

Faculty Senate Minutes of Meeting

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

Thursday, March 28, 2024

12:15 – 1:50 PM

Slaughter Hall 2240/2230

Attendance: See Below

Agenda Item No. 1: Call to Order; A. Newman (12:16)
Meeting called to order.
Agenda Item No. 2: Approval of Agenda; A. Newman (12:16)
Motion: M. Anselm Seconded: I. Puchades Approved by Acclamation
Agenda Item No. 3: Communication Officer's Report/Approval of Minutes; S. Aldersley (12:17)
<p>S. Aldersley: Good afternoon, everybody. Please excuse me if I allow myself a short diatribe. If you looked at the minutes from the 3/7 meeting you may have noticed that probably 20 to 30% of the meeting did not make it into the record, easily the worst so far. And so I'd like to ask for your advice. I don't know why it was so bad last time, but it was. It takes me between six and seven hours to write up the minutes. I think it's important to have an accurate historical record. That's why I do it the way I do. I know official minutes are sometimes summarized with much less detail, but I think it's better to have full minutes. However, I cannot do that if I don't have an audio transcript. A secondary issue is senators continue to not say their name when they speak. And at the last meeting people were talking over each other: somebody would make a point, the presenter would respond, and the person who had made the point would start to engage in a conversation with them. That cannot be, and it certainly cannot be picked up by the audio. So I've just asked Hamad to please control people's responses to presentations and that will hopefully be better. But what I would like to ask you, since I don't need to spend six or seven hours on the weekend making these minutes if you don't want them. I'm perfectly happy to do it. I think it ought to be done, but if you don't want them, then I don't need to do them. So does anybody have any advice for the Communications officer with regard to the minutes?</p> <p>B. Dell: I know that last year there were several times when I was on the DEIC, that we looked back at minutes to find out what had happened at meetings because we couldn't remember what had happened. So I think they're important.</p> <p>I. Puchades: Is there a difference between minutes and transcript because the transcript would be confusing. If somebody was just writing down overall conclusions and minutes that would be different.</p> <p>S. Aldersley: You're right, because some people present more clearly and cogently than others. That's natural, of course. If I have the transcript, word for word, if the mic's picking up, and the speaker is clear, I edit it for fluency. You don't want all the ermmms and the repetitions in there. So I do that if it's on the transcript. But I don't summarize what any particular person said in any major way.</p>

J. Butler: If you turn on the automatic captioning on the powerpoint and people speak slowly and loudly it's easier for turn taking and you could save it o use for the minutes.

S. Aldersley: Tamaira, is that something that we are not doing?

T. Brown: We are using Microsoft Powerpoint 365. So, to the best of my knowledge, it's doing a live transcript as we talk, but I do not know a way to save what it's saying right now, if someone does know how to do that, please let me know. But from my research and my experience, it's only going to give it to us live. If someone knows different, please let me know

A. Newmann: This is something that we will ask our audience to outsource.

J. Butler: You can also use Google slides.

A. Newmann: We can test that out. This is something that we're just going to ask our senators or anyone if they know anyone who can help us solve this particular problem. That would be really, really helpful. We previously did hire a student notetaker, but unfortunately they only stayed for two meetings, and that obviously just makes it a little bit harder. But record keeping is an incredibly important thing that we need to do for the Senate. And you know, it's something that we're going to just keep trying to improve as we go forward.

S. Aldersley: Even though the minutes for the 3/7 meeting were not up to my standard, and I'm sure they weren't up to anybody's standard. I move that they be approved because it was the best I could do.

Motion: M. Anselm

Approved by Acclamation

[March 21, 2024 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes](#)

Agenda Item No. 4: Executive Committee Report; A. Newman (12:23)

A. Newman: I want to start by thanking my vice chair, Sam, for running last week's meeting. I had to leave to attend the final budget hearings. The budget hearings have been concluded, and it was definitely an eye opening experience to participate. I won't take away RABC's thunder. They will be coming back for a deeper report. But I think that having three faculty members, the co-chairs of RABC and myself participate, we were able to add context to a lot of the asks that were made and hopefully we were able to amplify and increase the urgency that we have been hearing from Senators and our faculty beyond Senate. There are rumblings about certain pools of funding that may have been approved, that we might have had something to do with. I'm not going to take credit for it, but I'm kind of taking credit for it. It's just what we do.

Next as a quick reminder, the celebration of teaching and scholarship award ceremony will be on April 10th, at 4:30 pm. Historically, we get very low faculty attendance, and this year, we'd like to request our Senators to amplify the event within their units. Please encourage your constituents to be there. This is a celebration of faculty achievements. We will forward the community invitation to you. So please keep an eye out for something from us or the Provost's office.

A small housekeeping item: we need a representative from Senate to attend Staff Council meetings. Historically, this was something the Executive Committee members rotated between us. We would attend meetings to report on Senate activities. But our committee has been over scheduled this year, so we've missed more meetings than we have attended. The meetings are on zoom, usually held right after the Senate meetings. If you're willing to step forward and present a short report, we would really appreciate it.

Agenda Item No. 5: Staff Council Update; J. Zehr (12:26)

J. Zehr: We have a few things going on. There was an announcement today regarding staff managers. There was some confusion about Eclipse Day on April 8th, basically saying that if you are on campus and your staff is on campus, please allow them to step out without any loss of pay to experience the once-in-a-lifetime event. So that was just announced this morning. We would like to encourage faculty to communicate with any access services staff, interpreters, captionists, note takers in your classes whether or not you plan on having class that day, so we can properly plan on having the right number of staff here, because there is a little bit of inconsistency. So we encourage that. Most importantly today between 2:00 and 4:00 in Ingle Auditorium, we have the Presidential Awards for Outstanding Service ceremony. This is the most exciting day of the year for staff, where we get to recognize some of the unsung heroes among staff here at RIT.

Agenda Item No. 6: Student Government Update; A. Shuron (12:27)

A. Shuron: Polls for Student Government elections closed last night and the results will be announced at our Senate meeting tomorrow. You can find the information on our website

Special Agenda Item: Election of Executive Committee Officer (12:28)

A. Newman: We have a slight adjustment to the agenda, and to that end, I cede the floor to Blanca to speak for the Nominations Committee.

B. Lapizco-Encinas: The Nominations Committee has a motion to make. Since there are no other candidates for positions on the Executive Committee, we move to re-elect the current Executive Committee to their current positions.

A. Newman: I don't know that it's appropriate for me to run the vote so the committee will run the vote. Blanca, the floor is still yours.

Motion: B. Lapizco-Encinas

Approved: 30-0-0

Agenda Item No. 7: ASSAC and DSO Accommodations; A. Lawrence (12:30) *Presentation linked below*

A. Lawrence: I just wanted to give you a quick update with some minor streamlining since last time. I did confirm with Joe Loffredo and his development team that this is a priority project for the fall. Same thing with the transfer credit. I did some rewording for clarity. These are the specific changes and I have communicated them to Tamaira and given her a document which she is getting ready to put on the website. So I think we're positive on both those things, and we're good to go. The meat of the discussion here today is in regard to DSO testing accommodations. Last time I went through the basic drivers for this project, as well as the options that are available to us and ultimately I am looking for a recommendation.

The DSO has a problem: they're looking for how to expand in the right way, and if we should expand their current practice. There's some data here showing how at the end of this cycle, during final exam periods, things spike. And this requires a lot of people and resources. Another point in the data that I want to point out is that a lot of these exams may not require in-person DSO tests. Two points here: over-capacity at specific points; and there are some people with tests that don't necessarily need to be there. We can look at ways to solve that problem. From a faculty perspective, there's room for improvement in terms of satisfaction with the current process. The primary feedback from faculty is scheduling, basically, flexibility. There's some scheduling issues. They're not available when the student and I have agreed to do

this test. So there's bumps there. There's also, 'I'm working on refining these things up until the last moment. Great if I can submit the test at the last minute.' So there's flexibility in scheduling things from the faculty perspective. I think these are the major areas that faculty are focused on. And you can see how those ideas compete with the current resource and reality on the DSO side. And this is where we have sources of conflict. We did some quick analysis of peer institutions. Most of them have centralized DSO functions, and some of them use test proctoring software, which is something I want to talk about in terms of whether this is a potential solution to the problem. We did reach out to our own committee members as well as talking individually with leadership. There are some colleges where, from their perspective, everything is spoken for, all the resources have been accounted for. We have everything lined up to do what we want to do, in terms of the mission of the college. The other kind of big takeaway from the leadership was, we don't want to dictate how faculty test. So there's some apprehension about if we brought it to the colleges, what would that look like?

So as I outlined last week, there are three options we looked at. Option #1: Can we offload some of the testing and relieve the burden on the DSO by putting it online? Can we shift some of these exams online? We looked at the benefits and risks. It's not a one size fits all kind of proposition. It's not going to solve all the problems, but could it solve some of the problems? You can see the cost and time estimates in terms of our ability to execute. I think this is pretty high, and it's not clear what kind of impact it would have. It might help people become more comfortable with moving testing online which is where a lot of our students are.

Option #2: Decentralizing DSO testing and moving it into the colleges, either to complement what currently exists, or maybe to replace it. If you look at the benefits and risks, I think it puts it closer to students which may create more goodwill with students. But we're not DSO experts. We would have to build that expertise in the colleges and we'd have to hire people to do this. You have to find space, because people don't want to give up their current space. We would either be taking space resources away from other people or have to build something new. There's renovating current spaces, or actually new construction. It costs about \$700/square foot to build new at RIT. We just built a building at Saunders, so I got the estimate from *inaudible*. I don't think there's an appetite for doing this and I don't know that it's really going to solve the problem. It might even create more problems.

The last option is that the current Test Center should be expanded. They already do this today. They expand, they take over other spaces, they get staff involved. So I think it's something we can do. The question is, how big does the space need to be? I modeled it after an 800 square foot space we have over in Saunders which has been allocated for graduate students. So there are potential spaces that could be used for this purpose. But again, in terms of the cost, if we're going to renovate, we're going to have to hire more people. It's doable. But I don't know if it's going to really solve our problem. We can't just look at expanding spaces to solve this problem, because we're going to run out of spaces. We need technical solutions, and that's ultimately how I ranked the options out here. So #1 and #3 are really kind of the focus of what we propose. Now in terms of making a specific recommendation as to how we should actually pursue these options, there are talented, smart people on the ASSA sub-committee, but they are not experts in this area. And for us to say specifically, we need to go after this kind of software and actually build these things is probably out of the realm of our area of expertise. We need people who understand the different risks associated with pursuing these options. Both the subcommittee and the DSO think they are the right options to work on. The DSO is already working on how to expand current service levels. We're also trying to figure out how we allocate space. Maybe do things more intelligently or efficiently? There may be technical solutions. I don't know what their work process looks like. I don't know if there's opportunities for improvement in those areas. Again, I'm not an expert. Same thing with software. As a result of some of the work we've done, the DSO is already looking at proctoring software. I think they're moving the needle in this direction. But again, we don't have a critical mass on the AASC subcommittee. It probably doesn't reside here in Faculty Senate, it's not all in DSO, it's probably a collection of resources that needs to be managed at a higher level to make the decisions and the strategy for how RIT is going to solve this problem long term. So that's what brings me to the motion which is for the Senate to request a joint task force to look at the issue of equitable testing across the colleges. This is something that DSO is on board with, Student Affairs is on board with. And I think faculty should get on board with it and elevate this discussion to the Provost and Student Affairs and let them build out the right recommendations for us to follow as a university, both short-term and long-term.

A. Newman: There's a motion on the floor. Do we have any discussion?

M. Laver: I support this whole-heartedly. My only question is, is a task force really necessary? I've had a lot of interaction with the DSO and I have great respect for them. They are experts. They know what they're talking about. Might it be better to just have the DSO let us know what they need, and then we can kind of weigh that within the Senate? That's my only real concern.

A. Lawrence: An excellent question. Can the DSO tell us what they need? I think they have. They want to put boundaries on when you have to put your test up, and they're asking the colleges to do the expansion. They're asking you, as faculty, to change the way you do your testing to help solve this problem. And we know that's not palatable to everyone and probably shouldn't be in some cases. We can't eliminate testing. We just can't do that. I think they've stated their position fairly clearly and of course we've stated the arguments from a faculty perspective. We have competing things going on here and what we need is someone to take the inputs that we can provide and let them make the decision, so we take all the positioning and the politics out of it. It's still going to be political, but it's going to be out of our realm. And we don't have to get into what we have right now which is people standing on their turf and not giving any ground. I talked to Sandy about this. We're looking at starting this right now related to the proctoring software, so we don't have this same kind of complaint in 12 months. I think where the discussion should be is how this is organized, who participates, who has decision making power, who are the workers, who the advisors, how all that breaks out? I would certainly advocate for having Faculty Senate have a seat on what I would call the steering committee. It's not just the Provost and Student Affairs, the Administration driving things. It would be Faculty Senate having a voice and directing the activities of the team over the next 12 months.

B. Thomas: An excellent presentation. I've had multiple conversations with the DSO and multiple conversations with faculty colleagues. There are multiple students, several in my class, many in my colleagues' classes who were given DSO accommodations but do not need them, so when you speak to the students, and ask them are you going to the DSO testing center, they say 'No, no, no, *inaudible* I don't know the DSO's procedure. I have no clue how they decide which students need which accommodations. But it's very likely that we have a lot of students, who do not need to take their exams in the DSO's testing center. I have no problem with this recommendation, but the challenge that you have is people with DSO accommodations who don't need them.

A. Lawrence: One of the data points I provided at the beginning is that even the DSO recognizes that. First of all, to give you some facts, there's a couple of drivers for the increase, COVID obviously, mental health, that's driving things. There's also laws that changed in the early two thousands with respect to ADA that are driving the need. And those students who were born then or around then are going to be starting to come to college in the next few years, so we're seeing an increase in accommodations overall. There's recognition that about 70% of the people that have accommodations have testing on there somewhere. Now, the question is, how many of those students actually need to be in the DSO center? And that's the data I shared earlier and roughly half of them might be candidates for doing exactly what you said. We can take it in class and/or outside of class, if you're going to do it online. We don't necessarily need the DSO. Right now, the DSO is probably taking students for whom other approaches might work. And that's why looking at a solution like online proctoring where you can eliminate the need for faculty to be there watching might make sense. We could relieve some burden on the faculty as well as help the DSO out.

P. David: One comment and a quick question. This is a challenging problem. We want to do what is right for our students and the DSO's mandate is to help those who really need assistance. And the demands are going up, I totally understand that. I also understand the faculty perspective, to have the freedom to construct the exam, as much time as we need, because we don't know what happened in the class at the last minute. So I understand that also. Some kind of a compromise solution, I think, is important, but I'm not sure in the discussions with the DSO there has been a good faith attempt to talk through the challenges and come up with a plan. If the purpose of the 12 month charge is to foster those conversations, I totally support that.

A. Ross: It will be important to add a representative of access services to the task force steering committee because one of the big issues with on-line proctoring software is the captioning problem.

Senator ?: Have you thought about including students on this task force? I ask because when online proctoring saw a critical mass in the middle of the pandemic, it turned out online proctoring software was very unpopular. My second question is, has there been any work done looking at racial biases related to false positives in the online proctoring software?

A. Lawrence: You're getting into areas of online proctoring where again, we just don't have that subject matter expertise. I'm not even sure that the DSO has it. Is this team hardened up and complete? Absolutely not. We need to build it out, including who are the right people to be on it, who needs to chair it. Senate needs to be involved in shaping it.

H Ghazle: Point of order, if I may. We are past our time. So just to make sure to stay on time.

J. Lanzafame. I just wanted to respond to the Provost's point. We did have discussions directly with DSO. This actually gets back to Michael's point. They did not want to give us a specific plan. And part of the issue has been the fact that DSO is technically under Student Affairs, whereas the faculty side of things is under Academic Affairs. And so the idea of this committee really was driven by Sandra Johnson who felt, by elevating it to a Provost-Student Affairs discussion, maybe we could round the edges a little bit to make it work.

R. Zanibbi: I appreciate the work, which is excellent. However, 12 months really feels like too long to address what for faculty is a very pressing issue right now. Are there any plans for shorter term ways to address the shortages in the coming year, rather than waiting here for future recommendations. I think my constituents would be concerned about that.

A. Lawrence: The idea is for short term and long term recommendations. But when do you actually get those recommendations? I think this is why Sandra is in favor of looking at the online products. There's other ideas that they've had about expanding as well, but it gets into the question of who gets to decide how resources are allocated and no one agency can tell another agency what to do. It needs to come from a leadership perspective. I don't know what in terms of specific recommendations we would make. We certainly have ideas. They are accommodating them now, it's not impossible. I know I've heard the complaints, I'm sure you've all heard some of the complaints. We get complaints from them. It's on both sides here.

R. Zanibbi: I understand that. I just want to share. . .

A. Newman: I agree. But we are over time, and there is a motion on the floor. This has been something we've been discussing in extreme detail. Let's pick up this conversation offline and we can fill in some gaps for you that you can take back to your constituents. In the meantime, we do have a motion on the floor and I would like to initiate the vote.

Motion: Faculty Senate requests the formation of a joint task force to look at the issue of equitable testing across the colleges.

Passed: 25-1-6

[ASSAC and DSO Accommodations Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 8: University Travel Per Diem Rates; M. Conception (12:54) *Presentation linked below*

M. Conception: Thank you so much for the time today. I know it is a very busy time of the year for you all, we're already a little bit behind. So if I do cover some of the points quickly, please feel free to reach out to me. I'm also joined by my colleagues, Chris and Bill who oversee the area that administers this process. Any of us can provide any additional information or answer any questions you might have. So this is what we're going to talk about today. Just a little bit of background information. We'll look at our current rates which you're probably familiar with if you travel for business purposes. Talk a little bit about our benchmark analysis, what our proposed changes are, and then probably not a lot of time for discussion. But again, please feel free to reach out to us. Chris or Bill will be happy to provide additional information or answer any questions.

When we talk about meal and incidental reimbursement rates, they're really used for when you are traveling for a business purpose, and you have an overnight stay. If you're traveling for a business purpose, where you don't have an overnight stay, you are required to substantiate your travel business to be reimbursed and then, finally, the whole purpose of having meals and incidental reimbursement rates is to ensure that employees that are required to travel for business purposes can thoroughly, equitably and prudently defray their costs.

The process and the policy we're going to talk about today really applies to faculty and staff. For students, the university does not have a per diem rate, and there really is a great deal of variability in how meals are provided. So when students are traveling, for example, our hockey team right now, Go Tigers, the Department of Student Affairs makes sure that their meals are covered in a very different way. And that practice really varies widely across the university. But today we're focused on faculty and staff traveling reimbursement. So here's a high level look at what we processed in fiscal year FY23. In terms of meal reimbursement, you can see that 88% of all our reimbursements were for domestic travel. About half of those availed themselves of the per diem. You can see that some actually used their receipt option to access the higher rate of reimbursement. There was some travel to high cost cities, and then about 12% of our travel was to international destinations. It is a lot of volume, as you can see, just thousands of this particular type of reimbursement report. These are our current rates, and if you travel, you're probably quite familiar with them. These rates were established quite a while ago, and they have not been revised. So it was really time for us to do this benchmarking. And what we're proposing is to align with a standard that is renewed every year, so that we're no longer relying on a periodical review. We looked at 16 peer and local colleges, and we looked at their policies, and most of those use the US General Services Administration rates or GSA rates. If you ever received a Federal grant, there is a lot of reference to GSA rates in awards from the Federal Government. 12 of those universities and colleges use GSA rates. No receipts required. Others use fixed rates, generally assigned with the GSA rates. But they have some receipts-required options. What we're proposing to do, effective for travel occurring after May 1st of the current year, is full adoption of the GSA meal and incidental per diem rates. You'll notice the addition of the word 'incidental'. Our current rates do not include an incidental component. You can get reimbursed for incidentals but you would be required to submit receipts. By adopting the GSA rate there is a component for incidentals, and I'll show that in a couple of slides. And then, according to the GSA rates, available maximum of 75%, your first and last calendar day of travel and that is in recognition that you may not be traveling the entire day on those days, and therefore the first and last days are curtailed. Some schools do something different with that, for example, at the UR, you have to be traveling prior to 7:00 am the first day, and after 7:00 pm on the last day to access the full rate. What we decided to do is that we would allow employees to access the full GSA rate with receipts for that first and last day if they wish to access the full amount. A couple of things are not changing such as reduction for meals that are provided which is part of our existing policy. It's also part of the GSA rate policy. Basically, if you have a meal provided by your conference, lunch, dinner, breakfast, or if you started your travel midday and you were at school here during breakfast time or at home, then you would reduce that from your per diem for that day. And then grant and contract limitations could supersede this policy. If you've ever received a grant from New York State, for example, they typically do not allow international travel. It could be that you are eligible to be reimbursed, but you might not be able to charge these rates to the grant. You would have to charge to a different source of funds. If there are other limitations specific to your grant or contract, you just have to pay close attention to that. Most federal grants do allow GSA. We do travel to a variety of international destinations. So what we did for that is to increase the per diem and allow the receipt option for international travel.

This is straight from the GSA website, and you can look at it at any time. You can see the breakdown of the rates. You can see the incidental expenses, about \$5 per day, that gets added for incidentals. They define incidentals as the cost of transportation to go to a meal, or it could be for tips given to hotel staff who assist you with your luggage or things like that. That is going to be based on your per diem rate.

You can see that there are five tiers. Tier One is the least expensive city, and Tier Five translates to our highest cost cities. So we have a high cost city reimbursement rate right now. You can see that they break out breakfast, lunch, dinner, so that if you are having some meals provided you know how much it wants to be deducted. This is a screenshot on the GSA website where you can put in the city that you're going to be traveling to, and it will tell you which tier your city is in, and what the rate is for your trip. You don't have to do this, but you can do it for planning purposes. When you enter your reimbursement report, your travel expense report into Oracle, and you put in your city, the GSA rate tables are already downloaded, and it will know exactly what rate is applicable to that city. So you don't need to include any of this information, the system will automatically populate it. Here's an example of a three-day trip which illustrates what I'm talking about today. So you can see under our current per diem, which is \$41 per day, you would receive \$123. Adhering to the GSA per diem rate for a Tier One city and subject to that 75% reduction on first and last day, you would access \$147. Under the current receipt option for domestic travel, today you would be able to access \$158. Under the proposed receipt option, you would still be eligible for the \$59, but we would access the full \$59 on that first and last day for \$177. Right now we don't have a per diem for high cost city. So we would be putting in place a per diem for a high cost city, or \$79, and you could ask for 75% for first and last day, so without receipts, you would have the option to get \$197, and with receipts, \$237. And again, that would be minus any kind of deductions that would happen, based on your travel and meetings or meals. For international, you can see that our current per diem is \$79 per day. We're proposing an increase to \$110. Our current receipt option is \$105, and we're proposing an increase to \$13. An advantage of the change we are implementing is that by aligning with the GSA rates, those rates will be changing every year. So when the federal government updates their rates, our rates will automatically change. So you won't be relying on us to do a review. They actually are going out and looking at what the cost is in those cities, and those will be aligned. Travelers are able to access an amount that is more equitable, fair, and more able to defray their expenses when they're traveling for a business purpose. We have that additional incidental cost added for the per diem/non receipt option. And we have a more standardized process. I get a lot of PIs who call me and say, you know, I travel with my colleague, and they were using GSA rates, and I can't use GSA rates. Another advantage is that it will standardize the process from our end by being able to download the rates and put them into our system and have that automatically calculate. And then, very importantly, we have a lot of staff and faculty who travel quite a bit. Can we simplify and streamline the process for them and for the administrative staff that are putting together travel expense reports? By increasing the options of the no receipts required and the amounts, we give people the ability to defray their expenses without having to collect receipts, tax forms and those kinds of things when they go to restaurants. So we think that's going to be another plus for our business travelers and department administrators.

That is my presentation. Any questions?

B. Thomas: If you travel with students, students are not covered. When you go to meals with your students, you don't expect them to bring out their cards and pay for their meals. I pay for their meals and then I come back and explain to my chair *inaudible*.

M. Conception: We do have that. So it will be GSA, no receipts for everything with first and last day at 75%. If you want to access the full amount for first and last day, then you have the receipts option. That is the policy. With regard to the students, I think it'd be worthwhile to look at what others do. Also the way we currently reimburse students is very varied across the university. So to design a methodology, one size doesn't fit all. So we really need to think about what are the different groups, for example, what might apply to a certain group of students might not apply to our student athletes, might not apply where students are traveling abroad for a particular purpose. So there is a great degree of diversity there. So we should definitely look at that and work on something that might be feasible.

J. Hardin: My question is, why not use GSA rates for faculty and staff travelling internationally?

M. Conception: GSA rates don't apply to international travel. You have to actually use a different methodology. It's fairly complicated. It's based on Department of State rates. *inaudible* But I'm not saying that in the future we might not look at that

J. Hardin: The world is a diverse place economically. For example, going to Dubai is not the same thing as going to Costa Rica, and having a flat rate won't defray costs equally. I'd like to put a note in the minutes to request some further thought about using the Department of State rates.

[University Travel Per Diem Rates Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 9: Revision of University Writing Policies D01.0 and D01.5; G. Wainwright (1:07)
Presentation linked below

G. Wainwright: Thank you for the opportunity to talk about two policy revisions that the UWC, the University Writing Committee has been looking at this year. I want to start by talking about policy D1, Section 6c, which deals with the committee's responsibility regarding approval of writing intensive courses. We want to make visible some of the collaboration that the UWP is having with the UWP (the university writing program), and also serve to highlight some of the different goals and responsibilities these two bodies have. We want to allow the UWC to participate in the process for approving course substitution requests that currently go through the UWP. We want to clarify how it helps college curriculum committees to review proposals before they are sent to us, and also to identify some of the additional stakeholders that participate in the writing process curriculum assessment. So why are we proposing these changes now? Essentially, the writing policy which was put in place in 2014, with the exception of adding graduate writing, really hasn't changed significantly. There were some different roles and responsibilities that were envisioned at that time that really haven't come to fruition so we're pretty much wanting to incorporate into policy what current practice is. In addition to that, again to highlight the differences between the committee and the UWP and the important relationships that we have. The first policy change is to point out that the UWC is a standing subcommittee of the ICC. Going to the next section clarifying the committee's responsibilities as a subcommittee of the ICC. And identifying other participants that are involved in the process of passing on approvals to writing intensive courses. The next section talks about further collaborating with the UWP to provide curricular support for students and professional development support for faculty. Essentially the UWP ends up providing that support for our faculty and students but in some ways the UWC is in a better position to help identify what some of those needs are. And so again, it takes collaboration between us to be able to do that. I had previously talked about staying current with research on writing practices, where it makes more sense from the writing program to state current practices Also the writing committee to implement those practices. The UWC has already been assigned responsibility to coordinate a periodic assessment of writing across the curriculum. But now we further identify those other groups that are going to be working with us. Lastly, add a provision, so that course substitution requests can be reviewed by the UWC.

Next, the university writing policy. The last time that the policy was really looked at was 2011 when it was put into place. We added graduate writing to that policy in March of 2020. We really never looked at undergraduate writing.

We'd like to point out that the writing across the curriculum approach which is in that policy is consistent with what other research universities do, and we really want to incorporate writing into as many of the years of undergrad education as possible. Our current requirement is for a three course writing intensive sequence. As part of that sequence, we start out with first year writing, which all students take, unless they've gotten credit for it. We then have students take one writing intensive programmatic course, which is specific to their program. And they further take one writing intensive course, which is either Gen Ed or another programmatic writing intensive course. What we are proposing to change is to enhance the description of a programmatic writing course to make it more clear, and the big change is that we want to link the percentage of the grade for writing in a course to the number of credit hours for the course. Currently, most of the writing intensive courses are three-credit courses, and the policy says that 20% of the grade should be based on writing. What we'd like to add is that if we have two-credit writing intensive courses, 30% of the grade should be based on writing, and for one-credit courses, 60% of the grade. What that will allow for is more curricular flexibility, and allow programs to adapt and incorporate writing in more unique ways. We also want to clarify that the grade for writing should be based on individual formal writing assignments. There are both informal and formal writing assignments incorporated into these courses, and we want it to be based on formal writing, and further clarify that it's individual writing

that counts. We've also put in some provisions for how collaborative writing can be used. But again, to clarify that we want the grade based on individual writing. Why are we making these changes now? The committee has been receiving a lot of inquiries about one and two-credit hour courses, and there's nothing in policy that says they must be 3-credit hour courses. Therefore, because of these requests, and there have already been two 2-credit hour courses that were approved, we felt it was appropriate to adapt the policy and allow for us to incorporate three, two, and one credit courses into the writing policy, while ensuring that there's an equitable amount of writing that's taking place in each of those courses. We took a look at how this would impact programs. There are currently 2-credit hour courses in three of the programmatic areas in Engineering. When those were approved a few years back there wasn't attention paid to the amount of extra writing that we see done in those courses, so we feel that those courses will not be negatively impacted, if we say you must have 30% writing. In the future, once we get our curricular management system, we will be more easily able to track these courses, audit these courses and ensure that an appropriate amount of writing is being done. Turning to what the policy changes are, essentially to redefine what a programmatic writing course is. We want to expand the definition to talk about courses that are designed to engage students in writing in the disciplines that are represented by the course. Moving to the next section, this modification adds that comment that collaborative writing can be included but individual contributions should be assessed and identified individually. The next section reiterates that it is formal writing that is being graded. And we've updated the identification of those coming from the writing center as being consultants.

J. Butler: I do have a question about NTID in their associate degree programs. We have two-year programs that don't require writing, so it seems that we would be in violation of this policy. So I'm wondering how these changes are going to impact the associate programs.

G. Wainwright: Thank you for that question, because there is one last minute request that I had from another colleague at NTID. What I will further propose is that instead of saying all undergraduate programs, we should probably say all 4-year undergraduate bachelor degree programs. I think that will cover that. That was asked of me at the last minute after I submitted the presentation to Tamaira.

J. Lanzafame: First of all, I want to thank you for clarifying the language here. Having dealt with this last year, it was a little confusing and it does make my life easier in Chemistry. But I do want to express the slight concern that it could have the unintended consequence of actually decreasing the amount of emphasis on writing in a science course. Because with the focus of the grade on writing assignments you could fairly easily turn every one-credit hour laboratory course into a writing course, since they're graded almost exclusively on formal lab reports. But the effort in the course is largely focused on the lab itself, and not the exercise of writing.

G. Wainwright: That's an excellent point. If you go further into the definition of a writing intensive course, formal writing requires that formal feedback be provided to the students, and they are given an opportunity to revise their written work and get a revised grade for that. So what that would entail is every lab report that a student turned in would have to be given the opportunity for revision. They would be allowed to turn it in, and you would have to re-grade that and the grading would be on the writing content, not necessarily the technical content. It is theoretically possible to use those one-credit laboratory courses, but it would require a bit more effort and structuring on the part of the instructor to do so.

I. Puchades: You mentioned that you're revising the policy to say that the assignments have to be individual. But you also mentioned that engineering has some team writing activities, but I don't see that as part of the revision. I'm concerned that will get lost as this is implemented.

G. Wainwright: Are you referring to the individual component?

I. Puchades: Yes.

G. Wainwright: Engineering does have both collaborative and individual writing. My understanding is that some of those collaborative papers or reports and so on have sections that are individually graded, if written by individuals, and then graded separately. When you have collaborative work it becomes more difficult to do the assessment part. There are no writing police out there to say you're doing this exactly right or wrong. We rely on the faculty to conduct writing and individual writing within their programs

that meets the spirit of the writing policy. We agree collaborative writing is useful, but we also know sometimes students divide and conquer where you've got one report, and each student writes a part of it and they're not really collaborating on their writing. We understand both positions and are trying to make it more fair for everyone with the different forms of writing that are out there.

H. Ghazle: You are proposing multiple changes. Are you bringing a motion to the floor? Or is this an FYI for now. What is the intent of this?

G. Wainwright: We would like to move to approve all of these changes. If it's easier to approve changes to each policy individually, that's fine. I defer to the chair to say which is the easier and better approach to take.

A. Newman: I think right now we have a lot of changes. There's a lot of redlining. I think it makes sense to either defer the vote to a different day, or separate the two policies. How do senators feel about this?

F. Dreese: I'm on the committee and I endorse these changes. From being on the committee for a year they make a lot of sense. I don't think it's that complicated or controversial.

H. Ghazle: If we go back to the first slide, I just want to point out that it says that the university writing committee is a standing sub-committee. I just want to make sure that once we get into that, that is part of B2. Do we want to go back to the charter and make that change?

G. Wainwright: I know B2 is up for change as well. It almost gets into a Catch 22, because all we're saying is what is in the charter currently.

A. Newman: Actually it's not a standing committee. That's a good point. Right now it's a temporary committee under the ICC, whereby the ICC chair shall request the formation of these committees on an annual basis. The chair may choose to form the committee, but the only way they can request their formation is to come to the Senate floor and ask for them. That's what B2 says although we're currently not following that. So if we leave the charter as is, we would essentially dissolve these committees until the next ICC chair comes and requests their formation, which wouldn't happen until after the formation of the ICC itself. If the chair requests their formation, we would form the committees by asking colleges to run their elections, and then as a Senate we would need to assign charges to each of the individual committees. If we were following the charter today, the ICC's subcommittees would end up being formed roughly every November. And this would raise a big question as to which way you would want to go. In any case, according to the current charter, the UWC is not currently a standing subcommittee, so that needs to be edited.

We have a motion on the floor. Would you like to defer it to a different day?

