

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



Rochester Institute of Technology

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## MEMORANDUM

To: Deans, chairs, directors, and other supervisors  
From: Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President  
Subject: Faculty and staff evaluations  
Date: 12 December 2013

As we come to the end of our first semester, it is important to reflect on the work accomplished as a result of the calendar and SIS conversion. Without a doubt, we began our first semester after a tremendous amount of effort to develop new curriculums, approve new programs, devise the individual advising plans, advise thousands of students, develop all new courses, and learn the new student information system as well as the new early alert system. And this is clearly not inclusive of all the other work behind the scenes.

The COACHE and campus survey data, triangulated by conversations I have had with faculty and staff in the colleges, indicate a concern that all this work may not truly be acknowledged in the annual evaluation process. Many individuals indicated that the effort they did to prepare for semesters came at a cost to other areas that they would normally accomplish. While this is not true for all faculty and staff, I believe it is true for many of them.

In light of this, as you prepare your annual performance appraisals, I strongly encourage all supervisors to take into account the work performed by our faculty and staff in preparation for semesters. In addition:

- With all courses largely new and the pace of delivery substantially different from the quarter system, I urge us to evaluate teaching effectiveness using multiple measures and not to rely solely on the student ratings. Additionally, the new student rating system will inherently be different than what we are used to and so we must take this into account when reviewing the results.
- Staff have also been affected as they are the ones who have had to learn and master the new student information system, while concurrently continuing to support faculty and serve the students.

This guidance should also apply to the promotion and tenure processes. Faculty may have greater service and curriculum development contributions due to the calendar conversion start-up, and fewer accomplishments in other areas. As a result, I expect that chairs, review committees and deans will take these contributions in consideration as well. It is reasonable to assume that over the course of the next two years (AY 2013-2015), we will see faculty and staff become comfortable with the new calendar and systems so that the work activity will normalize. Until this time, I urge us to be thoughtful and diligent in our review of faculty and staff work and to acknowledge the incredible work that went into this transformational effort.

Jeremy Haefner  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs