Colleagues,

Once again, it is the end of another busy and productive academic year and time for my end-of-the-year review of academic activities. It is also a time to step back and think about not only what we have achieved, but what we are trying to achieve. Of course, our vision, our aspiration, is to become an international university, known for innovation, our technical and creative programs, and our experiential education. So what are the indications that our hard work is having an impact and that we are achieving our vision of becoming a leading national and international university?

**Indicators of our success**

The latest indication came just last week when President Destler announced the results from the Noel Levitz survey on student satisfaction, which showed RIT’s rating now exceeds the national average for private college and universities. This is the result of over a decade’s worth of work by faculty and staff toward improving RIT’s reputation for providing a rewarding, engaging and valuable education experience.

But there’s more…

**2012 National Rankings:** We continue to see our academic programs recognized for quality, innovation, and reputation.

- RIT is ranked 7th nationally for Career Services (Princeton Review)
- RIT is ranked 7th in Regional Universities North (US News & World Report)
- RIT’s game design and development program has jumped to 2nd at the graduate level and 6th at the undergraduate level. In 2011, RIT ranked 4th and 9th, respectively. (Princeton Review)
- RIT’s industrial design undergraduate program ranked 3rd, graduate program ranked 2nd in Design Intelligence magazine’s “America’s Best Architecture & Design Schools 2012.”

**Student awards:** Our undergraduate students have been recognized in several local, national and international competitions this year. They have been awarded highly
competitive fellowships, scholarships and research opportunities. Here are a few highlights:

- Two RIT Ph.D. students - Kenny Fourspring and Christine Trombley - were awarded graduate fellowships by NASA for the 2011-2012 academic year.


- Jenny Magruder, a fourth-year fine arts photography student, was chosen as a finalist in this year’s Sony World Photograph Awards Student Focus and her photograph was selected to represent North America in the world conference in April in London. Visit: [http://www.rit.edu/news/release.php?id=48943](http://www.rit.edu/news/release.php?id=48943)


- RIT’s team of Justin Hillery and Sean Petterson, creators of the Strong Arm assisted lifting device and Strong Arm Technologies, were winners of the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance’s (NCIIA) Open Minds student competition. This is the first time in the 16-year history of the conference that RIT has had a team selected to compete. They beat Ph.D. students from MIT, Cornell, Berkeley, and Stanford. Strong Arm Technologies also won the top prize of $25,000 at the 2012 Rochester Regional Business Plan Contest. See: [http://industrialdesign.cias.rit.edu/2012/03/24/nciia-best-cutting-edge-innovation-strong-arm/](http://industrialdesign.cias.rit.edu/2012/03/24/nciia-best-cutting-edge-innovation-strong-arm/)


Our high-quality, student-run media has also received significant recognition this year:


National Conferences: Like our students, our faculty achieve national and international reputations. Faculty have presented at national and international conferences and published hundreds of journal articles, book chapters and research papers. The 2011 faculty scholarship report features over 1,200 citations. For more information, and to review the outstanding scholarship produced by our faculty, please visit the faculty scholarship page at: [http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/facultyscholarship/index.php?year=2011](http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/facultyscholarship/index.php?year=2011) The above recognition is evidence, in my mind, that great progress has been made to achieve our vision and this progress is a direct result of our talented and committed students, faculty and staff.

Looking back, reaching forward: 2011-2012 Year in Review

But progress has been achieved in other ways as well; here is my end-of-the-year review of our academic priorities.

Student success

- **Student Input on Teaching Effectiveness:** The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) Task force presented a report to Academic Senate on student input on teaching effectiveness and recommended a pilot program to test two different evaluation systems. This pilot will run during next academic year. Look for further information on this topic in a separate email.

- **GeneSIS:** The new GeneSIS system is up and running and was used successfully for summer and fall registrations this spring. GeneSIS has replaced the legacy SIS system, which is no longer supported by the hardware or software provider.

- **Advising System:** The RIT advising system has undergone a substantial overhaul. In addition to increased staffing required for advising students impacted by the calendar conversion process, we have initiated required first-year advising for all new students.

- **Captioning Guidelines:** Stringent guidelines for captioning were introduced this year to ensure that course materials and other documents are accessible for all campus populations, including deaf and hard-of-hearing participants. The Wallace
Center is available to provide assistance with the captioning process. The full document and guidelines can be found at: https://www.rit.edu/~w-drupal/sites/rit.edu.provost/files/rit_guidelines_for_captioning_audio-visual_media_january_2012_final.pdf

**Research, scholarship, creative work and innovation**

- **Faculty/Student Collaboration:** We produced the next in the series of faculty and staff videos, this time featuring a student from the E. Philip Saunders College of Business. You can watch the video at: http://www.rit.edu/provost/hear_from_students

- **Albert J. Simone Center for Student Innovation:** Under Dr. Richard DeMartino’s leadership, the Simone Center for Student Innovation supports the “innovation eco-system” at RIT, advocating multidisciplinary and collaborative projects focused on innovation and entrepreneurship. The Simone Center seeks to promote and leverage RIT’s expertise in experiential education, technology, art/design, business, and social sciences.

