

## Faculty Senate Minutes of Meeting

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

Thursday, January 16, 2025

12:15 - 1:50 PM

Slaughter Hall 2220-2240

Attendance: See Below

Agenda Item No. 1: Call to Order; A. Newman (12:19)

Agenda Item No. 2: Approval of Agenda; A. Newman (12:19)

**Approved by acclamation**

Agenda Item No. 3: Communications Officer's Report/Approval of Minutes; S. Aldersley (12:20)

**Approved by acclamation**

[December 5, 2024 Meeting Minutes](#)

Agenda Item No. 4: Executive Committee Report; A. Newman (12:21)

- We are activating next week's meeting hold (1/23) which we will dedicate to discussion of B.2 and some of the outcomes of the Senate retreat in December. (Retreat notes are in the Senate drive.) We'd like to finish the remaining charter change motions so that they can go to the university faculty for a vote.
- You may be hearing from your constituents about DSO updates. We have learned they have not been able to update the system which allows faculty to approve or unapprove course accommodations. This means that faculty will have to resort to emails to interact with the DSO. I understand they are very open to accepting faculty feedback on specific accommodations

Agenda Item No. 5: Staff Council Update; Ross Hisert (12:21)

Our first meeting of the new year will take place later today.

Agenda Item No. 6: Student Government Update; J. Anderson (12:22)

Our first meeting of the new year will take place tomorrow.

**Agenda Item No. 7: United Way Presentation; N. Prahler and A. Dulac (12:23)**

The United Way campaign is the only philanthropic effort that RIT engages in. There are four impact areas that the United Way is focusing on with several different agencies under each area.

1. Youth Success: used to be referred to as Education. Margaret's House is one of the agencies under this area, so you can donate directly to them if you wish.
2. Financial Security: renamed this year from what was previously called Economic Mobility. 40% of Rochester residents are only slightly above the poverty line, and struggle day to day to pay their bills, feed and provide health care for their families.
3. Healthy Community: United Way is providing opportunities for people to obtain health care and mental health care and get connected with doctors and transportation to see those doctors.
4. Community Resiliency: When an event happens in Rochester, for example the flooding last year in Canandaigua, that causes many people to struggle, United Way engages community and donors to provide emergency funding.

This presentation is early and we don't have a goal yet but we're off to a good start and already have raised \$20,000 through three events: our annual golf tournament, the first week of September, which raised \$12,000; what we call a 'miracle minute' where we run around the hockey arena for 60 seconds and collect money; and then mud tug which raised \$10,000.

Some agencies under the United Way umbrella support our students and staff directly. The Center for Youth helps house students who are experiencing homelessness. Chili, Henrietta and Scottsville local medical ambulance provides financial support to our students who need help with the cost of an ambulance. The Legal Aid Society of Rochester supports our international students, especially with visa paperwork, and any RIT community members experiencing legal issues and in need of advice. Trillium Health is another and finally Willow, a domestic violence shelter in the area.

RIT students give their time and talent to many United Way entities, in 2023/24 they dedicated 14,506 service hours, with an economic impact of \$437,791. Over the last 5 years students have donated almost \$49,000 to the United Way.

How can a faculty member get involved in the United Way campaign? We count on our talented faculty and staff, who are looking for opportunities to give back to the community. The easiest way to become involved is to attend some of our events. Our kickoff event is on March 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Shed. We have a steering committee with members from just about every division in college, and if you're interested in joining that, please email us.

We make it as easy as possible for everyone to donate by using your RIT Login credentials to log into our website. You can pledge through credit card or through payroll deductions.

We also have the Charity auction in mid-March. We have close to 60 donated chairs and we'll be having them on display in the Campus Center. Finally, the Day of Caring, an RIT community-wide event on May 15<sup>th</sup> that will be held at Mount Hope Cemetery.

[United Way Presentation](#)

**Agenda Item No. 8: FAC Charges; L. Fernandes and H. Nickisher (12:36)**

H. Nickisher: We're here to offer motions on two FAC charges. The first charge follows from RIT's development of the Doctor of Physical Therapy program and the Occupational Therapy program in the College of Health Science and Technology, which require non-tenure track clinical faculty prepared with clinical expertise. Additionally, NTID also requires the clinical faculty rank for their Communication Studies and Services program.

