

Faculty Senate Minutes of Meeting

Regularly scheduled meeting of the Faculty Senate of Rochester Institute of Technology

Thursday, November 21, 2024

12:15 - 1:50 PM

Slaughter Hall 2220-2240

Attendance: See Below

Agenda Item No. 1: Call to Order; A. Newman (12:15)

Agenda Item No. 2: Approval of Agenda; A. Newman (12:17)

The agenda was approved by acclamation.

Agenda Item No. 3: Communications Officer's Report/Approval of Minutes; S. Aldersley (12:18)

Approval of the draft minutes of the 11/7 meeting was postponed because of gaps in the audio recording/transcript, in particular the wording of the motion pertaining to E33.1

Agenda Item No. 4: Executive Committee Report; A. Newman (12:19)

- On behalf of the Senate, I would like to congratulate Dr. Kelly Martin on being named Dean of CLA. We look forward to many years of fruitful collaboration.
- Please remember to RSVP to our end-of-year get-together at the Tait Reserve on December 12th.
- The Center for Teaching & Learning would like faculty to know that MyCourses is up for review, and D2L, the parent company, is coming for a campus visit on 12/3. Neil Hair has invited the FSEC to participate in the event, but unfortunately, it clashes with our attendance at the Provost's Council. Please let me know if you would like to represent Senate at this meeting and thus ensure the faculty voice is heard during that discussion. On a related topic, MyCourses has a storage issue. Apparently, we pay for only 6 terabytes but are using 98. CTL is asking faculty to explore deleting course materials after two or three years. However, some schools need to hold materials for a longer period for accreditation purposes. Alos, please note that CourseLeaf is not the same as, and is not replacing, MyCourses.
- Re: our attendance at the Provost's Council, we plan to discuss Senate's main areas of focus this year, and are open to any suggestions from Senators on topics you'd like us to discuss with our leadership. Also, for the second year in a row, Sam and I have been invited to meet with the Administrative Council in January.
- I recently met with Jo Ellen Pinkham to discuss the composition of the Benefits Advisory Group. We agreed that Senate representation is important, and I asked for a diversification of representation across demographics, to ensure a broader perspective. I am happy to report that HR has agreed to remove the "secrecy" embargo on the ability of BAG members to collect feedback from faculty going forward.
- At the 12/5 Senate meeting, I would like to finish the voting process on changes to B2 so that the university faculty at large can vote on the revised charter over the winter break. I will be adding updates

to the FSEC motions over the weekend so please review the documents and be prepared to vote!

- The Provost has been given the names of the senate reps for the benchmarking committee and we are now waiting for the committee to be created and get to work on the development of a new benchmark. We are hoping that this can be done in speedy fashion and certainly before next year's merit increment cycle. As you know, we have submitted our own benchmarking proposal which you can find in the drive.
- Lastly, I have been contacted by the chair of Faculty Senate of a nearby university. It seems that he and other chairs in the area want to discuss the future of shared governance and the challenges faced by Academia in the coming years. Our first meeting is tomorrow.

Agenda Item No. 5: Staff Council Update; R. Hisert (12:23)

Our executive committee have also met with HR to talk about Staff Council representation on the BAG and it's good to hear that faculty and staff are on the same page on this issue. In our meeting later this afternoon we are hoping to hear updates on the staff career architecture project updates, especially regarding transparency as the project moves forward.

Agenda Item No. 6: Student Government Update; J. Anderson (12:24)

SG has had a very busy two weeks. Paw Prints that have been responded to: RIT is putting new washers and dryers into 175 Jefferson; the Academics and Co-ops committee responded to adding course outcome stats to SIS; and the Housing and Dining committee responded to the charge to bring back more wet dining locations to the Ritz Underground dining location.

Then, the following PawPrints were charged: to the Facilities, Parking and Transportation committee, light pollution reduction; to the outgoing president, remove the camera in Prism; to the Housing and Dining committee, bring back the Crossroads flavor/sparkling water machine; to the Student Affairs committee, bring back the downtown weekend bus; to the Vice President, secure the services of an RIT cow to mow campus lawns.

I. Puchades: I've heard a lot of concerns from my students about the bus shuttle system

J. Anderson: The Director of Facilities, Parking and Transportation recently came to SG. We've asked for a better app system since the current one is really buggy and has a lot of issues. He said there's a lot of shuttle maintenance going on right now due to the change to electric buses and we are having to borrow buses from the University of Buffalo. It's not the best of solutions, but unfortunately it's what we've been given. The FPA committee has been meeting with Joel Mazieka every week, trying to get updates. They claim that once we have all the electric buses on campus, it will run a lot smoother and they will be on time. They estimate having a bus in Kate Gleason Circle taking students round campus every 15 minutes.

S. Malachowsky: I serve on the Parking & Traffic Appeals board and they say it's too much work to update the website so that people can know which buses aren't running on which day. If people are starting their day off in a negative light, depending on a shuttle or not finding a parking spot, I think it's affecting mental health. There are at least two layers within Parking who do not have a student first

approach. They do not empathize with the customers of our institution and it's becoming a major issue. As I understand it they're down three shuttles right now. I've heard nothing about electric buses and honestly, that sounds completely made up to me. I have a morning class and I frequently have three or four students that are not there because of the shuttle situation. But I think SG should consider pushing back on parking as well as the shuttle system.

J. Anderson: Could you elaborate on what you mean by two layers?

S. Malachowsky: Joel and his boss. They are not sympathetic towards students as customers.

J. Anderson: We have to keep a good relationship with them because we depend on them and the more aggressive we get with them, the less they want to work with us.