G. Wainwright: I'm fine with that.

[Revision of University Writing Policies D01.0 and D01.5 Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 10: Academic Charter B02.0; A. Newman (1:28) *Presentation linked below*

A. Newman: We have a small presentation on B2 today. I think I managed to add it into the folder. There's a copy of B.2 March 28th. There are a couple of things that we did over the past few weeks. I fell ill over spring break, which caused a lot of things to come and go on our timeline. B2 has been something that we've been talking about for quite a while, and today we're going to discuss the survey results of the straw poll that we took just before spring break, to see how the Senate was feeling about the proposed motions. Generally speaking, this is probably a good time to remind everyone as well as the newer senators that the revisions to B2 have been under discussion for about 18 months. There was a retreat some months ago which a number of senators and Standing Committee members attended and shared their ideas, and we put forward at that time what would be considered a very radical plan for how to redesign the charter. Since then we've been able to go back with a fine tooth comb, trying to figure out a

set of goals that are probably going to be difficult to achieve overall. But we are trying to make it so that the Senate runs better than it did before. So to catch everyone up on the core goals that we started off with because this is just an incredibly important thing. Post-pandemic, we've all realized how much work we actually do. Because we are very committed to our students, the teaching that we do, the work that we do overall, and the amount of work that we do to support RIT, it's become really important for us to find ways to reduce the service load that Senate places on our faculty. This is something that has become more and more clear to us as we've had more and more trouble over the past couple of years to recruit people to be representatives on our 11 standing committees. Because of the sheer number of 300 to 400 faculty members who are working on these committees, it has become really important for us to try and reduce those numbers in any way possible, and refine how we work.

We have also found a lot of inconsistencies in the charter, little language anomalies, which, if anyone here remembers Tim Engstrom, used to drive him crazy. The 'wills' versus the 'shalls', which may create ambiguity as to whether something really is a requirement. Also how voting rights on the standing committees are distributed, especially with regard to non faculty members. As you know, we switched from an Academic Senate model to a Faculty Senate model a couple of Senates ago during which we eliminated the voting rights of the deans and other administrative representatives, but we neglected to do that with the standing committees, and we should probably make that more consistent. Besides that, we wanted to make sure to align the language of the charter with our current practices, or at least refine current practices so they are less burdensome. That includes things like the fact that most people who were members of the Nominations Committee didn't realize they were members. Also practice of what would have happened if we were to follow the charter right now regarding the subcommittee of the ICC. Besides that, we want to make sure we recognize the inclusion of senior and principal lectures in the Senate population, which in many places means addressing the requirement for tenured faculty in particular bodies. So those are the changes that we've been looking at.

So, the survey results. Unfortunately, Sam isn't here because he was the one who built the survey, and he has all the detailed results, but we can look at them as well. The straw poll that we took had eleven motions in total, three of them concerned the RABC. We went from the least contentious to most contentious. Overall, every motion passed with a strong margin, except for the one regarding the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee. For that one I think, there were 16 yay votes, 8 nays, with 11 or 14 not sure. So that's probably our most split vote overall, which means that that's the committee that we would probably need to discuss more on the floor. But, because we are running short of time, we are not going to discuss that today, that is, unless somebody just wants to discuss it for a few minutes, before we move to the motions. We're only doing three motions today and I can go through them one by one before we vote.

The first is #3 in the survey. This was to amend the language of the academic charter in the preamble, so that it's clear that faculty are officially responsible for research and scholarly activity. This is something that we have neglected to put into the charter for quite a while, despite having a standing committee that actually deals with research and scholarship. So it was a big omission and we are moving to include it in the language of the charter.

The next one pertains to the Nominations Committee. Just because in the many years of previous nominations committees members have not realized they were on the committee, we suggested discontinuing the current version, and replacing it with a nominations officer position to be elected every fall, so that Senate is forced to recognize and assign one person who will then be in charge of taking care of executive committee elections, senator at large elections, so on and so forth. We think it would be an advantage to have the nominations officer be someone who is part of the group that is actively meeting and aware of their position. Finally, the question of at-large senators. A number of people have suggested having only one at-large senator assigned to each standing committee. I note, of course, that all standing committees always always have the option to request more at large men more at large members if they feel they need additional support.

So these are the three least contentious motions that we are putting forward today. Otherwise, would anybody like to discuss concerns regarding the DEI Committee?

I. Puchades: When was the straw poll taken?

A. Newman: The beginning of March. You didn't participate? That's awkward!

B. Dell: Having a DEI rep on each of the standing committees doesn't mean that that person has the competence to do the job.

A. Newman: I agree.

R. Zanibbi: It seems that it would be a particular burden for the person with responsibility to represent DEI concerns in a committee to then have the additional responsibility of participating with their colleagues in the DEI group.

S. Bamonto: There was a concern in our college that the DEI rep would be the only person on each committee to represent DEI-related concerns and could be very much in the minority

A. Newman: We saw that as well. That's definitely been a big topic of discussion, primarily, the idea of the overload and the representation element. Those were the two things that cancel each other out in a weird sort of way, because if you are already a part of one committee, and you end up being the diversity advocate. The idea of having the DEIC exist as an overarching committee, with a rep in each committee was to provide support to the individuals in their individual space, so less as a double workload type of thing, more as a here, this is what you're representing. Now, you can liaise with your group and have the backing of what would be considered hopefully the experts in DEI policy.

R. Zanibbi: *Inaudible*

B. Thomas: Sorry, I'm lost. What are you asking us to do again?

A Newman: The only motion that had mixed results was the one regarding DEIC and how it might be reimagined. So we are just collecting responses and feedback on that.

B. Thomas: Like Ivan, I did not know about this and did not participate.

A. Newman: We can send it out again, if that's the case. This was definitely one of those things where we were trying to figure out where everyone was.

P. David. I think the DEI Committee is very important for a number of reasons: one, to think about the strategic plan of the University, but also given all the political winds, it's an important committee to recognize. So while thinking about expediency, there are times when there is more to it, the symbolism and the weight we place on certain things. So sometimes expediency or efficiency may not be the most important criteria on some matters. And I think DEIC needs more careful talk before we take any action on it.

A Newman: That's an excellent point.

M. Laver: I think the first thing to say is that DEI is the responsibility of everybody. We should not talk about this as if we're singling out one person to be the DEI rep. And while you could also make the argument that we're singling out one committee to be the DEI Committee, I get that. But still, a committee is operating on a different level. It's saying that these are the functional areas of the University that we value. Academic Affairs, Faculty Affairs, DEI is part of that. Having one person on a committee is effectively saying that you're the DEI person and the rest of us don't really have to think about DEI. You let us know, if we're not going down the right path. I'm not saying that that's how it would work. But that's the signal we'd be sending. So I'm in favor of retaining the committee, if for no other reason than it sends a signal that this is an important and valuable part of the university that all of us should buy into.

