

This message is sent on behalf of Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Colleagues,

As we conclude this year's concept paper approval process, I want to provide the community with context and guidance for the development of future concept papers.

By way of context, it is important to understand the recent history with respect to new programs launched at RIT. Since 2007, we have added 60 new programs. This breaks down as follows:

- 11 bachelor's degree programs
- 12 master's degree programs
- 4 Ph.D. programs
- 18 BS/MS programs
- 2 certificate programs
- 8 advanced certificate programs
- 5 associate degree programs

A more detailed analysis of new program activity since calendar conversion (tracked on the [Academic Affairs Academic Program Management website](#)) is especially informative. For example:

- Since 2012 (when the conversion moratorium was lifted), there have been 52 new programs proposed: 45 proposed through the concept paper process and 7 certificates proposed through a separate process
- Of these concept papers, 11 were submitted for approval this past spring, of which 5 were approved to move to full proposal status
- Of the previous 41 new program concepts, 39 received an approval for further development (includes certificates)
- Of the those 39, 20 have emerged as full degree proposals and 7 certificate proposals sent to NYSED for approval
- Of the 27 sent, 17 degree proposals have been approved and are now operational; 7 certificates have been approved and are now operational; 3

proposals are still awaiting NYSED approval; all have appropriate resource needs met

- Of these 17 operational degree programs, less than 40% are meeting their enrollment targets

I am sure you will agree from these data that RIT has been creative and ambitious when considering new programs. However, as we begin to implement the new RIT Strategic Plan and take current budget demands into consideration, we must ask ourselves what the right size and complexion of the RIT academic portfolio should be and what enrollment and mission-specific criteria should be applied early on in the concept paper development process.

The new RIT Strategic Plan "Greatness through Difference" articulates a number of bold goals and objectives that will place RIT in the forefront of higher education. While many goals could and will shape and impact the future programs we add to the portfolio, there are some that stand out. First, there are several goals that will push the university to becoming first among private universities for the production of STEM graduates. We wish to be first among private universities for graduating the most number of women STEM graduates, AALANA male STEM graduates, and Deaf and Hard-of-hearing STEM graduates. Second, we wish to increase graduate student enrollments by 30% in a fiscally prudent manner. Finally, we wish to materially increase our student-centered research footprint. All of these aspirations require considerable resources and strategic decisions.

Moving forward, we continue to encourage faculty to be creative and innovative with new academic program concepts. As general guidance, however, we suggest that the following criteria should be applied to new program planning in the academic units and will be used by the president and me in approving future concept papers:

- Undergraduate and graduate degree programs that have a minimum intake of 15, 1st year students (not including internal transfers)
- Graduate degree programs that offer a non-thesis option so as to appeal to the student wanting to upgrade their skill set;
- A focus on degree programs that will materially allow the campus to reach its goals of being a leader in STEM degrees
- Degree programs, particularly graduate degrees, that offer degree completion through a set of stackable certificates
- Degree programs that can be offered online or in a competency-based format so as to reduce costs, particularly capital expenses; and
- A freedom to pursue innovative approaches to both content and delivery methods such as the "micro" master's degree concept that is being offered at institutions like MIT.

We have a vibrant academic environment at RIT that offers students many exciting program choices. Through our newly modified annual academic program analysis process, program leaders and faculty are now able to review key program metrics on a regular basis and take action, when needed, to ensure continued program viability. This program review process coupled with our framework for new program planning will work in tandem to ensure that our academic portfolio responds appropriately to RIT's mission, strategic priorities and student demand.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Haefner
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

For more information on this and other topics, please visit

<http://www.rit.edu/provost/>