Agenda Item No. 7: Financial/Budget Presentation; J. Watters (12:31)

Today's going to be a good conversation because we're in very good shape. A lot of people think of me as being responsible for the budget, but actually my portfolio of responsibilities is a little bit more than that. There are probably 900 people in F&A on a full-time basis plus several hundred part-time employees and about 1,500 students a year. So we are probably the largest employer of students. We try to line them up with areas that keep them engaged, teach them leadership skills and hopefully provide some financial assistance to help them along the way.

There are some really good stories going on in campuses overseas. Dubai, for example, just surpassed 2,000 students for the first time this fall. They're big operations and they're continuing to grow.

Turning to the budget, tuition and fees are the largest source of revenue. Another source of revenue is unrestricted endowment earnings which management uses for its highest needs in the operating budget. A similar amount that is restricted by donors also comes into the operating budget. Some of it is used to underwrite endowed chairs, some for scholarships for specific students. Management really doesn't have a choice as to where those funds go. The contribution to the operating budget of endowment earnings is 5% of the trailing 20 quarter average. That's the policy of the trustees. New York State has a regulation that caps how much an institution can distribute from its endowment at 7%. In addition to the 5% that we take, the trustees this past year did a special allocation over the next three years allowing us to invest \$15 million on a marketing campaign which is geared toward generating applications from families of higher means. These are credits coming from the endowment. Having interest rates go up is not good for us as consumers and citizens, but from the standpoint of the working capital of the institution it is helpful. We have about \$400 million invested in the marketplace. All of the interest that's earned comes into the operating budget to support current operations. When the entire portfolio was only generating 2%, the operating budget saw quite a drop in its available resources but when the Federal Reserve increased interest rates, we started to see the benefit. Now we're seeing rates start to come back down again.

You see \$40 million in overhead distributions coming in. There are other sources that come into the operations, but once again, you can see it's relatively small in proportion to tuition and fees.

The amount of income that the university would've gotten this year had all of our students been full pay, paying the published rate of tuition fees, would have been \$380 million. But that's not our situation. This past fall, the discount off of our published rate was about 59.4% and that's what's represented in that

\$380 million. So instead of that flowing into our coffers, it became aid to families so they could afford to come to RIT. Families today are negotiators. They have the ability through the common application to apply to 20 different universities and so they're going out and they're testing the market to see who's going to give them the most financial aid and then they come back and they negotiate with you. They say 'WPI is offering me this, RPIs offering me this. I would love to come to RIT, but unless you sweeten the package, I have other places I can go'. So there's great pressure there and repositioning ourselves in order to see more net revenue coming for a per student calculation is something that strategically this institution needs to be doing.

Then there's auxiliary enterprises including housing, dining, the bookstore, etc. It's an old term, but basically those operating units are business units, responsible for paying the entirety of their cost and expense. In other words, they are self-contained units which have to pay us for the spaces they occupy, they have to pay for capital improvements to their spaces and if they want new spaces, they have to pay for the new construction. And they have to pay all their operating expenses, the cost of goods, employees, benefits. They also buy services from the university, for example, payroll services. Plus, they have an obligation to return any surplus to us.

With regard to NTID, these are monies coming from the feds which must be spent on NTID. They also collect their own tuition and fees which are much different than us as far as the amount charged. The university management doesn't have the right to spend those monies on other things here. Then there's restricted sponsored projects brought in by faculty members who are getting NIH awards and NSF awards, etc. Once again, management doesn't have the right to redirect those dollars for other needs of the university. They must all be spent on the outcomes expected by the awarding agency.

When you take all this into account, our ability to spend money in the operating budget is 455 million. Now, this slide shows you the total expenses of the institution and the various constituent categories. The Academic Affairs budget includes lines for Instruction and Academic Services, such things as the registrar's office, the library system, all of the infrastructure needed to support instruction. That bifurcation takes place because past provosts have always wanted the colleges to be separate so they could look at that over time.

So of the 468 million you can see that in the current fiscal year, about 63% of our expense base is in Academic Affairs. We've also looked at the 990s, the tax filing forms, of some of our competitors. It's not the best way to compare because definitions and what is in what categories differs from one institution to another, but it's a rough approximation of what others spend on academic affairs and instruction. So compared to our 63%, RPI is about 57.7% and Syracuse is about 42%. So you can see the range of instructional category expenses in the institutions we compete against. I can't tell you that it's apples to apples because the 990 form doesn't get very specific in how it defines what gets counted in these various categories, but it's a close approximation.

This slide shows the growth in the Academic Affairs budget over the past few years. You can see that in FY20 and FY21, COVID led to lots of changes across the institution as we responded to the crisis that we were facing. But now we're starting to see a building of some of the margins and our resulting ability to start investing more heavily in the operations of the institution.

Earlier this year we had the pleasure of having the chair of Faculty Senate and some Senators sit in on the budget hearings so they could see what everybody asks for. And this week we shared with Atia the resulting distributions that took place in academic affairs. We usually get about ten times the amount of requests for the available money. And so the provost and his fine team of academic leaders go through a prioritizing process to make sure that the kinds of investments we make are in line with the strategic plan.

We present these to the president and he helps to allocate monies across the other vice presidents. It's a competitive process that hopefully at the end of the day delivers an allocation of funds that keeps the institution positively moving forward towards its strategic planning goals.

This slide gives you an idea of where we stand against others from the point of view of price. We used to be pretty far off the benchmark group, but over the last eight years we've done several things to boost entry costs for first time students, so that now we are a little closer to the peer group as far as the tuition is concerned. Once again, however, for those who have an affordability issue, that \$380 million is used to provide opportunities for everybody to access RIT.

This next slide shows the enrollment picture for the institution. You often hear the president and enrollment management talk about the overall system having more than 20,000 students. That number reflects the more than 4,000 students who are overseas and whose tuition dollars and fees remain on those campuses. It's important to separate out from the budget perspective those students who really don't contribute to our operations here in Henrietta. Similarly, there are students who are on co-op and in Project Lead The Way, the program we administer for high school kids taking a class from RIT. They pay us a very minimal fee but they're considered students in the head count. So we have to take all those out because they're economically not meaningful to us from the standpoint of running this institution. So then you get down to the netting effect of who really pays the bills.

Next, here's an idea of where the colleges were this past year versus in previous years. It's nice to see that we're starting to see increases in enrollment in CET. They went through a period of losing students. I think they did a great job in creating a program in the robotics space and they're actually starting to gain students there. A nice return on marketing. For the longest time GCCIS was actually the growth engine of the campus. They're starting to back down a little bit now to take a little pressure off them, which is not a bad thing. And we're seeing some of that counter cyclical nature as some of the other programs start to come back into favor, which is good from the standpoint of our long-term health.

I thought you might be interested to see our growth in PhD students. You understand we provide all the first year financial support in terms of stipends and healthcare expenses for these students. So most of them don't contribute from a tuition standpoint.

Here is a longer term snapshot of what has been happening in terms of discounted tuition. We've reached a point now where the overall discount of all students to the institution is more than 50%. It's something I've been really focused on talking with trustees and the finance committee and we're going to use that \$15 million investment to start moving the economic profile of families a bit more towards the right on this slide, where you can see that less than one and a half percent of students at RIT are full pay students, meaning that they come with no need for financial aid. But if you look at the left side of this continuum, 30% of students are in total need of aid. They're considered Pell students by definition. I'm not saying we don't want to support kids with high need. I'm saying that for the long term financial stability of the institution, especially given the fact that we will be going through a period over the next six years of potentially real pressure on enrollments where we might become a little smaller, we need to increase the net tuition from students that are here. If we can reduce 5% or 10% on the Pell side and grow the right side, it will be meaningful to the institution as far as its financial stability long term. That special allocation of \$15 million from the endowment is being invested by the marketing people in those areas where they know they could draw applications from more economically substantial families.

Let me finish by saying I've heard that we have four budgets. I don't have four budgets, but you might say there are three. First, there's the capital budget. Our website shows all of the major capital investments approved by the trustees, for which the funding is currently in place. The theater is \$74 million. It's

scheduled to open January 26th. Our stadium, which you saw the other day had a slight incident, is a \$30 million project that'll be open probably by late fall next year. The research building is about \$22 and a half million. That one is almost done. And then you start to look at other things that we do. We invest in keeping things up to date. We're investing in deferred maintenance. There's a million dollars allocated to improve the air quality in the library. There's a lot of things that need to be replaced. You can see it on that schedule.

And then, second, there is the permanent budget of the institution. We develop it by looking at enrollments, projections of enrollments, and projections of the monies that will get distributed from the endowment. These are all projections at a snapshot in time and that's where the permanent budget is set. Now, In addition, there's a working budget. Budgeting is a dynamic process. I mean, as soon as we get done with the permanent budget, there are changes which are required or suggested. A dean hires a faculty member with a trailing spouse that we also want to hire. Well, that's not part of the permanent budget, yet it's something that the institution wants to do and funds are needed to do it. For example, deans may take some money they think they're not going to use this year and put it in a personnel line. That's not a permanent change to the operating budget. That's a necessary one year event. So there's a working budget that tracks all these kinds of one-time events. It changes every day as people need things, want things. Another example, say a faculty member is promised a startup package and when the startup package comes in it's \$300,000 higher than what originally was thought. Well, the money may come from the savings accounts of colleges. These are sitting on the balance sheet, but they're not in the operating budget. And so they're going to be drawn in, and maybe the college will ask F&A to match it. But again, monies for one-time events that show up in the working budget don't change the permanent budget.

I hope that that clarifies what takes place and where the monies are and how they're tracked. We are as transparent as possible. You have a great new chair of the Resource Allocation & Budget committee. He's very engaged and eager to understand this stuff. So we're going to feed him as much as he wants to take and as much as he can tolerate. So that committee will see a lot of stuff. I also gave him the presentation from last spring. We had over a thousand people attend. And if people want it again, we'll do it again. In short, we provide as much financial information and transparency as you request.

S. Aldersley: It's good to see the slice of the operating budget to Academic Affairs on an upward trajectory, 63.3% or so. Hopefully that trajectory will continue in an upper direction. We'd like to see it at 65%, maybe two thirds of the budget would be a good target, since we are after all the heart of the university, and what students come here for. But my question is to what do you ascribe the increase over the last two years from whatever it was, 61% to 63%? How did that happen?

J. Watters: Well, the student body has grown in size so there is more net tuition available. There was also money from net tuition that got moved in there through the budget hearing process. And there were a lot more one-time requests in terms of startup packages. So one-time expenses are up. Also, some of the other operating units of the institution actually had less demand, so they saw less money and it was redirected.

J. Chiavaroli: I have a question on the discount rate. How does that work its way down? It seems to me that the measure of how successful that metric is would be calculated at the program level, the number of seats. If you still have ten seats available in your first year cohort, then maybe we're not giving that

program enough discount. I don't know if that's the case, but it seems there's an opportunity there. It's better to get some tuition than none. So is the process sophisticated enough to go down to the program level and if so, how is that managed by the admissions department?

J. Watters: There is variability across programs in the discount rate. So where you have high demand, that discount will be less because there's more students competing for those seats. So you can be a little bit more selective and not provide as much student financial aid and you're still going to fill those seats where you see some unused capacity. There just are not enough applicants who are acceptable to RIT to fill some seats. Admissions picks out all the students who have a real chance of success at RIT. There's just not enough there to fill those other capacity seats. It's not a matter of discount, it's a lack of qualified applicants for those seats.

