

Faculty Senate Minutes of Meeting

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

Thursday, March 20, 2025

12:15 - 1:50 PM

Slaughter Hall 2220-2240

Attendance: See Below

Agenda Item No. 1: Call to Order; A. Newman (12:15)

Agenda Item No. 2: Approval of Agenda; A. Newman (12:15)

Approved by acclamation

Agenda Item No. 3: Communications Officer's Report/Approval of Minutes; S. Aldersley (12:17)

Minutes of the meeting of 3/6 approved by acclamation

[March 6, 2025 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes](#)

Agenda Item No. 4: Executive Committee Report; A. Newman (12:18)

- Senate will host its annual luncheon with Dr. Munson on 3/27. Please bring your questions.
- Hoping everyone was able to catch Dr. Watters' presentation this morning on the state of the University's finances. The ExComm will be following up with questions on the hiring freezes and voluntary retirement incentives.
- Provost David is holding a Town Hall meeting on Zoom on 4/4. We are hoping to learn more about the issue of removing the requirement for a DEI statement on the part of faculty position applicants.

K. Tobin: The DEI committee had been told to expect information from the Administration on this topic over break but we received nothing.

B. Dell: I believe the DEI committee is going to submit a recommendation on this issue to Senate.

A. Newman: There seem to be some crossed wires here that need to be followed up on.

- Last, in view of the very large number of issues still to come before Senate this year, the ExComm is considering waiving the practice of asking the standing committees to offer final reports on the Senate floor.

S. Aldersley: Will the committees still be expected to develop and post final reports on the drive?

A. Newman: Yes, and they will be available to all faculty on campus.

Agenda Item No. 5: Staff Council Update; Georgeanne Hogan (12:23)

The presidential awards for outstanding staff will be awarded on 4/2. Please support staff who have been nominated in your area, especially in light of the current hiring freeze

Agenda Item No. 6: Student Government Update; J. Anderson (12:24)

SG has recently had a large number of policy presentations, and I'd particularly like to mention a proposal for early enrollment priority for RIT ambulance members. We have also had three Pawprint updates to do with making period products available across campus, and notifying faculty of career days so as to not have exams on those days. We are deep into elections with voting on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of next week.

I. Puchades: A few weeks ago you said there was a motion to ban homework platforms that you have to pay for. Has that gotten any traction?

J. Anderson: We have been working with the library on ways to make textbooks available free of charge, but I don't know if there has been any progress related to homework programs.

Agenda Item No. 7: Exec. Committee Nominations; C. Hull (12:27)

C. Hull: We have one contested contest with Scott and Richard nominated for ExComm chair. Running for vice chair we have Keri and Hamad for operations officer. Stephen is running for communications officer and Joe for treasurer. By policy, candidates should provide a bio and vision statement. We have some other open positions. On the AAC, we need one senator to volunteer, and I remind everyone that if you're a senator, you're supposed to be on some other university level committee and this would be one of those. The same goes for an opening on the GEC. Also, we have one person running for one of two slots on Grad Council and then the LRPEC.

I. Puchades: Isn't the LRPEC being disbanded next year?

A. Newman: That will depend on how the faculty at large vote.

H. Ghazle: We also need some volunteers for the Grievance Committee. Perhaps the current alternates will be willing to become full members, in which case we would be looking for alternates. I will ask them.

Senator ?: Do you have someone for the University Writing Committee?

H. Ghazle: The colleges are currently electing committee members so the picture is not yet clear..

C. Hull: Maybe we don't have the executive committee election exactly at the same time as the other ones because it's easier for us to approve by acclamation when there is no contest. But the executive committee election is a little bit more formal I think. So possibly two different elections. And the executive committee election is done by secret ballot.

Agenda Item No. 8: Taskforce Update; C. Hull (12:34)

The task force met this morning and is assembling an inventory of non-academic programs. We're talking about programs of the non-degree type that might be vulnerable if people come after us over DEI stuff. Because of concerns expressed about assembling such a list and then having it be used against us, we're not calling it a list but an inventory. It will be assembled by Bobby Colon and will be kept secret. Therefore what we tell him is covered by lawyer-client privilege and he doesn't have to tell anybody what's in the inventory. I don't know what the purpose of this inventory is but apparently lots of other universities are doing the same thing. It was then briefly discussed that we might consider doing things to reduce our dependence on federal funding. And then we went back to discussing communication strategies and how the task force and university should communicate with everybody else, but I don't know what we will be communicating.

