

Minutes of Meeting

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

Thursday, October 13, 2022

12:15 – 1:50 PM

Zoom

Attendance: See Below

Agenda Item No. 1: Call to Order; A. Newman (12:15pm)
Meeting called to order.
Agenda Item No. 2: Approval of Agenda; A. Newman (12:17pm)
Motion is approved.
Agenda Item No. 3: Communication Officer's Report/Approval of Minutes; L. Hall (12:17pm)
Update: 9/29 minutes were sent out, but we have some corrections that we need to finalize to the attendance list, so we'll approve those minutes at our next meeting.
Agenda Item No. 4: Executive Committee Report; A. Newman (12:18pm)
<p>Benefits update: Ex-Comm just met with Judy DeCoursey about benefits. Things have not changed dramatically. We've lost pet insurance and we're no longer constrained by the 2 year dental plan cycle.</p> <p>The Center for Teaching and Learning has asked for a faculty rep on their Council this year. Please let me know if you're interested. I can reappoint Joe Lanzafame, who served last year, unless anyone else is interested. We also need nominations for the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom that our Senate voted to create last year. We need one person from each college; does not have to be a Senator.</p> <p>Apologize for the email chain that started up following the invitation to this meeting. I will be more careful in the future.</p>
Agenda Item No. 5: Staff Council Update; Staff Council Rep ()
N/A

Agenda Item No. 6: Student Government Update; L. Dibble (12:21pm)

Student advising came in and told us what to do. We've been trying to get people to go to the No Voice Zone. We have schools working on resume reviews. And we're looking at other college's student government to see how they function. We also sent a reminder that Together RIT is coming up. We're looking for a College of Science student Senator. We also got a PawPrint that was critical of the way SG operates and we're following up.

Agenda Item No. 7: One Payroll Initiative; Newman/Granberg (12:23pm)

Background: One Payroll was presented to the Senate in April of 2022. It was initially just an informational presentation but was brought back later with a motion to amend Policy E04 on May 5th. Senate voted against it for a number of reasons, most notably, because we wanted to address the question of being paid in arrears. In light of our refusal to update the policy, Ex-Comm admittedly relaxed on this topic (which was wrong of us).

However, since September, we have continued to learn more about this initiative and it has raised a number of concerns:

- The bad timing of the prospective rollout
- The consequences of a shift to arrears payments: The fact that faculty will essentially experience a 4% pay-cut in 2023, only to resume their regular salary in 2024.
- Final question is what the university plans to do with the money they're saving in AY2023 on faculty and staff salaries. This raises the question of the lack of transparency in the decision-making process and the atmosphere of mistrust that has been created by this.

The FSEC has had a number of detailed conversations on this topic, and we wanted to ensure that Senate has the opportunity to ask any questions that are not immediately answered.

Because we are dedicating only 45 minutes to this topic, I ask that our senators speak briefly and refrain from repeating concerns that have already been aired. Please note that I will end this discussion at 55 minutes at the latest.

The stated justification for OnePayroll is online at <https://www.rit.edu/onepayroll/>

Q&A:

Q (L. Hall): What is happening to the millions we're gaining in January?

A (J. Watters): We have a budget shortfall this year as a result of the discount rate and lower retention rates. The \$8 million or whatever that number is is not a planned event to save us this shortfall. The way the operating budget works is that if we have a surplus we build in physical plants and campus improvements, so unused salary dollars also become portions of that transfer as well. In good years where we meet our budget and we can reinvest in the campus. We renovated about 12 labs in CoS and that funding came from surplus the year before. We're making improvements in the College of Design and so on. The \$8 million that you reference, if there's any available after covering the costs for the year, that money would end up transferred to physical plant improvement, etc.

Q (B. Thomas): Is this decision final? Are we able to change anyone's mind? Most of our faculty are against.

A (J. Watters): Nothing I said implies that this is a fait accompli. We don't want to convey to you that this is a done deal.

Comment (C Lutzer): I'd like to propose another idea. We do have the loan option, but that option takes salary even further, particularly in months where we only get two paychecks. So instead of having faculty flush in June and instead advance that in January. There would be much less turbulence in faculty's finances. So we'd get two pay periods in January and two pay periods in June.

Comment (L Lawley): Two things. One is about process and the second is about OnePayroll. We already received an advance in July and August and we'd have to repay them if we left early. So it's not entirely clear to me why we could not make people whole by ensuring that they get the full amount of their salary during the calendar year. So why can't we give people a full advance on the 3.3% difference with the understanding that we would have to repay it if they leave early. The other issue is the complete lack of shared governance in this decision making process. We voted against this in May. The decision had already been made at that point, because the Deans had already received new templates in April. So the decision was made before it was ever brought to the Senate. Even if we call this an administrative policy, which we shouldn't, even administrative policies require soliciting input

from stakeholders before the decision is made. I'd like to know why shared governance was completely ignored during this process.