M. Laver: I have a broader question and that is, when I came here in 2008 from the University of Wisconsin system, I was really proud of the fact that RIT got through the 2008 financial crisis while Wisconsin crashed. The same thing through COVID. A lot of our peer institutions were having tough times. We were too, but we were pretty steady. So I've always been proud of that over my 17 years here. Now everybody is talking about disruption to higher ed and what's coming up. First of all, what really keeps you up at night, not abstract things like the demographic cliff. We all know about that, but what keeps you up at night otherwise? And then secondly, what do you see in the pipeline in the short term future that could be potentially transformational for RIT?

J. Watters: I'm sure anything I say is going to be disputed by somebody. But the thing that keeps me up at night is that imbalance that I mentioned where we have 30% of the students who are only generating 6% of the tuition. In the past we've had a proud history of making sure we're accessible to everybody. Looking at the next six or seven years of potential challenges, I don't think that we have the ability to do that, especially when you're sitting at a 59.5% discount and we're modeling new programs at 60. To me that's just not a sustainable marketplace. I think making the shift to higher net worth families coming here and enjoying this wonderful campus and experience is paramount to the institution. As far as seed changes are concerned, what's being talked about in some of the early stages of the strategic plan is that 20% of GDP is spent on healthcare and we have an insignificant footprint there. Having successful programs in healthcare would be additive and very helpful. You don't need to have home runs where you're bringing in 7-800 students into a program. It's going to be very important to this institution to add a 3-500 program to its portfolio. So over the next three to four years I think focusing on new healthcare programs and getting them off the ground successfully is going to be very important. We need to think carefully about program design and make sure we come out the gate with programs that are attractive to students. That's a tactical thing in the short term. Otherwise, I think this institution is going to have to take a look at feeders like Dubai and other international locations where there are high net worth individuals who are enjoying campuses over there who want to take advantage of graduate education in Rochester. I will tell you that our master's level programs are not contributing anywhere near what they should be. To me, it's in the graduate area where master's programs, professional master's programs need to be totally rethought. Do we have the right portfolio? Do we need to add? How do we make them exciting? How do we market them? We're seeing some great success with the BS/MS combined programs. We need to really focus on master's level. If we want to add more, there should be a nice healthy contribution from professional master's programs which support PhD programs. And we do not

have that.

A. Newman: Thank you so much for coming. And if you don't mind, if Senators would like to send me the questions, I will direct them to you.

J. Watters: And I will direct them to Milagros and Leanne who know everything.

[Financial Update Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 8: Workday ERP Project Update; T. Steward (1:00)

Operation Tiger Cloud is the name of RIT's project to implement Workday and I'm the organizational change management lead for this project. As part of our RFP process we talked to a lot of peer institutions, and one of the things we heard time and time again was that we should make sure to focus on the people part of the project, not just the technology part. So making faculty aware of this change is a critical part of our change management plan. We've had a couple of little blurbs in your Faculty Senate newsletter and back in August we met with the FSEC, and today I'm here to give you a basic description of the project, how we got here, what we're enthusiastic about, when the project is going to go live, and how you can stay informed of the change.

ERP stands for Enterprise Resource Planning, a system which enables us to execute human resources, finance and budgeting processes. We have an ERP today in Oracle, but if you've seen it, you might think you just stepped into a time machine and in any case, the need to find a new system was forced on us because our licensed version of Oracle is approaching end of life.

For many of you, your experience with Oracle may be limited to checking your pay stub or checking a vacation balance. Others may use the data that comes out of it in a system called Carol, which is really an abstraction of Oracle, for example, to look at your grant information. In any case, most of you probably have some interaction with Oracle at some level. Oracle is no longer investing in the product. Currently, they provide us with only security and compliance patches and eventually, though we don't know exactly when, they'll stop supporting it all together. So we've been forced to find a replacement.

Ever since we first implemented Oracle in 1997, we've had a fragmented ecosystem. Over the years, we've purchased a number of bolt-ons which has meant users have had to hop from system to system. We've had to purchase EIS for reporting because the native reporting in Oracle was not sufficient and arguably EIS isn't really keeping up with the modern vision of how reporting and dashboarding should work either.

We conducted a survey a couple of months ago, maybe some of you or your departmental staff contributed to it. And we heard from many people there are lots of shadow systems in place to keep track of hiring processes or GRA stipends. There are many things that really should be managed in system but instead people have been forced to use spreadsheets and databases or other mechanisms to keep track of things. And that is what we are moving towards replacing.

After a very vigorous and thorough vetting process, which included input from many people in the RIT community, including Atia and Larry Buckley and Laverne and many, many others, and lots of peer institutions, RIT selected Workday.

At the same time we went through the RFP process, we selected a system implementation partner, as it's

common practice to bring in a seasoned and experienced partner to help with implementation because it is so massive, with such great impact that success is absolutely critical. We selected Accenture to partner with us. Workday has over 10,000 customers and hundreds of those are in the higher ed space. You can see some of the familiar logos here. Gallaudet is a Workday client and just recently Johns Hopkins announced they are moving from SAP to Workday. Workday is a modern cloud-based platform that has a robust community of users and that's really important to us. The higher education community is very interested in sharing ideas and helping people troubleshoot. We observed this at Workday Rising that several of us went to. People are coming up with solutions and willing to share their experiences, which is not true of our current platform. Our implementation partner is providing us with a lot of additional context and expertise that we wouldn't otherwise have had. ERP will reduce risk and simplify our processes and by modernizing our organizational processes it's going to transform our ability to support our strategic plan by leading to improved data quality and access.