F. Deese: Will the inventory be protected from AI intrusion or scraping, someone looking for key words?

C. Hull: The inventory that Bobby keeps will not be put someplace where you could get at it from the internet. So I think that would count as protection. Apparently, there is also a way to make it so humans can read about your DEI programs on a website but which is not accessible to artificial intelligence. In any case, at the moment the committee has decided to stand firm and not change anything unless we're legally required to and we're not going to back off of any language we're currently using unless we find ourselves required to. The statement from Bobby is we're going to try to stay true to our values.

H. Ghazhle: What is the proper name for this task force?

C. Hull: It is something to the effect of 'the Executive Orders with respect to DEI Task force.' When I first signed up, I thought it was all the executive orders, but we're focusing on just those particular ones.

A. Newman: When I was asked to appoint someone for it, I also thought that it was for the entirety of the executive orders and only later found out that it's only focused on DEI, which is interesting in itself.

Agenda Item No. 9: Policy C03.0 (Intellectual Property) Edits; P. David (12:40)

P. David: This policy concerns intellectual property. You see a reference to conflict of interest and that was added throughout, but the key change is that RIT used to give \$500 as an incentive for people who applied for patents and if there were more than one person on the team, the \$500 was divided among them. First, the amount of work it takes to divvy up the \$500 is not insignificant. Second, it seems disproportionate to reward just this one aspect of our research, when people are publishing papers, etc. Because of these reasons, the president decided that this wasn't a good idea and it should be removed

from Policy C.3.

I. Puchades: When faculty in KGC OE discussed this a year or two ago, most were against it, first of all because it came unilaterally from the president, and second, because those of us that have worked in industry find that it's a pretty standard incentive to publish patents which actually incentivizes patent applications. It's quite different from the publication process. You actually could be making money out of a patent versus a journal. So I want to state KGC OE faculty's opposition to this change.

P. David: But it doesn't change any of the other distributions pertaining to intellectual property. When faculty contribute to IP and it blossoms into something big, there is a policy regulating what is shared with faculty. None of that has changed.

R. Zanibbi: I know a little bit about this process. Does anyone know if this originated from Xerox and Kodak practices with regard to patent application? I have three patents and the person I worked for at Xerox got \$500 each time.

S. Malachowsky: I can postulate. Basically the entire business world was patent-crazy in the nineties. And I'm guessing we got caught up in that. And the result is that now you have everything from patent trolls to patent portfolios where companies have nuclear arsenals pointed at each other.

R. Raffaele: I was actually here during that era almost 30 years ago. When we first established our intellectual property office the university wanted to incentivize faculty to submit them. So we copied Kodak.

Motion to approve changes to Policy C.3

Moved: J. Capps

Seconded: F. Deese

S. Johnson: This is a C policy. We don't have to actually vote on this. It's more of a 'yes, you passed it by us and we're OK with it.'

S. Malachowsky: I know \$500 isn't what it used to be, but are we going to vote to eliminate a benefit for faculty here?

Motion passed: 19:13:1

[Policy C03.0 Document](#)

Agenda Item No. 10: Changes to Policy D19.0 (Student Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct Policy) and Policy C27.0 (Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment for Faculty, Staff, and Students); S. DeRooy (12:48)

I'm here to present revisions to policies D.19 and C.27. We worked over the summer in 2024 to update our policies in accordance with new Title IX legislation that was due to be implemented in August of 2024. However, in July of 2024, RIT became embroiled in a lawsuit at a federal level with many other

states and universities across the country, which put a halt to our implementing the 2024 regulations. And then with the new presidency in January, the 2024 regulations went away completely, which means that we are still operating under the 2020 regulations. So the changes I'm here to present today have nothing to do with legal requirements, but more to do with aligning both policies with changes in our practice since 2020.