A (J. Pinkham): The specific issues of the templates is that the information was shared when we believed OnePayroll was moving forward and we weren't aware of the E04 language. The E04 language wasn't made apparent and wasn't researched well beforehand. We retracted those templates and moved forward with the existing semi-monthly language.

Comment: A. Newman: It does seem to call into question the commitment to shared governance across the board.

Q (S. Johnson): There are a few years where there are 27 pay days during the year. How will those be handled?

A (M. Concepcion): You will receive another paycheck.

Q(S. Johnson): So in those years we will get 103% of our paycheck?

A (M. Concepcion): Yes, that's true.

Q (S. Johnson): will we be paying more in benefits in 2023 than in 2022?

A (J. Pinkham): No, all things will remain equal.

Comment (J. Pinkham): There were several months of research and benchmarking between HR and Controllers Office and we looked at different options for timing and one of the significant difficulties is moving those benefit cycles that are already really complicated, and we'd have to make all those changes half way through the year.

Comment (L. Hall): Here's the survey data. There were 750 responses in a 48-hour period. 67% of the faculty disagreed with making the switch, and 15% agreed. When asked if they would support the plan if there were not an interruption to the payment schedule, 42% of the faculty said they might support it. 56% said they might support it if they were paid their full salary in the year of implementation. And 20% said they might support it if the conversion happened over the summer rather than in January. There were nearly 30 pages of text comments, as well.

Comment (S. Aldersley): What approaches did you not take that you could have to mitigate these effects?

A (J. Pinkham): Sure. The difference depends in large part on the starting point. Some institutions had to move from a fully prospective system, others had to move to a more consistent payroll for all employees. Lehigh was moving to a semi-monthly for everyone, but because we're a NY-based institution, we can't pay our time card workers to a semi-monthly because it's prohibited by NYS labor laws. We benchmarked at least a dozen institutions that went through a consolidated payroll exercise. Some have done a bridge payment as a bonus and our effort in that direction was folded in with the wage advance. Not only did we interview the materials that were publicly available, but we also did interviews as well.

Q (S. Bamonto): Why can't we just be paid the way we're paid now but with our salary paid across 26 pay periods instead of 24. We don't really work the way hourly workers do.. I'm just not sure why we can't have our salary divided. Why do we need to be paid in arrears?

A (M. Concepcion): The point of paying in arrears is to have accurate payroll. If you Google payment in arrears, that's the recommended process. The payroll takes quite some time to complete. We do a preliminary, we reconcile, we run, and then we reconcile against last year's payroll, we correct errors we find. One of the things that arrears brings in is that you have time to correct things. We have overpayment, remitting taxes to the wrong state. Because of the way NYS operates, you can't pull anything back, so you have to do it all manually to correct errors and make restitution, etc. Because we've had a lot of turnover, the arrears give us a little bit of time that everyone is paid correctly. That's not unique to us.

A (J. Pinkham): Let me add that the two overarching reasons that OnePayroll is important is the increased complexity of running two payrolls every year and the complexity of paying people current. We'd still be paying all our adjuncts and hourly employees in arrears and exempt faculty and staff in arrears. So we'd be moving from 50 to 52. It doesn't achieve the objective that we need.

Q (L. Lawley): I'm having a hard time finding schools that have faculty biweekly, though most of those universities have non-exempt staff on biweekly pay schedules. Do you have a list of schools that currently pay their faculty in bi-weekly and arrears?

A (M. Concepcion): Many schools pay once a month. But then we're in arrears. And yes, many schools do this, because faculty move across roles, they take leaves, and so on. Same for exempt staff. The goal wasn't to make work easier for HR; it's to free up resources to come into compliance with all the requirements of being a multi-state and multinational employer. Instead of adding headcount, how do we add efficiency to our current headcount?

Q (H. Ghazle): I have a question about post-docs and whether they'll be affected.

A (J. Pinkham): Yes, they're exempt staff.

Q (D. Newman (in chat)): I'm concerned about the loss of pay in the first year. So is there a way to address that?

Comment (S. Malachowsky): I'm also upset about the lack of transparency and the lack of shared governance. When you look at this and it took so many people so long to figure out that they're making less next year, it seems like obfuscation. It's hard for me not to go down the road of assuming deception.

Comment (J. Pinkham) It's important for me to hear those feelings. As hard as it is, it's not intent that matters, it's the effect. With regard to OnePayroll, did we underestimate the frustration? We thought we were being very transparent, but I'm definitely wondering what we could have done differently. It was never mine nor my staff's intent to try to railroad something through to our advantage and to the disadvantage of faculty/staff. I do take these comments to heart and will reflect on them.