All of that being said, I think the most critical part of it is a simplified user experience. One of our guiding principles is that if a process can be executed within Workday, we should aim for that. Workday has many business processes based on best practices that they've found from all of these other institutions, and we should really consider those as we are doing our implementation. It means there will be fewer hops from system to system and no creating an Adobe form after you've done half your process in Oracle. We are really interested in reducing the administrative burden that is piled on departmental staff. A common system also means better data quality and decision making. We will have one data model that supports all of HR, finance and budget, one security model, one code base, and one version of the software. It's really hard to talk to other Oracle clients and ask how they solve the problem because everyone seems to be on a different version of the software.

A significant part of this project is data conversion. Obviously we need to get what's in our old system into the new one since it's abundantly clear that if people don't trust the data that's in the system, they're not going to trust the system. So that is an absolutely critical part and we are paying very close attention to it.

So where are we in the project? We are working hand in hand with our partners from Accenture to really align what's in the box in Workday with RIT's processes. Workday is designed to configure rather than to customize. I think if any of you have worked with these kind of systems in the past, 20 years ago, the idea was we're going to bend the system to meet our process. Our processes are also special and unique and really with a cloud-based platform, we're kind of flipping that. You want to try and take as much out of the box as possible and give control back to the business side of the organization. If you've worked on a project with ITS, particularly with Oracle, because it is so antiquated in its technology, the changes that are required take a lot of time and you have to go back and forth with ITS. Much of that control will be back in the hands of trained business analysts.

Speaking of training, user training, people who are using the system will be trained in the deployment phase. I know November of 2025 sounds really far away, but we need to make sure we're training people at the right time, and six weeks prior to deployment is considered best practice. So right about this time next year we'll be reaching out trying to schedule opportunities for everyone to know what they need to know in the new system so that what you do in December of 2025, you can do confidently and effectively in January of 2026. One word about 'hypercare', for people who have said, 'that sounds really intimidating', but it's really not. It just means we're going to be hyper-focused on making sure that people have what they need to be able to execute processes in the new system. Phase Two will start in April of 2026.

A. Newman: When does it hit faculty?

T. Steward: Regarding ways to engage faculty in the process, some of the things we've thought about in addition to just looking at our website, which you can find by searching on Tiger Cloud, you can invite us to college and department meetings. We can continue the dialogue here in this forum. If you're somebody who likes to break systems, we would love to have your participation for end-user testing. If you've got some expertise you want to tell us about or could provide to the project, maybe you're doing some research on business processes or technology transformation or you have a group of students that do graphic design, we would love to hear from you and incorporate any of that into the project. Or you can invite us to write a news article or some other communication vehicle you may have, or as classroom guest speakers. Earlier this semester we did a class in Golisano for a software engineering class, and last semester we did one in Saunders and the students were very engaged. They asked really great questions about the RFP process and integration. For a lot of people, this is a once in a career type project and we would love to collaborate with anyone interested.

[Workday ERP Project Update Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 9: Faculty Affairs Committee Charges; C. Schlombs (1:15)

FAC has several proposals relating to annual reviews and plan of work and I'm bringing forward our second proposal today. And in the policy text that was pre-circulated, the changes are shown in yellow. The idea here is to implement longer review cycles for top ranked faculty, meaning full professors, principal lecturers, full research professors and professors of practice, with a performance rating extending over the entire evaluation cycle. Such faculty will have the option to opt into a shorter review cycle, if they prefer to do annual reviews. The length of the review cycle, however, is agreed upon at the beginning of the review cycle and it's put in writing in the POW, so it's clear what the agreement is. As I said before, the idea of this proposal is to promote trust in faculty and to align the evaluation cycle with the longer term nature of academic work, from research to submission of an article to eventual publication. And finally, to reduce the administrative burden on both faculty and administrators. In the survey we administered last spring, counting faculty who were strongly in favor of this proposal, and those who were indifferent but willing to go along with this change, we have a clear faculty majority in support of the proposal.

Turning now to questions about this proposal. Will faculty become complacent or even lazy if they have longer review cycles? FAC believes this is not going to be the case. On the contrary, we believe this will be more in line with the longer term nature of faculty work. It will rather encourage faculty to engage in more risk here and be more enterprising, for example, by submitting an article to a journal that's higher ranked and therefore may have a higher chance of rejection. We believe that will help RIT promote its research goals. And at the end of the day, faculty will be responsible for the work they've done over the entire review period. They don't get a slack year, so we don't believe this will be the case.

Second, how will workload portfolio changes be made if faculty have longer review cycles?

We believe a longer review cycle is more in line with the nature of faculty work and therefore it gives faculty also more security in planning, knowing what their portfolio model will be in a longer term,

knowing what their teaching load and what their research expectations will be. That being said, the proposal is optional. If college administration and faculty feel that the longer review cycle is not implementable because of their particular portfolio model, there is an option to opt out. If implemented. The POW could still be amended at any time during the evaluation period.

Third, how will the merit increment be determined? That's the crux of the issue here of course. It is very important to realize that at the moment, the performance evaluation is determined by the academic unit head. It typically correlates with the merit increment, but it does not determine the merit increment. For a longer review cycle, the performance rating would carry over the entire period. And then on an annual basis, based on the annual merit pool, the academic unit head would determine the merit increment. And faculty on the normal review cycle should still have access to market adjustment, exceptional performance increases, and also individual negotiations.

Fourth, should associate professors, associate research professors, senior lecturers who do not seek promotion be eligible to opt out of an annual performance to also go on the longer review cycle?

FAC believes that it's in the interest of both the institution and the faculty member to incentivize promotion to the highest rank. And therefore at this time we propose to limit the longer review cycles to faculty who are at the top promotion rank. We also believe this will avoid putting mid-career faculty in a position where they may have opted for the longer review cycle but then the situation changes and they may want to go up for promotion after all, and they are delayed because of a lack of annual reviews.

Faculty were split on this question in the survey and the FAC is open to extending this proposal if there is strong sentiment in Senate in favor.