Starting with D.19. I believe you have the red line in front of you. We changed 'calendar days' to 'business days' throughout both policies. When we created C.27 back in 2020, we wanted to emphasize making the time periods as short as possible so that we could get through cases efficiently but what we've found is in a lot of areas where we're differentiating between how many days people have to respond, they need more time. We reintroduced the definition of non-consensual sexual contact. The definitions around sexual assault are very prescribed under Title IX, and so we followed that. We have found over the past several years that sometimes there are behaviors that are alleged that don't quite fit under those very prescribed definitions, so we're reintroducing non-consensual sexual contact to better reflect some of the behaviors that are reported to us.

We've made slight revisions under sexual exploitation to include more language related to AI-created materials that we sometimes hear about. We added language around the initial assessment of a complaint. This was really for transparency for students. There's a lot that goes into that initial assessment and what we find is that oftentimes people make assumptions that sending in the report is enough and it's going to mean that action is going to be taken. So we've really tried to be transparent about the initial assessment. We added language to the effect that after the investigation, additional charges may be added or removed because when we receive an initial complaint, we take that complaint at face value and log the allegations that we see might be a policy violation but then oftentimes during an investigation, different potential policy violations come up. Next, if a party is no longer enrolled or either party is non-responsive, RIT reserves the right to resolve the matter administratively. What we are finding is that sometimes a party is non-responsive from the very beginning. If the complainant wishes to have the formal process, we start with that. There might be times when Public Safety, or the Title IX office, or other offices outreach multiple times but do not receive a response. We won't take this approach until the investigation has crossed over to Student Conduct.. And at that point, we have a procedure to determine if an administrative review is a better alternative than trying to take it through the full hearing process. The procedural document is now posted on the Title IX web page.

Regarding C.27, many of the changes are the same as D.19. We make a statement about when there are multiple allegations that are outside the scope of C.27, we may bring all of those allegations together under one umbrella to be sorted out through the same investigation. In other words, if there's a complaint about sexual harassment and maybe there's a computer violation embedded in that, we will have one investigation and resolve it under the same process. We've added definitions again, similar to D.19 just for clarity and transparency. They include definitions of admission, amnesty, closing statement, impact statement, informal resolution, mutual resolution, party and preponderance of evidence. Also we've added language about the initial assessment of the complaint to increase transparency. We added language about the appeal option. And we refer appeals for student respondent cases to the student appeals process in D.18.2, the same referral as is mentioned in D.19.

S. Aldersley: You mentioned that RIT was part of a legal entanglement in 2024. Can you talk about?

S. DeRoy: I believe it was Kansas. There were three different groups that were suing to make sure that the 2024 regulations didn't go through because they included express prohibition against discrimination and harassment based on gender identity and sexual orientation, which these groups were opposed to. We became enjoined in that process because somebody affiliated with one of those groups had an affiliation with RIT. There were about 600 universities across the country and several states and RIT and other

universities in New York named in the overarching lawsuit. However, various laws in New York State grant us the authority and the ability to continue to protect based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

M. Ruhling: Regarding the Title IX grievance procedures, I'm looking at page 15 of the C.27 red line. That's all in red. Could you clarify, is that all new to this document?

S. DeRoy: No, that whole section was relocated from another part of the policy. Nothing in there is new.

S. Aldersley: You said that if either or both of the parties don't follow through in some way or other that you will resolve the matter administratively. Could you say how that might work and what would be an example of what the resolution would be?

S. DeRoy: Similarly to how cases are handled under C.6, where there's an investigation and then it goes to HR for review and they provide a full outcome notice to the parties. The same would hold true for Student Conduct. So we've already done the leg work, just as it would be if it were going to go through the hearing process. But now once Student Conduct receives that investigation and parties aren't enrolled or not participating or not answering, they have the opportunity to forgo a hearing and make a determination based on review of the materials in front of them. The procedure allows for multiple attempts at contacting the parties before they go that route. And for any party that continues to participate, they are asked if they are willing to go that route. So it's not a decision that's made before those factors are taken into consideration.

Motion to approve changes to Policies D.19 & C.27

Moved: D. Johnson

Seconded: M. Ruhling

Motion passed: 33:0:0

[Policy D19.0 and C27.0 Presentation](#)

[Policy D19.0 Document](#)

[Policy C27.0 Document](#)

Agenda Item No. 11: Research and Scholarship Update; R. Raffaele (1:02)

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. We are currently having the best sponsored research year in our history by a pretty fair margin. We're about 9 million ahead of last year, which was our record year, and the first time we ever broke a hundred million. Our proposal activity is also at an all-time high. And what's really remarkable is that with three months still to go, the value of proposals submitted is already a new record.

After the first round of executive orders there was a definite slowdown in both awards and requests for

proposals. But after the initial shock wore off and some of the lawsuits came in, we're starting to receive new federal awards. Shima Parsa in physics has won a new NSF career award, keeping our pretty amazing record over the last 10 years or so alive. We still have four pending, so I'm hoping for at least a couple more. Last week many of you probably attended our PI reception where we inaugurated another ten PIs into our millionaires club. And we also handed out 13 new seed funding awards from our most recent bootcamp. They are our millionaires of the future.

Our new research building is getting very close to having its certificate of occupancy (COO). It's going to have 18 research labs, about 800 square feet a piece. Half of them are equipped to be wet labs, but the entire building can be converted to wet labs because of how it's been designed. Three of the labs have been allocated to COS, two to Engineering, one to DCCIS and one to the new cognitive science PhD program. Which leaves 11 still up for grabs. They're actually being used for two things, recruitment and retention. Deans can put in requests for one of them either for a current faculty member in need of additional space, or some blue chip recruit that we're trying to attract. I'm working with the provost to come up with some criteria regarding how one goes about applying for those laboratories, and we hope to have that very soon. Although we'll get the COO this spring, we don't expect any of the labs to really be ready to go until next fall.

Now a little bit about the staffing challenges we've been having within Sponsored Research Services. In the last ten years, we've doubled the number of proposals, doubled the number of awards, the average proposal size has doubled, the number of proposals over a million dollars has doubled and the number of million dollar awards has doubled. Bigger proposals, bigger awards, equate to a lot more administrative time. Also, as many of you are painfully aware, compliance has gone up by orders of magnitude. And if that wasn't challenging enough in itself, we have not doubled our support staff. Instead, we've seen tremendous turnover over the last few years. This isn't true just to RIT, it's academia in general. The number of staff departures we've had in SRS since Covid has been astonishing. We've had 17 people depart since 2020 and even though we're replacing them, we can't catch up. It's been a challenge. We've been working hard to try to address it, but it comes with the territory. Often you have somebody getting poached by another organization, university, even industry, and it's difficult to replace them with somebody with the equivalent amount of experience. The good news is that within the last six months, we've brought in two new pre-people, one post-person, and a new admin. We've also hired a new intellectual property director and another support person there, and we currently have four open searches which are all moving forward, and which we hope to soon. So help is on the way.

Now about the executive orders and the continuing resolution, which looked like the best case scenario in the current environment. But it's a continuing resolution like none I have seen in my career. A continuing resolution is supposed to be flat funding, but this one was passed without going through the appropriations committee, and it contains a whole bunch of cuts. Most of the agencies that fund research at RIT did indeed receive flat funding but seven billion was cut from DOD, unfortunately the vast majority in their R&D programs and the other big cut was in NIST where unfortunately we do have a couple of large awards that I'm very nervous about. To date, we've only had one grant cancelled. We had another one put on pause but then with all of the legal stuff, it was reinitiated. And now we have a second one that's been put on pause. While I don't anticipate many of our grants being canceled, I would not be surprised if we see a few more that get canceled early. But my main message is keep calm.

I. Puchades: I appreciate the staffing issues. And I want to say from my perspective, you guys have been really responsive. But we have heard some discontent from our faculty in terms especially of negotiation of contracts and things like that. Can you speak to that a little bit?

R. Raffaele: One of the areas where we've been hit hardest is in post-award staffing. Those are pretty hard jobs to fill too because they require a lot of expertise and understanding of contracting and that sort

of thing. The good news is we have brought in a couple of post-award folks and I've seen an improvement in turnaround times and trying to keep up with the flow of new contracts, etc. But there have been some health issues within the division that have made it particularly challenging. Not that we weren't short-handed on the pre-award side, but we were even more challenged on the post-award side. The good news is I will be interviewing three candidates next week for another post-award position, so it is getting better. But please share with your colleagues that if they do have something that seems to be languishing where they've reached out several times without getting satisfaction, don't hesitate to let me know, and I will do whatever I can to get it unstuck and moving.

