Faculty Senate Minutes of Meeting

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

Thursday, October 23, 2025   12:15 - 1:50 PM   Slaughter Hall 2220-2240

Attendance: See Below

Agenda Item No. 1: Call to Order; R. Zanibbi (12:16)
Agenda Item No. 2: Approval of Agenda; R. Zanibbi (12:16)
Agenda approved by acclamation

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

There are two sets of minutes to approve this week, for the 9/25 and 10/2 meetings. There were very minor wording edits to both sets of drafts that you received. However, I need to state that for the first time in the almost three years I've been doing this, one senator requested that I delete something they had said, which I agreed to do and so it did not show up in the draft minutes.

I. Puchades: I am a little troubled by the deletion. Can you elaborate?

S. Aldersley: I would rather not.

I. Puchades: I am even more troubled.

Senator ?: Can we know if the stricken comments were personal related or was it something related to the discussion?

S. Aldersley: I am going to defer to the chair to further elaborate to the extent that he would like to,

R. Zanibbi: A senator made a comment about previous administrative actions from one of the offices that oversees conflict and when we spoke to them, they said that since it didn't pertain to anyone currently at the institution, they requested that it be removed. So for the record, this was not something that the FSEC decided to remove, but rather the person who said it.

Motion to approve the minutes of 9/25
Approved: 27/2/3

Motion to approve the minutes of 10/2
Approved by acclamation

September 25, 2025 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item No. 4: Executive Committee Report; R. Zanibbi (12:22)

R. Zanibbi: It was suggested that the chair's report be made available in written form, especially if there are links, I've done that and it is available in the Google drive. Of course, things may come up during the report that aren't in these notes so you would need to check the minutes afterwards to get the whole story. At the very top you'll see that there are some resources for senators. What you're seeing here are links to the FS homepage which I'll post every meeting: the orientation slides; the B.2 and B.5 policy links which govern both how we as a body run and how policies are revised; links to minutes and materials, including agendas from past meetings. So that's where you'll want to check if you're looking for past stuff. The Roberts Rules cheat sheet we're using is there. For the policies themselves, the first link shown on the policy board is a spreadsheet that shows the status and history of the policies that we're working on or have been recently completed. The RIT governance policy library and then other RIT policies like Administrative, Student and college policies that are available through the RIT webpages. Then there's a page with the charges assigned to standing committees. And finally reports from last academic year and the last six academic years. If for some reason you need to check a report from a previous committee, whether it's the one you're serving on or one that was working on something related.

Some quick announcements:

1. The Center for Teaching and Learning has a questionnaire out that closes tomorrow. It takes less than 10 minutes to complete. Neil Hare and his organization want information to find out whether the services they're offering and the technologies we use for instruction are helpful.

2. The Division of Access, Engagement and Success is holding an event in Ingle tomorrow 'Together RIT', that's going to take place from 10:00 to 4:00. The focus this year is on rank and socioeconomic diversity.

3. One of the things that was shared at the recent Board of Trustees meeting is that RIT's ability to receive Title IV student aid funds, which amount to over a hundred million dollars on an annual basis, is contingent on Middle States accreditation. The self report is out and Chris Licata would like your feedback by the 27th. For example, if you're interested in governance, you might look at section seven. If you're doing something in instructional design, you might look at section three.

B. Thomas: Where do we send feedback to?

R. Zanibbi: Because it's private to the institution, you have to read the document online, and there is a feedback link.

L. Villasmil: Who has access? Only Senators or can we forward the document to our constituents?

R. Zanibbi: It is definitely all faculty. I don't know if students or staff have access as well.

C. Licata: Staff do.

C. Hull: I didn't look at every line, but for the record, I couldn't find anything to complain about, I'm sorry.

R. Zanibbi: The election for Senate Communications Officer will occur during today's meeting. Stacey Davis has sent out the link for you to vote and the materials for Heidi and Michael are in an email you received and in the Google Drive.

I've shared the Senate policy board and charges with Senators, chairs, deans, the provost, the president, the chair of the board of trustees and staff council and student government. I hope it will lead to more conversations and fewer emails where people are saying, 'was this policy updated? when was it updated? by whom?' Please feel free to share it.

The FSEC started its college tour with a visit to the College of Science. We're going to be at GCCIS soon and we plan to get to every college at least once. The purpose is to talk to faculty and let them know what Senate is doing..

This Saturday, there will be an all-day multi-institution faculty senate retreat which members of the FSEC have been helping to organize. Between 40 and 50 people who work in faculty governance from 14 schools have indicated they will attend. The idea is to do some reflective exercises and discussion about faculty governance and strategies moving forward.

Finally, the two recent changes to B2, renaming the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee and the Resource Allocation and Budget committee, are now with President Sanders for final approval. Otherwise, the President has suggested that he and Bobby Colon meet with the Senate task force to discuss proposed changes to Policy E2, Principles of Academic Freedom. If you were on Senate last spring, you might remember we discussed putting the Chicago Statement into E2. Subsequently, there were some proposed changes from Legal Affairs. We're now trying to push the conversation forward. Finally, policy C0.0. Because it's contentious, we are going to send out an email to collect comments, questions and concerns related to the proposed changes. We'll then meet with Erica Duthiers and share the feedback in advance of her returning to Senate with the hope of being able to complete the vote before the policy is returned to University Council. For context, if you check the specific language of B5, it stipulates that all the governance bodies do not need to vote on a policy before it's approved and modified by the body that owns it, but that it simply needs to be presented for input. So the fact that Erica is willing to come back is I think a sign that governance is working. She's doing this voluntarily and technically could just go to University Counsel to ask for action.

B. Thomas: Can you provide the voting results for the changes to B2?

R. Zanibbi: If you go to the policy board, you can see that for the change of DEI to ESA, it was 311 in favor against 58, so 84% in favor. For the change from RABC to BPC, it was 361 to 8, so 98% in favor.

S. Aldersley: Pertaining to C0.0, I have drafted an additional Section N for that policy, which I plan to give to Erica for her consideration to include in the policy. The title of the section is 'Transparency' and it goes to protections for faculty who are being investigated for whatever reason. So at some point when we've deliberated a little further on the executive committee, I will send it out to the Senate for your information.

T. Brown: When Richard mentioned going to the Senate website for the minutes, I want to point out the minutes only go back to 2021 on that site. So if you want anything older you are going to have to go to what is now called the 'repository'. Many of you may be familiar with the digital archives, but the library has now moved all of those documents from the archives to the repository.

A. McLaren: We have to report to our college during all college meetings on the Senate and it'd be great to have something that's really concrete and short.

R. Zanibbi: The reason that it's in this form is that that gives the history, the current status is always the first. You should be able to report just the top line of what's there. It's in reverse chronological order.

S. Aldersley: Regarding the ECFS intention to visit each college, Joe and I were at a COS faculty meeting a couple of days ago. I would estimate there were 50 or 60 faculty there. I thought it was a great meeting. There were a lot of questions that we were able to field, I hope satisfactorily. I think these meetings are

very useful, and to the extent that you can encourage your faculty to attend the one in your college, I think that would be very constructive.

J. Chiavaroli: Do the deans and associate deans tend to come to those meetings?

S. Aldersley: In the past, it's been mixed. At the COS meeting there were no college-level administration people there.

H. Ghazle: There's a difference between faculty meetings and all college meetings. Sometimes when we go to a college, it's an all college meeting with the dean, the associate dean, the faculty and the staff. Faculty meetings are faculty only though they may invite the dean or others.

J. Chiavaroli: So it's up to the college which one they invite you to?

H. Ghazle: Yes, you decide.

C. Hull: Saunders has a policy now that the faculty do have their own governance meetings. It seems logical that the FSEC would go to the faculty meeting that's run by faculty and not to the dean's meeting.