The second charge is to evaluate the need to change non-tenure track titles of lecturer, senior lecturer, and principal lecturer. Some of you may recall this charge has been presented to Senate before and has been on the FAC docket for over four years. We chose to review these two charges together since they impact the same policies, and we want to take the opportunity to define consistent and inclusive non-tenure track titles. The policies that are impacted are E.6, 7, 17, 20, and 24, as well as B.2.

There was one point in the rationale associated with the title changes that suggested a change in titles might lead to RIT being better able to attract and retain the strongest possible teaching faculty. The committee spent a lot of time benchmarking, and reached out to a number of schools (See Slide #24)

The title Teaching Professor is a common term. Teaching professors do more than just lecture. They also build curriculum, they advise and mentor students. In some instances, they perform very important service roles.

Regarding the need to hire clinical faculty, the occupational therapy program has been provisionally approved by the accrediting body, and we've got existing occupational therapy faculty members right now who are holding temporary titles. The program needs these clinical titles to support accreditation and future hiring.

This is the proposal: everything in yellow is what is being suggested for both charges.

E.4 defines faculty responsibilities. Part of the responsibility of clinical faculty is to do research. For teaching professors, it's a title change only. There's no change in salary and no change in job responsibilities, although in future making the titles consistent with other schools may make it easier to benchmark.

L. Fernandes: Our subcommittee spent quite a bit of time looking at the new charge related to establishing clinical faculty ranks, and I want to thank Dean Wang and his staff and Dean Buckley and his staff for their assistance, because what you're about to see in the next set of slides are materials we worked on together to cover both the new programs in CHST and existing programs in NTID.

It's important to point out that if you look at E.6, you will find clinical faculty already referred to, but listed as non-RIT employees. We actually have over 200 people today in that category. When we introduce the new employee rank of clinical faculty, we will still need to have this non-employee category as well.

Teaching may not be the primary responsibility for some of these new clinical faculty which makes the definition of what they may be expected to do different from some of the other titles that we already have. The next 11 slides in the deck contain all the new language that would be put into E.6. Together with the slide deck, you should have received the red line version of the changes we're proposing to E.6, including a new section to cover clinical faculty. Since we're suggesting the creation of multiple ranks within the category - assistant clinical professor, associate clinical professor, and clinical professor - we had to define a promotion process, including nomination, criteria, documentation, etc., and we had to define what clinical faculty would be responsible for. So there's some definitional language in the new section in E.6. In defining the contract periods we stuck close to the definitions used for lecturers.

So we are ready now as a Faculty Affairs Committee to make our motion; that Senate approve all of the changes as these are shown in the redline document.

M. Ruhling: Among the list of duties for clinical professor is administration of a program. What do you mean by 'administration'? Do we run into the danger of not having an appropriate tenure line to administer a program?

Y.T. Wang: I would like to share with you why we need a clinical faculty rank. In our new doctoral programs, faculty research is a requirement. Students must do a research project in order to graduate, and the clinical faculty must do research and publish. If they don't, we won't get accreditation. That's the first reason. The second pertains to future faculty recruitment. Without the clinical faculty rank we can only offer lecturership positions and potential faculty won't come.

M. Ruhling: I'm not opposed to this in any way but you haven't answered my question. I would like to see a tenure-track faculty be hired to administer the program.

H. Nickisher: Just because something is being done doesn't necessarily mean it's a reason to be doing it, however, there are non-tenured faculty members already running programs.

I. Puchades: With regard to the lecturer title change, if I remember correctly the last time this was brought up at Faculty Senate, senators went out and polled their constituents. Coming back and changing this without having senators go back to the faculty again makes me uncomfortable.

L. Fernandes: We did two surveys less than 12 months ago which asked about the title changes and both came back overwhelmingly in favor.

S. Malachowsky: My question is about symmetry. Everything has symmetry except for the affiliate clinical instructor. What is this title?

L. Fernandes: You're talking about the non-employee. That goes back to the contract we have with Rochester Regional. E.6 doesn't define them but I know they have roles today within CHST.

E. Williams: I have a question for Atia on Senate process. This all sounds very reasonable. I don't expect my constituents to have any concerns with it, but we're also being asked to vote on something on the day it's being presented. I know there's a survey, but there's a difference between having a survey and saying, 'this is going to become policy.' Is the plan to vote today, or are we putting it off till the next meeting?