J. Hardin: I wonder if you could talk a little bit about the awards that were canceled. What can you tell us about how that happens and why you might expect a few more to be canceled?

R. Raffaele: Well, the one that was canceled, the PI is sitting here in the room and it was a big one. It was with the Department of State. The ones that are being targeted are ones that are perceived to be providing aid overseas or associated with diversity, equity and inclusion. Primarily but I can't say exclusively. Clyde's grant was associated with teaching entrepreneurship in Southeast Asia and was perceived by the Administration as being money the US shouldn't be spending. Truth be told, the federal government can either not fund an increment or pull back funding at any time. It's rare. The biggest example of this was about 10 or 15 years ago when NASA found out that they had a real financial problem and cancelled a billion dollars worth of awards, contracts that had been signed all over the nation. But it's rare. The other one that was put on pause was a workforce development award through the Department of Transportation which had some inclusive aspects to it. I feared it was going to be canceled, but then after the federal injunction, they had to turn it back on. Much of what they've been trying to do with regard to already funded programs is quite literally illegal. They're in breach of contract.

R. Zanibbi: Are you able to share some of the main reasons for all the attrition of the office. Why is it hard to hold on staff? Is it compensation or something else?

R. Raffaele: It's a variety of things. There's definitely been some poaching. Some of them are getting pretty nice promotions and pretty large increases in pay. Also being given the opportunity to work remotely, so they don't even have to move. We just lost somebody last week.

R. Zanibbi: Are we unable to make counter offers?

R. Raffaele: The administration has been extraordinarily supportive in trying to retain, reband and post positions. They know we have to stem the tide. It's been one of those spirals: you have five people, then one person leaves and you have four people doing the work of five, and then another person leaves and suddenly you've got three people doing the work of five and they're all getting burnt out. I've talked to sponsored research offices at a lot of other universities and we're not alone. We're trying to hire a director of compliance and there's hardly a university in the country that isn't looking for a person like that.

C. Hull: When you're putting in a grant, you can request a pre-award person to work with and sometimes you get the person you requested. But you don't get to request a specific post-award person. I'm wondering if you'd consider allowing such requests?

R. Raffaele: There is a little bit of a difference there. Some agencies have personalities and requirements that are unique to those agencies. And so you really do have to have somebody who knows NIH contracting versus somebody who might be attuned to DOD contracting. The reality is we're talking about three or four individuals here, so we don't have a lot to choose from. But it is a case where there are certain people who would probably have a hard time supporting you, depending on your source of funding.

S. Malachowsky: Could you talk a bit about your efforts in getting feedback from your stakeholders in terms of the office and the effects that you're having on faculty?

R. Raffaele: We talked about this at the University Council. We haven't put out any questionnaires or anything since then but it is our intent to do so. Right now the feedback is anecdotal, but there is a lot of it.

S. Aldersley: You distinguished chill from freeze. Jim Watters was talking about that on the stage in Ingle a few hours ago. Let's say that you continue to struggle with losing people and replacing them. Do you have confidence that if the freeze continues and you continue to struggle, your request for exceptions will be met positively?

R. Raffaele: I do. Everybody is aware of the challenges we've had over the last couple of years in regards to staffing and I've discussed it with everyone from the Board, and the incoming president, down to center directors. Everybody understands it's critical. So I'm confident we'll continue to have the positions and we'll continue to try to fill the positions. In a weird way, this DOGE thing is in some ways helping us: two of the candidates for our post-award positions are contracting officers from the federal government who've either been laid off or have had enough. A couple of the resumes I've looked at are mind-blowing in terms of the credentials these people have, and that under normal circumstances we wouldn't see.

N. Eddingsaas: Do you know the status of the proposed reduction to 15% for indirect costs? And does RIT have a plan in place if that does occur?