R. Zanibbi: We've said we would prefer to attend the faculty meetings where possible, but we can't require that.

Agenda Item No. 5: Staff Council Update; Amanda Hughes (N/A)

No report

Agenda Item No. 6: Student Government Update; Igor Polotai (12:40)

First of all, thank you to everyone who participated in Brick City Weekend. We had several sold out events. I want to give a quick update on one issue we've been seeing around homework being due around fall break. I'd like to remind you of policy D0.5.1.C, which states that no homework can be required over breaks or any weekends attached to them. I ask that all senators take a moment to reach out to your constituents and explain the policy and that, when homework is given over breaks and weekends attached to breaks, it doesn't give students the time to enjoy the break.

C. Sanders: Since there are so many policies that we have to follow, can I ask that SG send a reminder to faculty that no homework is to be given during breaks?

Igor: It's not easy for SG to contact faculty. I think it's the responsibility of faculty to be aware of and follow the policy.

H. Ghazle: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. In terms of process I recommend that SG reach out to the office of Academic Affairs because they are able to connect with the faculty to ensure there's collaboration and coordination of effort.

R. Zanibbi: LaVerne, who would be the right person for the students to contact in Academic Affairs?

L. McQuiller: Typically that would come from the Provost, so I would recommend that as a starting point but please feel free to connect me into that.

S. Chung: How does the flex plan work in the context of this policy?

K. Torres: The best practice would be to follow what your flex plan says. So if you were giving every student with a flex plan an additional two days beyond the assignment deadline, we would encourage you to maintain that. So if the deadline is on Friday and then there's fall break on Monday and Tuesday, so there's no homework to be given there, we would ask for you to consider two days beyond the break.

Agenda Item No. 7: General Education Revisions; L. Hall, E. Hane and L. Bradley (12:46)

L. Hall: I'm the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Liberal Arts. Elizabeth Hane who is the Faculty Associate for General Education and Leah Bradley our assessment guru are here with me to provide an update on the activities and recommendations of the General Education Revision Task Force.

E. Hane: Our current framework dates from 2010 though it was revised in 2012 and 2014. The task force was put together about 18 months ago to begin the process of making recommendations as to how we might improve, update and modernize the GE framework. In the beginning we said, 'do we want to tear the house down'? Or do we want to make small changes? The feedback on that question was very mixed. Some stakeholders really wanted bold and innovative changes. However, since there are significant resource constraints facing all of higher education at the moment, the recommendations in the end have had to balance the ambitious vision that many people have with practical feasibility.

L. Hall: The idea is to lay the groundwork for potential changes in the future and maybe do this in stages. There are six recommendations in all. #1 is to reduce the number of student learning outcomes. We currently have too many. There's a focus on critical thinking and communication and each of those domains have four learning outcomes. They're overlapping and some of them are redundant, so there's an opportunity there to collapse them and make them more cohesive. We also recommend eliminating the requirement that all GE courses contain both communication and critical thinking. I think some courses focus more on one or the other. So that recommendation really doesn't need to still be there and depending on how the outcomes get revised, it may not be appropriate. The recommendation is that a small working group develop the initial set of outcomes and revise the ones we currently have. Recommendation #2 is to create a new first year course that is focused on technology's impact on society, integrating AI, digital literacy and ethics. I think we all recognize that our students struggle especially with digital literacy. How do you provide evidence for things? How do you know your evidence is correct? And then the ethical implications around the use of AI, particularly in writing and creative work. And so the recommendation is to designate a faculty group to develop the course coordinated with first year writing.
I should add that all our recommendations are the result of not just campus-wide feedback, but also research. We went to a number of GE conferences. We looked at a lot of research data in GE pedagogy, as well as models at other institutions. All these recommendations are intended to address various existing friction points within the curriculum. The goal with this first-year course is not to just add another course to the curriculum. It's really to address a couple of key concerns that we've heard over and over again. One is first to second year retention, which is a problem RIT is struggling with. And second, we really don't have a cohesive first-year experience for students. They have no opportunity to really feel like they're part of an intellectual community. They just get dropped into random GE courses and the

only common course they take is first year writing. All of the major GE associations identify a first year seminar or first year course of some kind as a best practice across the board.

