

Academic Portfolio Blueprint

Task Force Report

February 14th 2013

Presented to the Academic Senate

10 December 2012

Endorsed by Graduate Council

5 December 2012

Endorsed by ICC

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Introduction

Rationale

RIT is at a defining moment regarding its academic portfolio (defined as the inventory of undergraduate and graduate degree programs). To support the calendar conversion effort, the faculty approved the Academic Program Profile, which is a set of learning outcomes that must be satisfied by each current and future academic program (in the portfolio). While this Profile is critical in shaping each academic program, there remains a lack of formal clarity in connecting the overall portfolio of programs with the vision, mission, values, and strategic direction of the university. No clear criteria by which programs can be judged relative to the long-term aspirations of the university exist. The Academic Portfolio Blueprint Taskforce (APB Taskforce) was charged with making recommendations that will establish these understandings and expectations in the form of characteristics and criteria. The characteristics are outlined as goals to aspire to by 2018 and the criteria are crafted to support the process of holistically developing strong program proposals. The APB is not intended to be a prescriptive document. It will be a guiding document for academic program proposals.

Context for the proposed APB guiding document

RIT is recognized as a unique and leading university and it is positioned to be a key leader in the higher education environment of the 21st century. We have many challenges ahead (Mayberry, 2011) in the current higher education landscape. An Academic Portfolio Blueprint is an important first step toward reaching our goals. During the fall of 2013, our first year of semesters, RIT will offer 215 programs across 9 colleges and two degree-granting units. This is an exciting time during which we can build upon our existing programs and propose new programs that will strengthen our University in which innovation, creativity and education thrive.

Since October 2011 the APB taskforce members have initiated and fostered a rigorous and diverse dialogue across our campus. The rich and robust feedback we received forms the recommendations cited in this document. Of great importance throughout was the discussion of the goals of our university community for our students now, and our students in the future.

As a part of our inquiry we collected a variety of data. This included qualitative and quantitative surveys, summaries from meeting with multiple constituent groups, researching relevant documents and resources generated by RIT and other higher education communities, and summaries from formal and informal meetings across the campus. We keenly listened as our peers in the RIT community spoke about their insights for a successful higher education environment, goals for our classrooms and community, perspectives on our overall campus offerings and the desires for what our University can, and/or should, embrace in regards to our future academic portfolio. These discussions and inquiries form the backbone of the proposed APB.

Summary

This process has been robust and stimulating for all members of the taskforce and hopefully equally important for the RIT community. After an extensive inquiry and review of the community input and a review of existing RIT guiding documents, the APB Taskforce presents this report as a guiding document for our academic program offerings for 2013-2018.

Charge

To develop a set of recommendations that will define the scope and domains for new academic programs at RIT for the period of 2013 to 2018; in essence, the charge is to recommend an **Academic Portfolio Blueprint** for 2013–2018. The final **APB** will be approved by the Academic Senate, the RIT President, and by the executive committee of the Board of Trustees. As part of this charge, the taskforce will:

- 1 Review the 2004 strategic plan and the subsequent strategic planning documents from President Destler and the Board of Trustees in order to develop a context for the APB.
- 2 Analyze the current RIT academic portfolio for size, types of programs, distributions such as graduate versus undergraduate, technology versus arts, attractor versus retainer, etc.
- 3 Collect, analyze and interpret input from the broad RIT community regarding the future direction of the RIT academic portfolio. This input should form a key anchor to the recommendations of the taskforce. It will include input from Trustees, industry and non-profit partners, Rochester community members, alumni, students, faculty, staff, and other friends and supporters of RIT. Specifically, the taskforce should
 - a Maintain sustained consultation with the Graduate Council and the Inter-College Curriculum Committee
 - b Seek input from the Office of Inclusion and Diversity, the Golisano Institute for Sustainability, the Study Abroad office and other key players in the international education space, the Center for Multidisciplinary Studies, the Office of Graduate Studies, the Vice President for Research, and University Studies.
- 4 Gather information, and consider trends, future societal needs, etc. that will help inform the recommendations.
- 5 Develop and recommend a list of parameters and criteria that will define RIT's academic portfolio for 2013-2018. The resulting list and supporting narrative, once approved, will constitute the RIT APB. These parameters and criteria must be aligned with the Academic Program Profile.
 - a For the purposes of this process, a parameter will be defined as a characteristic element of our future academic portfolio — a property that helps to characterize the portfolio; a boundary condition is another descriptor for these parameters.
For example, a possible parameter might be:
"The RIT academic portfolio will include a body of programs that demonstrate aspects of multi-disciplinary education, particular programs that involve cross-college collaborations. By 2018, RIT envisions between 20% and 30% of its programs will be described as multi-disciplined."
 - b A criterion will be defined as a standard on the basis of which a judgment can be made about whether a program can be part of the RIT academic portfolio. These criteria, taken collectively, will define the overall character of the portfolio.
For example, a criterion might be:
"any new graduate program must support the research goals as articulated in Key Result Area #2".