R. Raffaele: You just asked me what my full-time job is these days. We've been spending a lot of time in DC talking to all our elected representatives, both Republicans and Democrats, educating people as to what indirect costs are and what they aren't. I hope we're winning the battle. The representatives I've spoken to seem to understand and realize this isn't a profit on grants, that these are real costs that have to be covered one way or the other. You can either do it through a direct process or an indirect process. An indirect process was put in place to be more efficient and to save the government money. The retroactive stuff, I don't fear that. That's just impossible. It would bankrupt hundreds of universities and medical centers. When they tried to impose the original 15% cap on NIH indirects, it was going to be done retroactively. The president was talking to some of his colleagues at Michigan, and it was going to cost them \$300 million. Even Michigan would have a hard time swallowing a \$300 million shortfall. So I don't think that will happen. Now they could go to a thing where they're like, for this program it's going to be 15%, and foundations only give you 10%. But there the budgets are completely fungible and you can use the money to cover whatever the costs are. They're not itemized the way that we do with most federal grants. So if they did something like that, basically we would have to change the way in which we budget projects completely. These are real costs. They've got to get covered. It would be horrible from an efficiency and from a taxpayer point of view. We might see some of these sorts of things, but the hue and cry has been overwhelming. I get the feeling the Administration will just move on to their next thing and it probably won't come to pass, but who's to say.

G. Tsouri: Do you have any advice for a project that's just starting? I'm the PI on a DOD grant that was fully contracted through the IRB process and everything. It starts in May and I have PhD students lined up. Should I warn them? Should I tell them to look for other options in case this falls apart?

R. Raffaele: This comes down to your comfort level and the comfort level of your students because I can't say in any definitive way what's going to happen. I know how I would proceed. Having a signed contract with a federal sponsor is pretty sacrosanct, once the money is obligated. So if you're talking about a contracted project, for which the money is obligated, I think you can feel pretty secure that you

can spend that money and that the university is going to get reimbursed. Now, if it's incrementally funded, I would be more nervous today than I was a year ago about future increments, which would of course affect your students. I always tried to have a portfolio approach to funding my students. I never felt comfortable even when I had a five-year grant. I always wanted to have options because I'd hate to ever be found short. But I would continue to take on these students and continue doing your research. But specifically, once you've accepted that grant, you've got to deliver.

C. Hull: You talked about some of your applicants who used to be federal contractors. Are you still taking applications and could some of these positions be fully remote and done by somebody in Washington DC who for example, used to work for the federal government?

R. Raffaele: They are open, and people can still apply. So far we've not accepted anybody who is fully remote. We are a student-facing, a faculty-facing university, and I see tremendous benefit in having people who are able to interact with their colleagues face to face. That being said, I've mellowed considerably since Covid. I was one of those folks who thought being remote wouldn't work. And then Covid showed me how wrong I was. During the first year of Covid, we submitted more proposals than we had ever done in our history. And by and large we were able to do much more than I ever thought we could do via Zoom. So could you do it remotely? Philosophically, yes. Do I want to do it remotely? I would say no, but that's just me.

[Research and Scholarship Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 12: Expand letters of support for NTT promotion candidates (revision to change approved in AY 2023/24); A. McGowan (1:32)

I'm here on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee and I have two slides. Last April, this body approved additional language in E.6 to allow for lecturers seeking promotion to provide names to the chair of the promotion committee of faculty with whom they most closely interacted and from whom letters would not otherwise be solicited. Subsequently, we received a request from the president and provost to insert three words. There were no changes other than that to the language. It was intended as a cap on the number of such inputs. The FAC had a discussion and we added 'up to three' because we didn't think a candidate should be required to list exactly three. The amended language is as follows: *Additionally, the candidate (lecturer) may provide, as a section in their portfolio, a list of up to three faculty members (of any regular faculty rank). This may include (but is not limited to) coordinators of multi-section courses, co-instructors, or any faculty mentor who is not included in the solicitation above. If provided by the candidate, the Chair of the Promotion Committee shall solicit feedback in the same manner as described above.* In the language that passed last April, the candidate for promotion was given the ability to produce a list of other faculty who were not necessarily senior in rank but with whom they had worked closely, for example, course coordinators or co-instructors. It was believed that those were the people who could best evaluate the teaching of the candidate. We didn't put a cap on it. There was a requested cap and we felt it would be easy to create a list of up to three individuals who could provide good feedback on their teaching.

M. Laver: When one is looking at a tenure or promotion package, we're not supposed to put them side by side, but we do. It's unavoidable. It's human nature to do so. And so one package you see has three letters.

And you think, wow, the people in this department really respect this person's scholarship and another one has none because it's "up to three". And so then I think the human intuition is to say, wow, boy, what's going on here? So I mean, by saying up to three rather than requiring a number, you're leaving that open to human judgment. And I don't know that that's a great thing.