E. Hane: It's been studied and shown through all kinds of educational research to have an impact on student retention after the first year. In order to add a course, you have to juggle the curriculum to remove something. In order to do this, we would need to reduce the perspectives requirements. For those of you who are familiar with our general education framework, students take a series of perspectives, global, ethical, artistic, social, plus some GE requirements in science and in math. Ihe idea would be to reduce these requirements in order to accommodate this new first year requirement. There's a couple of ways we could do this. The process of reviewing the learning outcomes that are associated with the GE framework could potentially lead us to where they might be able to be combined. Alternatively, we could give the first year course perspective status depending on what the topics are. Or we could allow one course to cover two perspectives. The idea would be that the task force would investigate these various options in conjunction with the changes to the learning outcomes in order to come up with the best possible solution.

L. Hall: A third recommendation is to streamline immersions. If you go to our immersion and minor webpage, you see a huge list of options. A lot of immersions have very low enrollments and a lot of them overlap. There are a couple examples where you can take three courses and fulfill multiple immersions at the same time, which of course we don't let students count, but there's been an expansion over many years, and so the goal would be to create a better way for students to navigate what immersions are available. We also need to do a better job of helping students navigate immersions. If students are really interested in, for example, CAD concepts, technology, art, and design, we have a number of immersions that will help them, but there's no way to find those right now. You just have to guess at what the content is. We also recommend creating experiential shell immersions for study abroad and project-based learning like the vertically integrated projects model. The goal here is to try to use immersions to incentivize the kinds of activities that we want students to be doing in the first place, which is getting them out into the world, getting them into project-based work. Instead of sort of forcing them into whatever box faculty think is important, giving them an opportunity for more expansive kinds of opportunities. Since anyone can propose an immersion at any time, and this is one of the areas we identified as low hanging fruit, we worked with the general education committee and we'll be putting forward two immersion shells for consideration.

E. Hane: This year we'll be working with the colleges that offer most of our immersions, COLA, COS and CAD, to see if they can remove any of their low enrolled immersions. Or, if they have a very low enrolled immersion, maybe there's a better way to package or market it so students can see what the value is. The other idea is to go through the list of immersions and group them so students can better identify them as belonging to a group. For example, if I'm interested in technology or design, here's some that might correspond to my interest.

L. Hall: The fifth recommendation comes from a nationwide trend that we saw at a number of GE conferences, which is to rename the curriculum to brand and market general education and demonstrate its value. Right now, general education might be the least motivating phrase that a student could think about when it comes to the kinds of curriculum that they'll be taking. Boston University, for example, terms their general education "The Hub." At Purdue it's called "Cornerstone". There's a lot of ways we can signal the centrality of this education to students, and address the friction point we identified early on in the process that a lot of students just aren't connecting the value of what they are doing in the general education classroom in the context of their broader RIT experience. So we're hoping that even just a basic branding overhaul might be helpful. This would require working with Marketing, Enrollment Management, Leadership, the campus community and the strategic planning committee. Recommendation #6 is to ensure transparency and clarity to improve the student experience. We already

mentioned the problem that our immersions are currently just a big list. But we also need better clarity in developing brochures for admissions officers and student-accessible website support for advisors. One of the things we hear from students a lot is that GE courses are just boxes they have to check off on their way to get a degree. Obviously what we're really hoping for is that students think about their general education as both complementary and supplemental to their program-based work. The goal is to create more holistic students, better critical thinkers, better communicators. But when we have students who are looking at their general education coursework as just boxes to check off, we really lose a lot of the value that the curriculum should be providing. We found from many conversations with stakeholders that sometimes program directors and chairs of other programs talk about general education in demeaning terms. So part of this marketing and branding effort would be working with program directors, chairs and other leaders in the academic community to better showcase the value that general education brings to their programs, and how it amplifies the power of their program.