So there's one paragraph in the text that would implement these changes that we propose. And then throughout the policy, there are some minor adjustments. And without further ado, I will put the motion on the floor for discussion.

I. Puchades: In our last college faculty meeting, the dean gave us a list of very specific ratings for the categories of the annual review. And it seems like my dean has gone through a painful process to specify very clearly what our ratings are going to be. So my question is, if this gets implemented, then it goes to all the colleges and the deans can decide whether they want to implement it or not? Or is it within our purview to execute this?

C. Schlombs: Our perspective would be that this is a faculty process. Thanks to Senate, we have established faculty governance processes in all the colleges, and therefore at the college level, implementation of this policy change would be subject to that faculty governance process.

H. Ghazle: As a point of clarification, even if Senate were to approve this, it will not go directly to the colleges. It will go first to the provost and then to the president for final approval.

S. Johnson: I was a little worried about the length of the review being taken advantage of. So let's say I have a stellar year, I get a five in my rating and then I decide I'm going to go with the three year review cycle and my merit's going to be based on that for the next three years. And then next year I start doing lackluster work and I just benefit from three years of having a five, and so on.

C. Schlombs: That sounds mathematically possible. But in my experience, academic work doesn't work that way. We all know academic work can't be planned that way. We don't know whether an article will

be accepted right away or whether it's a revise and resubmit, and once it's accepted we don't know how long it will be before it's published. So will the grant submission go through or will I need to resubmit it? It's difficult to plan academic work to really hit that fourth year. So that's why I say it's mathematically possible. I don't think it's the reality of academic work. Should it turn out however that there is, for example, systematic gaming of the system, although I don't expect it. Or should there be frequent changes between a one year cycle and a three year cycle, I think in the implementation process it would be easy to, for example, lock in decisions for a certain amount of time or to extend an average of the previous three year evaluations over the next longer time period or something. If in the implementation such a problem, which I don't expect should come up, I think there are responses that could easily address it within the longer review cycle.

S. Malachowsky: At this rank we're talking about someone who's probably been here at least ten years, which is longer than my last three deans and the last two presidents. And that's a long time. So the idea of gaming the system after being here for ten years is kind of absurd to me. It's certainly possible. But the point that I want to add is how this might line up with contract renewal, specifically for principal lecturers. Did you give any thought to that?

C. Schlombs: I think that was one of the slides that I skipped over. It would be understood that the last annual review cycle or an annual review cycle could not go beyond the contract. So the contract End would correspond with the end of the last annual review cycle. And then for principal lecturers, just like for tenured faculty, we have an established standing and we have two or three review cycles on which to base a re-appointment.

D. Olles: I hear what you're saying about tenured faculty and research. My concern is more regarding the teaching faculty. When we do our performance reviews in COS, that's when we're evaluated in the classroom. We're not evaluated in the classroom unless we're going up for performance review. Sometimes for performance reviews it is necessary, but if our performance review is extended like this, then we're not going to be looked at in the classroom. But if our job is solely to teach, then this is going to be something that's glanced over. And if our job is solely to teach and our largest impact is on our students, that's something that's a concern for me. I understand this would be at the discretion of the college, but this is something that does cause me concern as a teaching faculty member. I'm a lecturer, we still need to be evaluated in the classroom if we're teachers and if we're not being evaluated on our teaching on a regular cycle, then we're not being evaluated on anything. Because we don't do research. We don't bring in funding. We do some service, but all we're evaluated on is our teaching.

R. Zanibbi: So here's the thing. I don't think we really have to worry about anyone getting evaluated after three years because if that went poorly, that's a lot of time to reflect on. And what it means is that person will probably have a lot less say over the resulting plan of work because they've been given more time to plan their work. Regarding evaluation of teachers, I agree, but to Sam's point, if you've been here ten years as an effective teacher, I'm willing to trust you for three years. And if classroom visits are not something that's possible, they're something that might be added as an optional process that's not necessarily tied to evaluation. I think in both cases when we're talking about people who've earned the highest rank, I think this is a level of trust and a level of elbow room that allows people to grow more easily.

P. David: Thank you Corinna. You and your team always do hard work, but you always bring challenging issues and we all ask you lots of questions. So I'm going to ask one question as well. A lot of work has gone on in the colleges. I polled this with the deans. The deans are very nervous in large part because this is so unusual. There are no existing models like this and they've spent a ton of time trying to do exactly the opposite to offer very concrete feedback, frequently once a year and then trying to make things clear. Now it seems like we're stepping back and making things vaguer. So that's one concern. My second is this is a major undertaking. There must be a strong reason why we're doing it. Speaking to the issue of trust in faculty, I'd like to know more. I think if we are going to take this to the next level, we'd need a little bit more discussion.

The point you made about a lot of publications taking a longer time than a single year, I think, is absolutely valid. One year is just not enough, a longer cycle is necessary. The solution to this in my former experience is that the annual review has two parts to it. One is a 12-month review placed in the context of a three year cycle. For example, when you do a review, perhaps this year you had a splendid year. However, the last two years were really bad, you're coming off two bad years onto a splendid year. So overall, this is a holistic assessment based on all three years. On the other hand, if you had two amazing years and for one year, like you said, it was a health concern, a bad year, again, it would be interpreted as this year things didn't work out. But over the three year period, this was a good period. I think we should do that as much as possible.

S. Aldersley: Have you considered a two year cycle rather than a three year cycle?

A. Newman: Would everybody like an opportunity to go back and ask their constituents about this? I understand the concerns, but I don't want to throw away the work that the FAC has done over the last two years. I'm sure there's going to be a lot more discussion, but let's do the vote right now, see how the Senate feels, and then we can work with the deans in terms of how to manage this.

Motion: Senate approves the recommendation from the FAC in favor of longer review cycles for top ranked faculty.