A. Newman: The FAC has made a motion, so there is a vote. All of these topics were brought to the floor previously.

E. Williams: How is an affiliate clinical faculty different from an adjunct?

L. Fernandes: They're not employees. They're paid by Rochester Regional.

R. Olson: I just did a quick search of a couple of our peer institutions and I see that almost all of their teaching professors hold the Ph.D. so I'm a little bit concerned that it's going to change the expectations around RIT's hiring. That would be a problem in my department, because when we're looking for lecturers, we're specifically targeting people with industry experience who do not do research.

L. Fernandes: Not every benchmark university requires a terminal degree, though some of them do. There's nothing in the scope of this change that would change the expectation of the job as it's currently defined. If that were something that the University wanted to do, that would have to be a new charge.

H. Nickisher: If you're concerned about changing culture, I would say it'd be a change for the good. It's a matter of self-esteem, so that's a good culture change.

F. Deese: I have some real concerns for the School of Film and Animation and I'm very much against voting on it today without talking to the school. Our benchmarks are not the same as general university programs.

B. Thomas: I think the first thing we need to do today is to separate the clinical faculty positions from the non-tenure track titles. When I was on Faculty Affairs some time ago, the lecturer title change was voted down. I don't understand why we are tying them together.

R. Zanibbi: I have a constituent who wanted me to share their concern that they're not comfortable with calling somebody in my discipline an assistant teaching professor who does not have a PhD and doesn't have teaching experience. I'm not saying that's my point of view, but I suspect they're not the only person who feels that way. As Rob pointed out, in many places a 'teaching professor' is someone with a PhD.

D. Olles: I don't have a PhD. and my students call me Professor. I've been at this University for almost 20 years, and I have teaching experience, starting here. The title is Assistant Teaching Professor. There's nothing wrong with that.

H. Ghazle: Point of order. Let's keep it collegial. We need to address each other in a collegial, respectful way, with every opinion being respected.

D. Olles: To echo what Heidi was saying earlier, this title change is for the better. The reason why this is being brought to the floor is because a lot of lecturers feel that the current title does not make us feel respected. It does not make us feel that we are held at an equal standard with our tenured colleagues. Having this title change gives us the opportunity to feel that we are more respected. If you look back at the survey results as Heidi said, they indicate that lecturers overwhelmingly agree with this change.

B. Thomas: It's an RIT principle to call anyone who is teaching 'professor'. But I think we're dealing with a slippery slope here. The first time this came to the Senate it was voted down. I still believe the current titles for non tenure track faculty are appropriate and are based on their responsibilities. I don't see why we need to change the titles from the way they are now.

Just because our peer institutions do something, doesn't mean we have to join the bandwagon.

The results from the earlier survey showed that the non tenure track faculty supported it but the tenure track faculty did not. It's important for us to take all that into consideration.

I have colleagues who are lecturers and who are doing a superb job. However, the responsibilities of a tenure track faculty are completely different from the responsibilities of lecturers. It's important that there be clarity on that.

H. Nickisher: If I remember correctly, when the title change question came to Senate before, it was not voted down. Rather it was tabled and sent back to the FAC. Additionally, in the last survey administered by the FAC, 21% of tenured faculty voted against the title change, 30% were in favor and 41% were indifferent.

B. Jadamba: There is overwhelming support for this in the College of Science.

P. Padmanabhan: I don't think having a Ph.D is necessarily relevant to one's title.

S. Malachowsky: One of my goals since I joined Senate has been to promote lectures and I think we're making significant changes. But still a large percentage of our population is defined by what they're not, 'non tenure track' and that's not changing here. This is a small step. I agree with some of the sentiment, but I'm afraid it's almost a trivial thing which allows us to say we did something right.

H. Ghazle: My recommendation is to separate the motion so we can have separate votes and I move to do so.

? Senator: Seconded.

J. Lanzafame: I would like to hold the clinical titles hostage, because it would be very easy for this body to pass the clinical professor category because of the business argument for them, and table the lecture titles for another five years. And there's a perfectly logical reason to treat them together. I keep hearing

about this title of 'professor,' and if the only professors out there were the tenure track faculty, I would support that. What you have is everybody having the title 'professor', except lecturers. You've got temporary employees without PhDs as professors, you've got non-RIT employees as professors, and professors of practice, again without having to have a PhD. I don't really care about the title. A \$50 gift card would matter more to me than the title, but many of my colleagues do care, and it starts to stick out that this one group of people are the only people on campus who should not be called 'professor.'