E. Hane: Please do not describe general education to your advisees as something to get out of the way!

L. Hall: We ended with a series of additional recommendations, stemming from things that came up in conversations we had at conferences and just in general. These tend to be more resource intensive, so we put these under additional recommendations because we want people to consider them, but they would depend on whether there's going to be resources to build them out. One thing we heard over and over again when we met with stakeholders, almost without exception, was what about RIT 365? It's not part of the general education curriculum. It's not under Academic Affairs, but students often think about it as part of the GE curriculum because it's a required class and they have to take it their first year. We did a lot of digging. We met with the RIT 365 folks. We had a lot of conversations. That program is very resource intensive. We got very mixed results in terms of its impact on students. And many students see it as another sort of not terribly coherent set of things that they have to do their first year that aren't really connected to broader kinds of initiatives. If we're thinking about creating a coherent first year course in combination with University Writing, there is an opportunity here to think about how to incorporate the principles of RIT 365, and use some of the resources that it is currently using. A second thing we see at a lot of other institutions is to centralize GE oversight via an office or director model. Our GE curriculum is currently highly decentralized. Faculty propose a course, it goes through the GEC who check that it fits the framework and then we approve it. There's no broader curricular strategy. Elizabeth is currently a faculty fellow, and she does a lot of the logistical stuff that needs to happen, including transfer credit articulations and many of the other advising things that have to happen. But there's no central director or office that could work across colleges to encourage interdisciplinarity, or co-teaching models or other kinds of really neat opportunities. Right now everyone's operating in silos and shooting courses up through the process. Another best practice that we heard about a lot was adding an integrative capstone that could connect the GE and students' major or program coursework.

This had a lot of support, but we did hear from a couple of the deans that they fear adding something in the last year when students need to take co-ops and things like that. There's a couple models that do work, at Ohio State for example. But one opportunity we did point out is that since we're moving to an Adobe creative campus, we might be able to pilot some kind of portfolio model that could serve as an integrative capstone.

There was a lot of interest in developing some kind of badging and credentialing for GE courses, or creating one credit stackable courses for flexible skill development. So pulling out and making more visible the kinds of skills that you get in these general education courses. We really like this idea. The concern the task force had was that it tends to be more resource intensive. You need some sort of centralized office or director model to help people see how the pieces fit together. This also goes further than general education. If you have badging and credentialing, it doesn't make sense for it to only apply to general education courses. You'd want to have some campus-wide system to do that and the universities that have badging and microcredentialing very often have an app or some kind of centralized way allowing students to move through. Right now we don't have that kind of infrastructure. So we

weren't sure at this point how to move back forward. The next step now that we have these recommendations is to kick it back to faculty working groups. Faculty would self-nominate and the Provost, working in conjunction with the ICC and the GEC, would form working groups which can then take these recommendations and move them forward. The task force feel that we aren't large enough to do the kind of work that is needed at this stage, but we also thought it was important to move back to the faculty and involve them in the curricular development piece.

L. Villasmil: Regarding recommendation #1. I don't know who is going to be the consumer of this. I support all of it, but when I read "reduce", I fear reducing standards. So why don't we say something like give priority to essential learning outcomes or focus general education on core competencies. Change the emphasis instead of reducing. And the same goes for Recommendation #5. Let's give it another name and that's it. So what about 'reframe' or 'redesign'? Re-branding is fine, but we are doing that because we are improving it. The last thing is that you mentioned the word 'portfolio'. I completely support that. I teach a wind power course and there is a lot of public policy involved. I work with a professor in COLA and we put a project together. So at the end of the semester we have a debate and we bring ethics into it and I always ask my students 'what kind of courses are you taking?' And they tell me 'History of rock and roll'. I encourage them to take ethics and philosophy that are completely related to engineering. Can you do a pilot?

A. Adrion: Thank you for a really informative presentation. How many perspectives classes are students required to take in GE now and how do classes get determined as perspective courses'

E. Hane: The State has different requirements for a BFA versus a BS degree. For a BS degree, there are seven categories and eight courses. There's artistic, global, social, ethical, two science courses and a math category. In terms of how they're determined, they are proposed by faculty members who are usually teaching the course. It goes through their college curriculum committee. And then it comes to the general education committee, which is a subcommittee of ICC. The GEC has representatives from all over the university. We have to follow the State's guidelines but then we also have our own guidelines where we determine whether a course fits our definition and the learning outcomes associated with that particular perspective.