Passed: 33:2:3

[Faculty Affairs Committee Presentation](#)

[FAC Document](#)

Agenda Item No. 10: DSO Survey Report; K. Barone (1:37)

The impetus for the faculty survey were the many faculty coming forward with concerns about the DSO. Some were confused with the process, some were confused with specific accommodations and there were other various concerns. So we wanted to put forward the survey to determine whether the concerns were widespread or whether they were just small pockets. We got 489 respondents and I think it was a pretty fair representation from all colleges. I'm going to go through these slides extremely quickly for obvious

reasons, but you have them in front of you. We asked faculty how many courses they were teaching per semester, and, as you can imagine, with 500 respondents, we had a lot of TT faculty. About 50% of respondents were NTT, teaching three or more per semester. We asked how many accommodation requests are coming to you at the beginning of the semester. Most said they were seeing six or more, with about 40% seeing 10 or more. This survey went out on October 5th which was before people knew that new requests would be coming throughout the remainder of the semester. We asked faculty to estimate how much time they were spending on responding to student accommodations, and the dominant answer was from one to three hours. Because there was some pushback about the main reason for complaints, the contention that faculty just don't get it, we asked faculty their level of agreement with the statement: 'You understand the process from attestation all the way through to the end of the process,' and it was pretty split down the middle between understanding and lack of understanding. So somewhere along the way there's clearly been some confusion, but there are clearly other problems with the DSO in the minds of faculty. Apologies for the text-heavy slides, but as we know, we are a verbose bunch and I just pulled out some samples. So we asked for pain points to be identified. One was if something had to be addressed immediately, the overwhelmingly dominant response was this created an administrative burden especially with the significantly increasing volume. Typical responses were 'I've worked here for 20 years, I've worked here for 30 years, I've worked here for five years and, post covid, this increasing number of accommodations that I'm asked to make are creating an untenable situation in my classroom and I just can't do it. They just keep coming and I just cannot do it. The flex plan was mentioned again and again, in particular, how confusing it was and people were not clear on exactly how to fill it out. There were also technical issues with it. Faculty also don't like that a lot of these new accommodations have been implemented with no faculty input.

It's worth pointing out that in a lot of places on the survey student responsibility and engagement were mentioned. There was strong faculty resentment about the fact that it used to be pretty well understood that students had a responsibility to notify or communicate with their instructor that they were going to be taking advantage of student accommodations. For example, I'm going to be using double time for the quiz, so please make sure you go into MyCourses and set that up for me. There would be some kind of conversation about it, whereas now it's this sort of post-mortem, 'oh, I failed that test, or I didn't show up, or I didn't do this and now I would really prefer to be using my, well, I have an accommodation'. Instructors report not even knowing that, because nobody had mentioned it between before the end of the semester until after grades were posted for specific assignments.

'Are there any specific accommodations or portions of accommodations that you've been required to facilitate that you would consider unreasonable?' Again, overwhelmingly this came through as the attendance accommodation. Faculty are really frustrated that students are being allowed to come and go as they please. There's a lot of obvious reasons for that, but one worth mentioning has to do with accreditation. In certain colleges, people have to have students in seats for certain numbers of hours. Also, there's a comment from Biochemistry: 'We can't just throw you anywhere to make up labs, for safety reasons.' So there are some really strong reasons why this can't just be made up and we can't put students anywhere.' Other comments included, 'I really just wish the DSO would ask for some faculty input before making these accommodations. Requesting changes to due dates, extensions, and extended time are really frustrating for faculty, especially when it comes to things like group projects and working with other students. We also asked about the pedagogical impact of accommodations. Again, attendance, extended due dates, Glean was mentioned a lot. It's unconscionable that DSO says we're not allowed to tell the class that it's being recorded even without identifying the student. There was a lot of talk about

accommodations impacting students that are not receiving accommodations. So Glean in particular is a big one because the entire class is being recorded. They talked a lot about students feeling like this should be a safe space for them and not being able to feel it's a safe space anymore. And then faculty also talked about other accommodations like headphones, laptop use, knitting in class, eating in class, coming and going as you please, taking breaks, things like that.

We asked for suggestions for strategies that faculty felt would be helpful and they replied, 'just please resource the DSO;' They need to be trained, they need to train the faculty; simplification and streamlining of processes; everything is very cumbersome, specifically with the flex plan. For example, maybe one flex plan per prep versus one flex plan per student. I see that Shelitha Williams is here now. Atia, Chris Licata and the executive committee met earlier in the semester and we talked about maybe a menu per class per course. Faculty create it and say 'the following accommodations will work for my course'. We hand it in to the DSO and students who know that they're taking the course choose from the accommodations. This way, faculty have the responsibility to create only one flex plan for each course. It was suggested several times that there be a full audit of DSO current practices - to ensure that they're working within the ADA and not transcending it. So we can know that we're not just doing things because we can but because we are required to.

I also need to say that even though there was a lot of critical feedback, many faculty prefaced it by saying they appreciate the DSO and its mission. Everybody is here for the students. Everybody understands what we are trying to do and they want to be here. And most people said, I've been doing this without any mandate from the DSO for as long as I've been here, but the way it's being done right now and the way things are being implemented needs to change.

Lastly, these are some additional takeaways I think are important. The DSO has recently instituted a practice where if they determine that a faculty member is out of compliance with their directives, they will then refer them to the Office of Legal Affairs, which subjects the faculty member to an investigation. This practice, which isn't supported by any RIT policy that has been identified is being followed with increased frequency, and for faculty it feels like RIT is supporting the DSO office against the faculty. Second, because of the major impact on faculty work, faculty are asking why the DSO is reporting through Student Affairs and not Academic Affairs? Finally, the question of what constitutes 'reasonable' accommodation has been raised by many faculty. In this context, the executive committee met with Legal earlier this year. And our understanding from Legal is that the federal statute defines reasonableness in terms of financial hardship for the institution. By that definition, given RIT's billion dollar budget, very few accommodations are going to qualify as unreasonable. Currently there is no mechanism by which to measure the financial impact of additional faculty time and effort in this arena. So if the size of RIT budget means it's liable to provide the full spectrum of possible accommodations, then it must also create an avenue for support of faculty providing those accommodations.