M. Anselm: Very well spoken. Culture at RIT has already changed. Unfortunately, people hired 20 years ago as lecturers probably wouldn't be hired anymore as teaching professors, and there's lots of departments already requiring doctoral degrees for lecturers. If that's what you're looking for as a department, you're going to find somebody with a PhD from industry. However, I think they're going to want to come in and be called 'professor.'

F. Deese: I support separating the two. I've spoken to at least two lecturers, a senior lecturer and a principal lecturer in my department, and they're very much against the change. They prefer the current title. It's part of the culture of the School of Film and Animation and other film schools in the country who still use the lecturer title. Those are our benchmarks, not the College of Science. There's a big difference between the disciplines.

C. Newman: Sounds like we've waited long enough to make this decision. I think we should leave them attached and vote.

#### **Motion to separate the FAC motion into two parts**

**7:26:5**

**Motion fails**

#### **Motion to approve the red-line changes to E.6 submitted by the FAC**

**31:3:5**

**Motion passes**

[FAC Charges Presentation](#)

#### **Agenda Item No. 9: Faculty Activity System Taskforce; I. Puchades (1:26)**

This system is supposed to replace ScholarWorks, but it also aims to create CVs and help with annual evaluations, promotion and tenure process. So it's going to be a nice platform for faculty.

The Task Force sent out a survey in the spring of 2024 to which we got 230 respondents. Faculty Senate helped get the word out on that, and we want to request Senate's assistance again in amplifying what we're doing next.

Based on the feedback, we sent out a request for proposals. Four vendors responded and they all said they could do everything we wanted. The Task Force sat through four presentations lasting from 90 to 120 minutes each and now we're down to three vendors. They'll be coming in the spring when they're going to set up a demo room as well as have presentations. We're going to be looking for feedback on the three platforms so that we can choose the one we think is going to work best. There'll be an email this week or next week explaining the next few steps in the process.



B. Thomas: Can any of these three vendors you've chosen as finalists provide us with a service which will take a pdf from a computer into their system and populate everything automatically.

I. Puchades: That's the idea. What you want to upload is going to be different from everyone else. But a lot of the systems are automated which will allow them to look through indexed ScholarWorks, Google Scholar or Pub Med and they're going to feed from them.

E. Williams: Can you remind me of the design objectives here? ScholarWorks was never used in faculty evaluation. Is this a new system to help administrators keep track of paperwork?

I. Puchades: The original intent was to replace ScholarWorks and have a repository for faculty work. That's why it's called a faculty activity system. But these vendors also offer other features, like creating CVs and doing your annual evaluations. And when we had a discussion on the Senate floor faculty said it would be interesting to have those features. The system will also facilitate certain administrative work related for example to accreditation. Faculty can opt out and that was a feature that was asked for in the feedback.

E. Williams: When you do a follow up next time, can you lay out who will use the system for what?

J. Lanza fame: I am on that committee, and I encourage faculty to view the demos and see exactly what they're capable of doing. I take your point as to what we want to allow administrators to have access to, but these systems are very powerful, and they do automate a lot of the things we're doing separately now.

J. Capps: How much does this cost?

L. Williams: The initial setup cost is always going to be the most expensive, but it'll probably cost about \$180,000 annually to run it, and the maintenance is going to be about the same. When the Provost first started last year, he indicated that this was going to be a priority especially because of requests from RSC, DEI and FAC and he said that he would find money to support it.

C. Kray: Will this mean that we'll have to go back and input into the system everything that we've already inputted into ScholarWorks?

I. Puchades: No, it's supposed to be automated.

A. Newman: Please make sure to discuss this with your constituents. The more faculty participation we get, the more it's going to be something that actually matches what we want.

[Faculty Activity System Taskforce Presentation](#)

#### Agenda Item No. 10: New Business; A. Newman (1:37)

*H. Ghazle called for a volunteer to represent Senate on the Parking Advisory Committee and J. Lanza fame stepped up.*

R. Zani bbi: A lecturer constituent of mine had a question about the FEAD committee policy. The current language in the policy says that each college will establish a FEAD committee elected by the tenure track faculty of the college. The request is to change that language to 'elected from and by the full time faculty of the college' so that lecturers would be able to participate fully in the process.