P. David: I'd like to piggyback on that point. It's somewhat unfair to the candidate if only one letter comes in.

A. McGowan: To be clear these letters are solicited by the chair of the promotion committee. The normal solicitation up to this point goes out to all faculty in the unit exceeding the rank of the candidate. So it is not comparing zero to three, it is comparing, for example, 27 to 29.

P. David: That's a fair point but a lot of people don't write letters at all.

A. McGowan: I have plenty of backup slides with the things that we observed, which is quite often letters are blank or, like in our college, it's a web form and people don't fill it out. Or people don't know who they're reviewing or they call them by the wrong name, any number of things, and that was the motivation for allowing people who work closely with the candidate to provide input.

S. Johnson: I agree with 'up to three' because if it says 'a list of three', then it requires three. So I wouldn't be able to apply for promotion if I couldn't find those three people. What happens if I don't have any co-instructors? If I don't teach any multi-section courses or if I don't have a mentor, things of that nature. Up to three means I don't have to have any, but I could have three, on top of the ones that already come in.

J. Lanza fame: I agree with Scott. In this case, not everybody has someone who's not already on the list of recommenders in the department. Especially if you're going from a lecturer to senior lecturer, maybe everyone in your department is of the same rank or higher, in which case everyone in your department or school is already writing a letter and you don't have anyone from a different department with whom you co-taught or otherwise interacted. It's not like you're soliciting letters from strangers to look at your research portfolio.

J. Hardin: Is there a consensus amongst lecturers or feedback from lecturers regarding this?

A. McGowan: I would say that was part of our process last academic year.

S. Johnson: I can give an example. When I went up for promotion to senior lecturer, I co-taught several classes with another lecturer. But since we were the same rank, they were not allowed to give a recommendation and speak on my behalf.

D. Olles: Changing the language in this way gives the lectures more flexibility with respect to who can be solicited to write letters. When I went up for principal, there were only two others that were principal. So there are a lot of limitations there. This opens up a lot more opportunities. So I would say this is positive.

C. Hull: When I went up for tenure, I had to write a teaching statement and subsequently the chair of the tenure committee contacted me asking about my teaching philosophy. At that time I understood him to be saying I needed to write an entirely different document about my teaching and not the previous one I had submitted. I wanted tenure, so I did it. It turned out he'd forgotten the name of the document and hadn't looked to see if I'd already turned it in. So where I'm going with this is if I see I have to have a list of three, I'm thinking I have to get three. But if it says up to three, that underscores the idea that this is an optional thing and if I don't have three, that's OK. Up to three makes it much more clear.

H. Ghazle: The Senate has made the decision to stay away from using the word 'may', and use 'shall', instead.

R. Zanibbi: I think 'shall' is usually understood as a command.

Motion to approve the revised language.

Motion approved 30:0:1

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[Policy E06.0 Document](#)

Agenda Item No. 13: New Business; A. Newman (1:44)

K. Barone: Some faculty are concerned that the language in an email that came from the provost this weekend regarding the early retirement proposition is a little bit vague and Dr. David has agreed to comment on that for us.

P. David: The current default that is available to faculty is a phased retirement plan over three years. The challenge with that is if we have a tenured faculty person, we have to wait for three years before we can use that tenured position. Given the strategic plan that's coming up, we thought we will offer an additional option that gives faculty the chance to just take one year and that gives us the freedom to then repurpose some of these positions for new areas. That is the intent.

M. Ruhling: I think the concern is we haven't seen the language in the strategic plan that would lead us to understand why this is being offered.

P. David: The strategic plan is still evolving. They did not identify anything there.

M. Ruhling: I think the concern is that the Administration is making statements about a strategic plan that we haven't even seen yet and isn't finished yet.

S. Aldersley: When Dr. Watters talked about this this morning, if I remember correctly, he mentioned the expectation that just 20 faculty would take advantage of this.

P. David: That's based on the percentage that has happened at other places. It's just a ballpark estimate

I. Puchades: I think the deadline to take advantage of this is April 15th. But without knowing the strategic plan, how can we expect faculty to actually make a decision on whether they want to retire without knowing if their position is going to be affected. It seems a little bit disconnected.