- **Research:** Research at RIT is on track to break a record number of proposals by faculty, with far more faculty producing sponsored research than ever before. The full 2011 Faculty Scholarship report is impressive in its breadth as well as its depth of study; the online report can be found at: http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/facultyscholarship/index.php?year=2011

**Inclusive and international education**

- A new office of global education has been established; Dr. Jim Meyers was recently named to fill the role of associate provost of International Education and Global Programs. More information is available at: http://www.rit.edu/news/story.php?id=49159

- This year there has been a 5% growth in study abroad experiences for students, enriching their educational experience with a global perspective. RIT has expanded into Northern Croatia with a new campus in Zagreb; see: http://www.rit.edu/news/athenaeum_story.php?id=48520

- Three new undergraduate programs have been initiated in Dubai: International Business, Applied Networking and System Administration, Information Security
and Forensics. For more information regarding RIT Dubai, visit: http://dubai.rit.edu/

Academic excellence

- **New deans:** This year ushered in several new leaders to RIT. We welcomed Dr. Hector Flores – Graduate Studies; Dr. Lorraine Justice –College of Imaging and Arts and Sciences; Dr. Daniel Ornt–College of Health Sciences and Technology; and Dr. Andrew Sears–B. Thomas Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences. Dr. James Winebrake was also recently appointed dean of the College of Liberal Arts. This summer, they will be joined by Dr. dt ogilvie, dean of the E. Philip Saunders College of Business. We also bid farewell to retiring Dean Ash Rao, who has served RIT well for 6 years.

- **Accreditation:** Our 5-year Middle States Periodic Review Report (PRR) was completed and submitted to Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). For the past year, a cross-divisional steering committee led by Senior Associate Provost Chris Licata has been busy drafting this essential accreditation document. I’d like to thank the committee for all their hard work. More information on this process can be found at http://www.rit.edu/provost/accreditation

- **Master plan:** An outline for RIT’s 4-year academic master plan for NYSED has been developed. This plan overlaps with the Academic Portfolio Plan, Middle States PRR, and online education plan and is an integral part of the calendar conversion process.

- **Academic planning:** The Academic Portfolio Blueprint, which will provide parameters and criteria defining the scope and domains of RIT’s academic portfolio, is on schedule for fall vetting. Thanks to the APB Task Force, which has dedicated a great deal of time and effort towards this important endeavor.

- **University Writing Program:** Dr. Dianna Winslow has been named associate director of the University Writing Program. This is a major milestone and will set us on the path towards full implementation of RIT's new writing intensive course requirements. The University Writing Program seeks to promote and foster a culture of writing excellence beginning in the first year at RIT.
• **Plus/minus grading:** Dr. Fernando Naveda has organized a committee to assess the potential impact of plus/minus grading on student GPA. The study will take place in fall of 2012 with a report to be released in early spring of 2013.

**Faculty and staff success**

• **Mentoring systems implemented:** A new faculty mentoring initiative was launched this year; Professor Chance Glenn, associate dean of Graduate Studies, and Professor Margaret Bailey have distributed a survey to learn how the program is working from your perspective. The data collected will assist in continuing to improve the effectiveness of the overall program. The deans have certified that every pre-tenure faculty member now has an assigned mentor or mentoring group.

• **Academic Senate Governance:** Proposed changes to the Academic Senate charter did not pass with the required approval of tenured and tenure-track faculty. The charter, which had been modified regarding voting privileges for lecturers, will go back to the Academic Senate this fall for review and revision.

• **College-Level Awards:** Deans have been encouraged to offer and promote college-level awards to complement the university-level awards currently distributed through Academic Affairs. The college awards offer recognition to faculty and students who exhibit exemplary teaching, service or innovation in student learning. New faculty and staff awards websites are available at: [http://www.rit.edu/provost/academic_affairs_awards](http://www.rit.edu/provost/academic_affairs_awards)

• **Academic Leadership Training program:** At my request, the Wallace Center has been diligently working with faculty department heads to identify best ways to assist with faculty leadership development. The result is a series of online resources that will soon be available on the Provost’s site. To preview these training opportunities, please visit: [http://wileylearninginstitute.com/pg/pages/view/1774](http://wileylearninginstitute.com/pg/pages/view/1774)

• **Course redesign support:** The Teaching & Learning Services (TLS) team at the Wallace Center provided a wide range of support for faculty undertaking course redesign during the 2011-12 academic year, including individual consultations, college/department-level consultations, training events and other activities to assist in the calendar conversion process. Support plans for the 2012-13 academic year include standard course design-related services, including workshops, the Faculty Institute on Teaching & Learning and individual consultation on course design.
Additionally, the TLS will work to support the “Writing Across the Curriculum” program and online teaching. This will be accomplished by a series of workshops, speakers, stipends and further resources offered in each quarter of the 2012-2013 academic year.

**Calendar conversion:** After discussions facilitated by the governance groups and a town-hall meeting, we launched the Office of Intersession and Summer Term, with Dr. Fernando Naveda as director. Dr. Naveda leads a committee of dedicated volunteers in overseeing planning for the new January intersession and summer term, part of the conversion from quarters to semesters. Their purpose is also to put together a program for January 2014 intersession and the summer 2014 session. A naming contest for the new winter and summer sessions was held this spring with over 1,500 submissions from faculty, staff and alumni. The official name will be selected and announced in early fall. Summer is a time to re-energize, renew and refresh, as well as to prepare for the year ahead. President Destler and I thank all of you for a very terrific year and wish each of you a productive and fulfilling summer.

Jeremy Haefner  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

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