S. Malachowsky: I'd suggest a revision to 'anyone who is eligible for the grant.'

H. Ghazle: Maybe Richard and Sam can work on the exact language and bring it back to the next meeting of Senate.

Agenda Item No. 11: Adjournment; A. Newman (1:41)



Attendance 1/16/2025

Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended	Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended
Adrion, Amy	ALT CAD Senator		Lanzafame, Joseph	COS Senator	X
Aldersley, Stephen	Communications Officer/ SOIS Senator	X	Laver, Michael	CLA Senator	X
Anselm, Martin	CET Senator	X	Lee, James	ALT CET Senator	
Barone, Keri	Treasurer/CLA Senator	X	Liu, Manlu	SCB Senator	
Boedo, Stephen	ALT KGCOE Senator		Malachowsky, Samuel	Vice Chair/ GCCIS Senator	X
Brady, Kathleen	ALT NTID Senator	X	McCalley, Carmody	ALT COS Senator	
Brown, Tamaira	Senate Coordinator	X	McLaren, Amy	CAD Senator	
Butler, Janine	NTID Senator	X	Newman, Atia	Chair/CAD Senator	X
Capps, John	CLA Senator	X	Newman, Christian	GCCIS Senator	X
Chiavaroli, Julius	ALT GIS Senator		Olles, Deana	COS Senator	X
Chung, Sorim	SCB Senator	X	Olson, Rob	ALT GCCIS Senator	X
Cody, Jeremy	COS Senator	X	O'Neil, Jennifer	ALT CET Senator	
Coppenbarger, Matthew	COS Senator	X	Osgood, Robert	ALT CHST Senator	
Crawford, Denton	CAD Senator	X	Padmanabhan, Poornima	KGCOE Senator	X
Cromer, Michael	ALT COS Senator		Puchades, Ivan	KGCOE Senator	X
Cui, Feng	ALT COS Senator		Ray, Amit	CLA Senator	X
David, Prabu	Provost	Excused	Reinicke, Bryan	ALT SCB Senator	
Davis, Stacey	NTID Senator	X	Ross, Annemarie	NTID Senator	X
Deese, Franklin	CAD Senator	X	Ruhling, Michael	CLA Senator	X
Dell, Betsy	CET Senator	X	Sanders, Cynthia	ALT NTID Senator	
DiRisio, Keli	CAD Senator		Shaaban, Muhammad	ALT KGCOE Senator	
Eddingsaas, Nathan	COS Senator	X	Song, Qian	SCB Senator	
Fillip, Carol	ALT CAD Senator		Staff Council Rep	Ross Hisert and Georgeanne Hogan	X
Ghazle, Hamad	Operations Officer/CHST	X	Student Government	Joshua Anderson	X

	Senator		Rep		
Ghoneim, Hany	ALT KGCOE Senator		Sweeney, Kevin	ALT SCB Senator	
Hardin, Jessica	ALT CLA Senator		Thomas, Bolaji	CHST Senator	X
Hartpence, Bruce	ALT GCCIS Senator		Tobin, Karen	NTID Senator	X
Hazelwood, David	NTID Senator	X	Tsouri, Gill	KGCOE Senator	X
Jadamba, Basca	COS Senator	X	Van Aardt, Jan	ALT COS Senator	
Johnson, Dan	CET Senator	X	Warp, Melissa	ALT CAD Senator	X
Johnson, Scott	GCCIS Senator	X	Weeden, Elissa	GCCIS Senator	Excused
Kray, Christine	CLA Senator	X	White, Phil	ALT GCCIS Senator	
Krutz, Daniel	ALT GCCIS Senator		Williams, Eric	GIS Senator	X
Kuhl, Michael	KGCOE Senator		Worrell, Tracy	ALT CLA Senator	
Kwasinski, Andres	ALT KGCOE Senator	X	Zanibbi, Richard	GCCIS Senator	X
			Zlochower, Yosef	COS Senator	X

Interpreters: Nicole Crouse-Dickerson and Jennaca Saeva

Student Assistant: Ben Bui

Presenters: Nicole Praher, Ashley Dulac, Leonie Fernandes, Heidi Nickisher, Ivan Puchades