Comment (C. Lutzer): There was a checkpoint to the faculty and we said no.

Comment (L. Lawley): E4.0 is the responsible parties is the Senate and the provost, which means any changes to that policy are supposed to be approved by those two groups. This was given to us at the end of the year and we were told that it needed to be approved to be "in compliance" and we asked what would happen if we said no and we were told that the President could veto it, but that's not true. The President can veto us making a change, but he can't override our resistance to a change. I didn't feel like the Provost acted to protect faculty and shared governance in this case. Policy E4.0 was not changed and we've had no discussion in Senate about changing those policies.

Comment (E. Granberg): I take your comments to heart. I agree the process didn't unfold the way we wanted it to, and if we could do it again we would do it differently. I don't agree with everything you said, but I will take everything to heart. There should have been additional closing of the loop to come back after

Comment: (S. Aldersley): It seems to me that given the upheaval, it's time to go back to the drawing board and think you know, maybe we shouldn't. Hopefully you can reconsider.

Comment (L. Hall): This is part of a larger pattern that faculty and staff see, which is a kind of divestment from quality of life for faculty and staff.

Comment (A. Newman): It feels like there's sort of a trend, that's very important to bring up. It's come up over and over again why RIT as an institution thinks it's okay to ask faculty to essentially take a pay cut next year. We didn't get a pay raise in 2020. We got one this year from 2021. It wasn't something that matched the current inflation rate. We are at a nine percent inflation rate right now, and this year's pay raise was two point five, three percent, maybe? It doesn't match.

And if we're going to start making "corporate" moves then maybe, the question starts to become: Are you paying us the same amount as well, because it feels like our quality of life is being eroded.

Paying for parking seemed to be the beginning of a big downward slide down this hill and One Payroll is starting to really speak to where we stand in the food chain of RIT.

I will allow Ellen to make a closing comment and we can move on.

Comment (E. Granberg): All I would like to do is thank everyone. This is a very productive discussion. I appreciate everyone for being willing to be honest and forthright. We'll be taking what we've heard today, combining that with what we'll hear from the Staff Council this afternoon, and we'll go back into discussions with Dave.

Agenda Item No. 8: Standing Committee Charges: A. Newman (1:24pm)

Background:

We left off on standing committee charges. We're starting with where we left off last week: the Long Range Planning and Environment Committee. We were discussing whether to keep the word "pandemic" in their charge.

Comment (L. Hall): We had suggested language to disruptive events, so not just pandemics.

Comment (H. Ghazle): We can keep it and move forward. I think for now it's a suggestion.

Comment (S. Malachowsky): I made the point last time that we were broadening this too much. This is in response to the pandemic so we can leave it to the committee to scope.

Comment (I Puchades): I would support the current language on this.

A (E. Williams): As I understand it, there are no governance policies relating to COVID, so these are administrative responses to these events? But they're not policy, so I don't think the Senate has direct capacity to revise those. I don't understand how Senate has the ability to revise something they can't control. Either this is about putting policy around these processes or it's about creating a channel for Senate to provide feedback.

A (C. Lutzer): We're not making policy; we're making a charge to action for the committee to do with it what it will. Even if the language of the charge isn't what we'd like, we're just charging a committee to go do something.

Move to approve: Hamad Ghazle

Seconded (D. Laury and L. Hall)

VOTE to approve language is approved, 36 yes, 2 no, 3 abstain.

Q (J. Venkataraman): Does this committee have any carryover charges?

A (A. Newman): I don't think they have any.

Moving on to General Education Committee. This is an easy one and these are their charges for every year. Can we approve these all at once?

Motion (S. Johnson)

Seconded (L. Hall)

Objections to voting by acclamation? None? **The charges are approved.**

Next is Graduate Council Charges. There was a carryover charge from 2021-2022 and also three proposed charges for 2022-2023. There was one charge requested by Grad Council. Since this is straightforward, does anyone want to move?

Motion (J. Venkataraman)

Seconded (L. Hall)

Any objections to voting by acclamation again? We'll vote to approve; the **charges are now approved.**

Up next is Global Education Committee Charges. Those were approved

Q (B. Thomas): Can we see the rationale for the carryover charges from last year?

Q (S. Aldersley): I thought we originally discussed in the Governance Summit how to incorporate the global faculty into shared governance?

A (A. Newman): We'll have to track that down. I'm not sure where that is, but that was the hardest of the charges from that summit.

