean	x
Cohen, Lindsay	Member-SC Alt.		McQuiller, Laverne	Member-Dean	x
Cuculick, Jessica	Member-AS	x	Mortimer, Ian	Non-Voting Member	
Cummings, Twyla	Member-Dean	x	Mozrall, Jacqueline	Member-Dean	x
Custer, Jacob	Member-SG		Munson, David	Non-Voting Member & EC	x
DeHarder, Shine	Member-SG		Nasr, Nabil	Member-Dean Alt	
D'Amanda, Elisabetta	Member-AS	x	Ortega, Jared	Member-SG	x
DeMay, Patrick	Member-SC	x	Pinkham, Jo Ellen	Non-Voting Member	x
Doolittle, Richard	Member-AS		Prescott, Joanna	Member-SC	x
Durand, Joline	Member-SG	x	Provenzano, Susan	Non-Voting Member	x
Edwards, Doreen	Member-Dean	x	Raffaella, Ryne	Non-Voting Member	x
Edwards, Patrick	Member-SG	x	Ramkumar, S. Manian	Member-Dean	x
Ellis, Jacob	Member-SG		Reeder, Gina	Member-SC	x
Esterman, Marcos Patru , Dorin -Alt.	Member-AS	x	Snyder, William	Member-AS	x
Fagenbaum, Barb	Member-SC		Sood, Harshita	Member-SC	x
Finnerty, Bob	Non-Voting Member	x	Stanley, Brooke	Member-SG	x
Granberg, Ellen	Member & EC	x	Stiner, Holly	Member-SC	x
Haake, Anne	Member-Dean		Teal, Michelle	Member-SC	x
Hall, James	Member-Dean Alt		Thomas, Shawn	Member-SC	
Herman, Vanessa J.	Non-Voting Member		Travis, Luca	Member-SG	x
Heyman, Emily	Member-SC	x	Trierweiler, John	Non-Voting Member	x
Hudson, André	Member-AS	x	Vallone, Lindsay	Member-SC	x
Hull, Clyde	Member-AS	x	Velamuri, Sri Chartitha	Member-SG	x
Jenkins, Keith	Non-Voting Member	x	Wang, Yong Tai	Member-Dean	x
Johnson, Sandra	Non-Voting Member		Warntz, Griffin	Member-SG	
Jokl, Todd	Member-Dean	x	Watters, James	Non-Voting Member	
Kiely, Becky	Member-SC Alt		Zion, George	Member-AS	
Krutz, Daniel	Member-AS	x			

Interpreters: Catherine Kiwitt and Jeneca Saeva