A. Adrion: So when I am proposing a course, is there something on the form to say this is a perspectives class?

L. Hall: Yes. You choose general education elective and then you drill down into perspectives. And if you choose perspectives, there's a whole suite of course learning outcomes that you have to comport with. You scroll all the way down to the bottom of the forum and it's Appendix A.

K. Barone: I have a question from a constituent. Can you talk a little bit about the process from here on? Will the faculty groups working on implementation share their work with the faculty at large and then incorporate suggestions?

L. Hall: Yes. We would expect the faculty working groups to be highly collaborative, to work closely with faculty, especially in the most affected colleges. The other piece of this is that at the end of the day whatever changes we propose have to be approved by Senate. If the faculty working groups propose changes to the framework, they would go first to the GEC and ICC and then to the Senate.

C. Hull: With regard to Recommendation #1, I think we should be reducing the non-major requirements as much as possible to help people actually get through the requirements for their majors. On Recommendation #2, first year required courses. A lot of elite schools, the University of Chicago, for example, do that so maybe we can look at how they market them. On Recommendation #3, I think

eliminating the number of required classes in a major that count towards different perspectives would help, and make it easier for us to do these things with existing resources. It doesn't cost anything to say, for example to Business, 'you can have four instead of two perspectives in your required curriculum' when we teach those classes already. Two more things, actually three, sorry. It's really hard to find classes in the system right now for students. It's mind bogglingly hard. I was trying to help somebody find an elective and we couldn't find it even though I knew it was there.

L. Hall: Part of the reason for doing this now is that we actually have this opportunity with the curriculum management system, CourseLeaf, coming on board, that will allow us to tag GE courses and hopefully make it much easier for students to see the connections between different courses and actually find them. We also have Middle States accreditation and the strategic framework that's being developed. So there were a number of really key strategic moments that made now the time to do this. CourseLeaf will be a huge improvement given the fact that our course outline form is over ten pages now. It will be really helpful to have an actual course management system to do this work

E. Hane: I'll address just the very beginning of your points, which is reducing the requirements. And then the question about integrating business into it. Both of those are governed by NYSED which dictates how many credits are required in general education for a BS degree. We cannot change that. It is 50% of the degree here. So the overall number of credits can't be changed although within that, there is some flexibility.

[General Education Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 8: Ombuds Office; J. Johnston (1:13)

J. Johnston: We try to present in front of all the governance groups every year, primarily for new members. But just also remind you that we're here. And the reason we do that is that I can guarantee that one of you will either come to see us or refer someone to come see us probably in the next two weeks. This is my ninth year in the Ombuds office. We also have Ashley Meyer, and Tammy Brongo, who manages the office. Ashley is a Coda so if you or anyone you are referring are deaf or hard of hearing, you can meet with Ashley without having to work with an interpreter.
We're based on four principles that make this very unique to the institution. Probably the number one is that we are confidential. So when you come to see us about an issue and you want to know what your options are or what your rights are, you know that we're not going to share that with anyone, with the only exception being someone is at risk of physical harm. We are the only non-mandated reporters for RIT employees on the campus. We're neutral. So when we're with you, we're helping you figure out what's best for you, not what's best for RIT and not what's best for the people that you're having a problem with. We help you try to figure out what you would like to do and support you with regard to it. We're independent. We report directly to Dr. Sanders. He does not know who comes and sees us. And we are informal. No one can ever be required to meet with an Ombuds. It's always voluntary. You can come see us if you feel like things are unfair, or you don't know how to resolve something, or you're trying to help with communication. Facilitating conversations is our bread and butter, it's what we do. So if you're ever having an issue with a student, you're feeling like you're not able to connect, we'd be happy to help try to facilitate the conversation. Ashley and I read policies every day. But we are not an office of notice. This is something that's been kind of trendy. We have a number of faculty coming to our office indicating they would like us to serve notice to a dean or another higher level administrator in regards to a concern they are having. We can help facilitate so that they can do that. We can even provide anonymous information to a dean's office, but we're not putting the institution on notice. It's completely informal. If you are upset with a colleague and you want your dean's office or your department head to know but

you want that to be anonymous, you can come through us. But if you're trying to make sure that RIT is aware of something significant, maybe something that's at the level of discrimination or harassment, if you want RIT to take action, you have to make a formal complaint. We can assist you with that, but we can't do those things anonymously.