Committee Members

Name	College/Division
Co-chairs	
Carole Woodlock	College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
Risa Robinson	Kate Gleason College of Engineering
Committee Members	
Ed Lincoln	Enrollment Management & Career Services
Manny Contomanolis	Office of Co-op & Career Services
Nancy Ciolek	College of Imaging Arts & Sciences
Zoran Ninkov	College of Science
Don Willson	Saunders College of Business
Henry A. Etlinger	Golisano College of Computing & Information Sciences
Ferat Sahin	Kate Gleason College of Engineering
Heidi Miller	College of Health Sciences and Technology
Ann Howard	College of Liberal Arts
S. Manian Ramkumar	College of Applied Science and Technology
Gerry Bateman	National Technical Institute for the Deaf

Timeline

Constituent Group	Meeting Date	Activity
Academic Senate Executive Committee	29 September 2011	Meeting to review charge
Academic Senate	6 October 2011	Charge approved by Academic Senate
Office of Graduate Studies	11 October 2011	Guiding Questions
	5 December 2011	Review Characteristics
President's Round Table	14 October 2011	Guiding Questions
Board of Trustees Education Committee	10 November 2011	Guiding Questions
	12 July 2012	Presentation and discussion of Clipboard Survey results
Graduate Council	9 December 2011	Guiding Questions
	13 September 2012	Progress update
	20 September 2012	Progress update
	27 September 2012	Review Draft of Characteristics/Criteria
	8 November 2012	Review of Characteristics/Criteria
	10 December 2012	Endorsed Characteristics/Criteria
Graduate Program Directors	5 December 2011	Charge/Guiding Questions
RIT Community (Center for Multidisciplinary Studies, Wallace Center, University Studies, Admissions, Liberal Arts, Golisano, others.)	12 December 2011	Provost's Town Hall
	6 February 2012	Faculty Staff Tea
	9 February 2012	Faculty Staff Tea
	10 February 2012	Faculty Staff Tea
	3 March 2012	Clipboard Survey
Golisano Institute for Sustainability	30 January 2012	Guiding Questions
Global Task Force	10 February 2012	Guiding Questions
Office of Inclusion/Diversity	7 February 2012	Guiding Questions
Office of Academic Affairs	26 January 2012	Guiding Questions
	24 August 2012	Working Session
Chairs & Directors	2 February 2012	Guiding Questions
	24 August 2012	Progress update
Institute Curriculum Committee	26 September 2012	Review Draft of Characteristics
	7 November 2012	Review Draft of Characteristics/Criteria
	5 December 2012	Endorsed Characteristics/Criteria
Deans Council	20 March 2012	Review Draft of Characteristics
	13 November 2012	Review Draft of Characteristics/Criteria
Vice President for Research	13 February 2012	Guiding Questions

APB Characteristics

The six characteristics below are intended to be inspirational in defining the Academic Portfolio. They illuminate areas of importance that we, the RIT community, aspire to during the next five years. They have germinated out of extensive dialogue, research and discussion across the RIT campus. The APB, which is comprised of characteristics, criteria and supporting narrative, is not intended to be a prescriptive document. It will be a guiding document for academic program proposals.