A Newman: Fair enough. Okay, that's excellent. So we are down to a very short amount of time. So now we're going to move to the motions.

Motion #1: To write research into the preamble of the charter at 3.1

Approved: 30-2-0

E. Williams: Point of order. This is a change to B2? I don't see a revised B2. Every time we revise a policy, we have a Word document that's marked up. I thought that was the standard procedure.

A Newman: Honestly, we didn't put this in because we're doing all of it in so many pieces, and we've gone over it in a lot of different meetings and we didn't want to put in the entire document until we are finished editing the entire document.

Motion #2: To discontinue the Nominations Committee in favor of electing a Nominations Office annually, in the fall.

Approved: 27-1-3

Motion #3: To reduce the number of at-large members on Senate Standing Committees to one.

Approved: 27-1-3

[B 02.0 Presentation](#)

Agenda Item 11: New Business; A. Newman (1:49)

H. Ghazle: I'm going to be begging. As you may know, the grievance committee is supposed to have five members and four alternate committee members. We have the five, but only one alternate, so we need one professor and two associate professors as alternates. I would be willing to volunteer myself as an alternate. So then all we would need is one full professor and two associate professors to serve as alternates.

M. Laver: Volunteered

F. Dreese: Volunteered

H. Ghazle: We need one more associate professor.

A. Newman: It doesn't have to be a senator. So if you know someone who you think might like to be involved in grievances, this would be a good time to go tap them.

H. Ghazle: You don't have to meet with the committee unless you're called in, and the meetings are scheduled by agreement among all the committee members, so there is no specific time when they will meet.

Q. Song: Volunteered

A. Newman: Thank you all so much.

Agenda Item No. 12: Adjournment; A. Newman (1:52)

Attendance 3/28/2024

Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended	Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended
Abushagur, Mustafa	KGCOE Senator		Lanzafame, Joseph/LRPEC and ASSAC Rep	COS Senator	X
Adrion, Amy	ALT CAD Senator		Lapizco-Encinas, Blanca	KGCOE Senator	X
Aldersley, Stephen	Communications Officer/ SOIS Senator	X	Laver, Michael	CLA Senator	X
Anselm, Martin	CET Senator	X	Lee, James	ALT CET Senator	
Bamonto, Suzanne	CLA Senator	X	Liu, Manlu	SCB Senator	
Barone, Keri	Treasurer/CLA Senator	X	Malachowsky, Samuel	Vice Chair/ GCCIS Senator	Excused
Boedo, Stephen	ALT KGCOE Senator		McCalley, Carmody	ALT COS Senator	
Brady, Kathleen	ALT NTID Senator		McLaren, Amy	CAD Senator	
Brown, Tamaira	Senate Coordinator		Newman, Atia	Chair/CAD Senator	X
Butler, Janine	NTID Senator	X	Newman, Dina	COS Senator	X
Capps, John	CLA Senator	Excused	Olles, Deana	COS Senator	X
Chiavaroli, Julius	ALT GIS Senator		Olson, Rob	ALT GCCIS Senator	X
Chung, Sorim	ALT SCB Senator	X	O'Neil, Jennifer	ALT CET Senator	
Crawford, Denton	CAD Senator		Osgood, Robert	ALT CHST Senator	
Cromer, Michael	ALT COS Senator	X	Puchades, Ivan	KGCOE Senator	X
Cui, Feng	ALT COS Senator		Ray, Amit/ICC Rep	CLA Senator	X
David, Prabu	Provost	X	Ross, Annemarie	NTID Senator	X
Davis, Stacey	ALT NTID Senator	X	Shaaban, Muhammad	ALT KGCOE Senator	
Deese, Frank	CAD Senator	X	Sheffield, Jr. Clarence	ALT SOIS Senator	
Dell, Betsy	CET Senator	X	Song, Qian	SCB Senator	X
DiRisio, Keli	CAD Senator	X	Staff Council Rep	Jeremy Zehr	X
Eddingsaas, Nathan/RSC Rep	COS Senator	X	Student Government Rep	Alex Shuron	X

Faber, Joshua	COS Senator	Excused	Thomas, Bolaji	CHST Senator	X
Fillip, Carol	ALT CAD Senator		Tobin, Karen	NTID Senator	
Ghazle, Hamad	Operations Officer/CHST Senator	X	Tsouri, Gill	KGCOE Senator	X
Ghoneim, Hany	ALT KGCOE Senator		Ulin, Robert	CLA Senator	X
Hardin, Jessica	ALT CLA Senator	X	Van Aardt, Jan	ALT COS Senator	
Hazelwood, David	NTID Senator		Warp, Melissa	ALT CAD Senator	
Hsieh, Jerrie	ALT SCB Senator	X	Weeden, Elissa	GCCIS Senator	
Jadamba, Basca	COS Senator	X	White, Phil	ALT GCCIS Senator	
Johnson, Dan	CET Senator		Williams, Eric	GIS Senator	X
Johnson, Scott	GCCIS Senator	X	Worrell, Tracy	ALT CLA Senator	
Kincheloe, Pamela	NTID Senator	X	Zanibbi, Richard	GCCIS Senator	X
Kiser, Larry	GCCIS Senator		Zlochower, Yosef	COS Senator	
Krutz, Daniel	ALT GCCIS Senator				
Kuhl, Michael	KGCOE Senator	X			

Standing Committee(s) Represented: ASSAC, DEIC, ICC, LRPEC, RSC, UWC

Interpreters: Nic Crouse-Dickerson and Jennifer Mura

Presenters: Andy Lawrence, Milagros Conception and Gretchen Wainwright