Q (B. Thomas): Was this charge #1 proposed by someone from one of the global campuses? Is the tenure policy

the same for the campuses? If the policy is not the same, we have no standing per this charge
A (A. Newman): I'm not sure, but given that this committee is tasked with communicating with the other campuses, we can just ask them to investigate. But we don't need to vote on the carryover charges anyway.

H. Ghazle: I move to approve the charges in their entirety and as presented to us.
Seconded (S. Johnson)

VOTE to approve charges: 23 yes, 1 no, 3 abstain

Our last one of the day is the DEIC Committee. One carryover charge and one new charge.

Comment (J. Venkataraman): I remember at least two carryover charges. That's why I wanted the final report.
A (E. D'Amanda): We're finalizing the report now since it was postponed to the next meeting, because we had a transition in leadership. But we'll be on it next meeting.

Motion (C. Lutzer): Move to approve the first two charges with the new language.
Second (S. Aldersley)

Objections to voting by acclamation? Hearing none, the motion is approved.

Agenda Item No. 9: New Business; Newman ()

N/A

Agenda Item No. 14: Adjournment; A. Newman (1:50pm)

Motion to adjourn

Attendance October 13, 2022

Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended		Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended
Abushagur, Mustafa	KGOE Senator	x		Ma, Yunn-Shan	ALT CLA Senator	
Adrion, Amy	ALT CAD Senator (Fall 2022)	x		Malachowsky, Sam	Treasurer, GCCIS Senator	X
Aldersley, Stephen	SOIS Senator	x		McLaren, Amy	CAD Senator	x
Anselm, Martin	CET Senator	x		Newman, Atia	Chair, CAD Senator	x
Babbitt, Gregory	COS Senator	x		Newman, Dina	COS Senator	x

Bamonto, Suzanne	CLA Senator	x		Olabisi, Joy	SCB Senator	
Barone, Keri	CLA Senator	x		Osgood, Robert	ALT CHST Senator	
Boedo, Stephen	ALT KGCOE Senator	X		Perez Sanchez, Alejandro	CAD Senator	x
Brown, Tamaira	Senate Coordinator	X		Puchades, Ivan	KGCOE Senator	x
Butler, Janine	ALT NTID Senator			Reed, Mary Lynn	COS Senator	x
Crawford, Denton	CAD Senator	X		Reisch, Mark	ALT CAD Senator	X
D'Amanda, Elisabetta	CLA Senator	X		Ross, Annemarie	ALT NTID Senator	
Dell, Betsy	CET Senator	X		Shaaban, Muhammad	ALT KGCOE Senator	
Deese, Franklin	CAD Senator (Fall 2022)	X		Sheffield, Jr., Clarence	ALT SOIS Senator	
Dibble, Leah	Student Gov't Rep	X		Song, Qian	SCB Senator	
Eddingsaas, Nathan	COS Senator	X		Sparkman, Torrence	ALT SCB Senator	
Faber, Joshua	COS Senator	x		Thomas, Bolaji	CHST Senator	X
Gehret, Austin	NTID Senator	X		Tobin, Karen	NTID Senator	x
Ghazle, Hamad	Operations Officer, CHST Senator	x		Tsukernik, Olga	ALT COS Senator	
Granberg, Ellen	Provost	x		Van Aardt, Jan	ALT COS Senator	
Gottlieb, Owen	ALT GCCIS Senator			Venkataraman, Jayanti	KGCOE Senator	x
Hall, Lauren	Communications Officer, CLA Senator	x		Villasmil, Larry	ALT CET Senator	
Hazelwood, David	NTID Senator	x		Warp, Melissa	ALT CAD Senator (Spring 2023)	

Heyman, Emily (Michelle Lezette substitute)	Staff Council Rep.	x		White, Phil	ALT GCCIS Senator	
Hsieh, Jerrie	ALT SCB Senator	X		Williams, Eric	GIS Senator	x
Jadamba, Basca	COS Senator	x		Worrell, Tracy	ALT CLA Senator	x
Johnson, Dan	CET Senator	x		Zanibbi, Richard	GCCIS Senator	x
Johnson, Scott	GCCIS Senator	x		Zlochow, Yosef	ALT COS Senator	
Jordan, Anne	Spring 2023 CAD Senator					
Kincheloe, Pamela	NTID Senator	x				
Kiser, Larry	GCCIS Senator	x				
Kray, Christine	CLA Senator	x				
Lapizco-Encinas, Blanca	KGCOE Senator	x				
Laury, Dino	NTID Senator	x				
Lawley, Elizabeth	Vice Chair, GCCIS Senator	x				
Lee, James	ALT CET Senator					
Liu, Manlu	SCB Senator	x				
Lutzer, Carl	COS Senator	x				

Interpreters: Nic Crouse-Dickerson and Carolyn Kropp