Scholarship, Research and Creativity

All programs will facilitate growth in student and faculty scholarship and creative work, and enhance innovative, creative and entrepreneurial activities. Where appropriate, programs will attract external funding.

Innovative Teaching and Learning

All programs in the RIT portfolio will utilize innovative and effective pedagogical approaches to achieve student-centered learning, including those that take advantage of technological resources and alternative delivery systems.

Experiential Learning

All programs in the RIT portfolio will require an experiential learning component as part of the degree program, encouraging students to apply their academic and career preparation to professional problems and/or settings.

International and Global Education

All undergraduate programs will address a broader understanding of global issues and enhance cross-cultural understanding and awareness. A majority of graduate programs will address a broader understanding of global issues and enhance cross-cultural understanding and awareness.

Synergy and Interdisciplinarity

A majority of programs in the RIT portfolio will demonstrate synergy and interdisciplinarity through the combining/re-structuring of existing programs and the addition of new programs that foster integration within, between and among disciplines, programs and colleges and address emerging disciplines in new areas of inquiry.

Inclusive Excellence

All programs in the RIT portfolio will strengthen RIT's commitment to growing and sustaining a diverse and inclusive learning, living, and working environment.

Characteristics summary:

By creating an Academic Portfolio in which all six of these characteristics are distinguished, RIT's recognition and reputation as one of the world's leading career-focused, technological universities that foster innovation and creativity will be enriched and advanced.

APB Criteria

"A criterion will be defined as a standard on the basis of which a judgment can be made about whether a program can be part of the RIT academic portfolio. These criteria, taken collectively, will define the overall character of the portfolio." — Academic Portfolio Blueprint Charge

Proposers must clearly identify how they meet the APB characteristics and criteria. The proposal must address each criterion listed and describe the extent to which the criterion is met or not met.

I Centrality

- a The program that is being proposed aligns with and advances the mission, vision, values and reputation of RIT.
 - b The program that is being proposed is aligned with the Academic Program Profile and contributes to the achievements of RIT's strategic plan priorities as identified in the Key Result Areas and Goals matrix.
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II Marketability

- a The program proposal provides evidence of sufficient external demand for the program
 - b The program proposal provides evidence of sufficient internal demand for the program.
 - c The program proposal provides evidence of demand for graduates of the program in the marketplace or in graduate programs.
 - d The program proposal includes an assessment of the extent to which it may have an effect on enrollment in other academic programs.
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III Quality

The program proposal will clearly identify:

- a effective use of current faculty expertise for program delivery and, where appropriate, justify the need for new faculty expertise.
 - b the integration of the learning outcomes in the General Education curriculum with the field of study. [For undergraduate degree program proposals only]
 - c curricular features that incorporate rigorous academic and career preparation.
 - d curricular features that facilitate and support student and faculty scholarship, research and creativity.
 - e innovative and effective pedagogical approaches that support student centered learning, including alternative delivery systems and technology.
 - f pedagogical approaches for integrating meaningful experiential learning opportunities.
 - g pedagogical approaches to engage students in learning experiences that promote global awareness and understanding.
 - h how it will foster integration within, between and among disciplines, programs and colleges.
 - i how it addresses emerging disciplines.
 - j a continuous evaluation and improvement plan that aligns with the existing RIT guiding documents.
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IV Financial Viability

- a The proposal will demonstrate how the proposed program will make use of existing resources through re-allocation, or will make a compelling case for new resources.
- b Incremental resource requests are clearly defined and justified relative to the value the program brings to the University's academic portfolio.
- c In addition to demonstrating viability using the financial cost model, the proposed program will provide a three, five and seven year financial, enrollment and resource assessment plan for continuance.

References

Dickeson, R. C. (2010). *Prioritizing academic programs and services: Reallocating resources to achieve strategic balance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

Mayberry, K. (2011). *RIT 2020 Strategic planning for a perfect storm*

Middle States Report: <http://www.rit.edu/provost/accreditation>
Periodic review report (2012)

<http://www.rit.edu/diversity/inclusive-excellence-framework>

<http://www.rit.edu/president/vision2025/>

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<http://www.rit.edu/president/strategicplanning/plan.php>