P. David: I don't have a good answer for that. The date has to be that because legally we had to backtrack from July 1st.

J. Capps: Is the assumption that if someone takes this offer, their line could go anywhere in the institute? It wouldn't necessarily stay with the college.

P. David: Correct, the whole idea of this plan is to create flexibility.

J. Hardin: What I heard in some of my colleagues' emails is a concern about how they are being valued, after what they have brought to the institution over a lifetime. I wonder if you could speak to that. And again, I think part of the question is we don't know where the values are going in the strategic plan. There's a lot of unknowns. So could you speak to the issue of morale and the sense that people have dedicated their careers here and that they're not being valued?

P. David: Yes. It is a difficult time and you make a very fair point. I've thought a lot about this, and talked with various folks about it. The timing is extremely bad, but this has been in the works for some time. To do something like this takes a lot of effort. I started this somewhere back in September, October of last year, and it's taken this long to get to a point where we could finally get the lawyers to agree and to issue the letter. I do understand the sentiment but at the same time, this is an option. No one's forcing anyone to do it. There are a few people who actually like it and so it was a trade off.

R. Zanibbi: *Inaudible*

P. David: Unfortunately we don't have the plan right now. But I would say at some point, as a community, my hope is that I can instill trust. The intent is not to take anything away from a unit in a mean-spirited kind of way. But to see what is good for the institution. What I've noticed, not just at this meeting, but over the last year and a half, we have to work on trust. People have good intentions. Maybe in the past that wasn't the case and trust has been eroded and I can't guarantee that I can always come through. But the intent is to take more of a relational approach and say, look, here's what I'm dealing with. Help me solve this problem.

Agenda Item No. 14: Adjournment; A. Newman (1:53)

Attendance 3/20/2025

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		Lee, James	ALT CET Senator	X
Barone, Keri	Treasurer/CLA Senator	X	Liu, Manlu	SCB Senator	
Boedo, Stephen	ALT KGC OE 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	
Chiavaroli, Julius	ALT GIS Senator		Olles, Deana	COS Senator	X
Chung, Sorim	SCB Senator	X	Olson, Rob	ALT GCCIS Senator	
Cody, Jeremy	COS Senator		O'Neil, Jennifer	ALT CET Senator	
Coppenbarger, Matthew	COS Senator	X	Osgood, Robert	ALT CHST Senator	
Crawford, Denton	CAD Senator		Padmanabhan, Poornima	KGC OE Senator	
Cromer, Michael	ALT COS Senator	X	Puchades, Ivan	KGC OE Senator	X
Cui, Feng	ALT COS Senator		Ray, Amit	CLA Senator	X
David, Prabu	Provost	X	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	Georgeanne Hogan	X
Ghazle, Hamad	Operations Officer/CHST Senator	X	Student Government Rep	Joshua Anderson	X
Ghoneim, Hany	ALT KGCoe Senator	X	Sweeney, Kevin	ALT SCB Senator	
Hardin, Jessica	ALT CLA Senator	X	Thomas, Bolaji	CHST Senator	Excused
Hartpence, Bruce	ALT GCCIS Senator		Tobin, Karen	NTID Senator	X
Hazelwood, David	NTID Senator		Tsouri, Gill	KGCoe Senator	X
Hull, Clyde	ALT SCB Senator	X	Van Aardt, Jan	ALT COS Senator	
Jadamba, Basca	COS Senator	X	Warp, Melissa	ALT CAD Senator	
Johnson, Dan	CET Senator	X	Weeden, Elissa	GCCIS Senator	X
Johnson, Scott	GCCIS Senator	X	White, Phil	ALT GCCIS Senator	
Kray, Christine	CLA Senator		Williams, Eric	GIS Senator	
Krutz, Daniel	ALT GCCIS Senator		Worrell, Tracy	ALT CLA Senator	
Kuhl, Michael	KGCoe Senator		Zanibbi, Richard	GCCIS Senator	X
Kwasinski, Andres	ALT KGCoe Senator	X	Zlochower, Yosef	COS Senator	

Interpreters: Nicole Crouse-Dickerson and Holly Jentsch

Student Assistant: Ben Bui

Presenters: Clyde Hull, Prabu David, Stacy DeRooy, Ryne Raffaele and Aaron McGowan