R. Olson: On your last point, is there any sense of how faculty time is budgeted to accommodate DSO requests? The reason I ask is I just did some back of the envelope math calculations based on the numbers in the survey and the average full-time faculty salary, and it comes out at about \$1.1 million a semester. And if you extrapolate that over the entire RIT faculty, it's about \$2.6-2.7 million a semester. So that's real money.

A. Newman: That is a lot of money. Dr. David is here. Is there a mechanism by which faculty time is measured in terms of time lost or efforts being put forward when talking about salary and RIT resources?

P. David: I think that kind of accounting would be too granular. We are a really big institution. We're supposed to be generous and accommodating. But the question here is undue burden on other students and on faculty, diluting the potential standards that we approach. So those are the tracks by which we could approach this rather than trying to look at faculty time. Yes, that's a concern for us, but I think the Feds may or may not find that useful.

A. Newman: But one of the comments in the survey I found very interesting was where somebody said they had 70 DSO accommodated students and they all had to have a flex plan.

P. David: Yes, I saw that.

A. Newman: And they didn't have any option for getting exams proctored, so they had to do double authentication. For one person to do all that extra work and not have it be recognized in any form, either in an evaluative process or a dollar amount or time itself, that should be taken into account because that's a lot of time. That's 70 different students. I can't imagine doing that.

P. David: Agreed. This kind of very anecdotal information, and specific cases like this should come through the department chair and the dean and I should be informed. I agree that is a heavy workload.

[DSO Survey Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 11: New Business; A. Newman (1:52)

There was no new business.

Agenda Item No. 12: Adjournment; A. Newman (1:52)

Attendance 11/21/2024

Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended	Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended
Adrion, Amy	ALT CAD Senator		Lanzafame, Joseph	COS Senator	X
Aldersley, Stephen	Communications Officer/ SOIS Senator	X	Lapizco-Encinas, Blanca	KGCOE Senator	X
Anselm, Martin	CET Senator	X	Laver, Michael	CLA Senator	X
Barone, Keri	Treasurer/CLA Senator	X	Lee, James	ALT CET Senator	
Beck, Makini	ALT SOIS Senator		Malachowsky, Samuel	Vice Chair/ GCCIS Senator	X
Boedo, Stephen	ALT KGCOE Senator	X	McCalley, Carmody	ALT COS Senator	X
Brady, Kathleen	ALT NTID Senator		McLaren, Amy	CAD Senator	X
Brown, Tamaira	Senate Coordinator	X	Newman, Atia	Chair/CAD Senator	X
Capps, John	CLA Senator	X	Newman, Christian	GCCIS Senator	X
Chiavaroli, Julius	ALT GIS Senator	X	Olles, Deana	COS Senator	X
Chung, Sorim	SCB Senator	X	Olson, Rob	ALT GCCIS Senator	X
Cody, Jeremy	COS Senator	X	O'Neil, Jennifer	ALT CET Senator	
Coppenbarger, Matthew	COS Senator	X	Osgood, Robert	ALT CHST Senator	
Crawford, Denton	CAD Senator		Padmanabhan, Poornima	KGCOE Senator	X
Cromer, Michael	ALT COS Senator		Puchades, Ivan	KGCOE Senator	X
Cui, Feng	ALT COS Senator		Ray, Amit	CLA Senator	X
David, Prabu	Provost	X	Reinicke, Bryan	ALT SCB Senator	
Davis, Stacey	NTID Senator	X	Ross, Annemarie	NTID Senator	X
Deese, Franklin	CAD Senator	X	Ruhling, Michael	CLA Senator	X
Dell, Betsy	CET Senator		Sanders, Cynthia	ALT NTID Senator	
DiRisio, Keli	CAD Senator		Shaaban, Muhammad	ALT KGCOE Senator	
Eddingsaas, Nathan	COS Senator		Song, Qian	SCB Senator	X
Fillip, Carol	ALT CAD Senator		Staff Council Rep	Ross Hisert	X
Ghazle, Hamad	Operations Officer/CHST Senator	X	Student Government Rep	Joshua Anderson	X

Ghoneim, Hany	ALT KGCOE Senator		Sweeney, Kevin	ALT SCB Senator	X
Hardin, Jessica	ALT CLA Senator		Thomas, Bolaji	CHST Senator	
Hartpence, Bruce	ALT GCCIS Senator		Tobin, Karen	NTID Senator	X
Hazelwood, David	NTID Senator	X	Tsouri, Gill	KGCOE Senator	
Jadamba, Basca	COS Senator	X	Van Aardt, Jan	ALT COS Senator	
Johnson, Dan	CET Senator	X	Warp, Melissa	ALT CAD Senator	
Johnson, Scott	GCCIS Senator	X	White, Phil	ALT GCCIS Senator	
Kavin, Denise	ALT NTID Senator		Williams, Eric	GIS Senator	
Kray, Christine	CLA Senator	X	Worrell, Tracy	ALT CLA Senator	
Krutz, Daniel	ALT GCCIS Senator		Zanibbi, Richard	GCCIS Senator	X
Kuhl, Michael	KGCOE Senator	X	Zlochower, Yosef	COS Senator	X

Interpreters: Nicole Crouse-Dickerson and Jennaca Saeva

Student Assistant: Nilay Vaidya

Presenters: James Watters, Theresa Steward, Corinna Schlombs, Keri Barone