Other than that, last year over 600 unique complaints came into the office. We probably worked with more than 900 people. There's a couple of people in this room I'll be seeing later this week. We do group presentations. We just did a presentation on styles of navigating conflict for GCCIS. We do a lot of policy review. We'll be giving feedback on the academic dishonesty policy that's currently being revised. We try to help identify and report on trends. You can work with us either by phone, zoom or on campus. I've literally had people who want to meet with us off campus because they don't trust that their cell phone's going to connect to the Ombuds wireless router that would identify them to RIT as having visited us.

B. Thomas: One of the things you do is anonymous fact finding. Have you ever had to send your information to HR?

J. Johnston: Only at the request of the person who owns the data.

S. Aldersley: C.24, the Ombuds policy, has an interesting section which says "An Ombuds will have access to all members of the university community and all university records and reports with the exception of medical, psychiatric, and psychological records." If somebody has an issue with promotion or tenure, obviously they're not privy to the chair's letter or the dean's letter, but does that sentence mean that you can see those letters, that you can ask for them?

J. Johnston: That's a great question. Technically, yes. There's not a document that I can't see, but I will not utilize that empowerment unless I feel like it would give me an opportunity to be able to neutrally impact something that is unresolved. Say I have a person who's upset about their tenure process and they say, 'Joe, I want you to go read the letters that were submitted about my process'. I will say 'no' to that unless there's some particular reason. For example, if for some reason they asked me to talk with members of the administration and we're trying to work through things informally and if everyone agreed it might be helpful if I had some information that everyone is okay with me reading, then I'd be more okay with it. But I would say that we generally do not. We get this request a lot, 'Please go read what HR has on me'. a) HR probably doesn't have much on you and b) there has to be some sort of practicality in trying to help you informally resolve something for us to do that. And if we're trying to informally resolve things, we've got to make sure that all the parties will be okay with me reading the information. So technically I can do that, but I also have the responsibility not to do it simply because someone asked. Say you're going up for an award and I read someone's letter that you can't read, the opportunity for me to make a mistake in some capacity, even having an informal conversation with you because I have that knowledge, is too great for me. And so I'm not going to read that letter unless everyone agrees that it's going to be helpful.

H. Ghazle: I'd like to bring the attention of Senators to E31 which talks about who can access material.

[Ombuds Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 9: Eisenhart Awards Coordinator; S. Davis and I. Bezakova (1:22)

S. Davis: Last spring the coordinator for the Eisenhart Committee accepted a sabbatical for the fall so Senate needs to find a replacement. I'd like to make a motion to approve the appointment of Ivona Bezakova, a professor in the Computer Science department.

I. Bezakova: I've been serving on Eisenhart committees for many years, chairing some of them. I've also served on the provost level committee, and I won the award in 2013. And I'm doing the work now.

C. Hull: Second.

J. Chiavaroli: Is the original coordinator resuming the role on completion of their sabbatical?

I. Bezakova: The policy says the appointment is a one-year appointment. It was Tina Collison who was doing it before me, but her appointment was for longer than one year.

L. Villasmil: The policy does say it's for one year, but one year is too short because typically it takes a year to really understand all aspects of the role.

R. Zanibbi: You're welcome to propose a separate motion at another time to change the policy.

S. Davis: Can I just add we have an experienced person who already knows the process who is willing to take over for the year.

H. Ghazle: Per policy, if we have a person who's serving and leaves for whatever reason, we need to get somebody to continue their term.

I. Bezakova: If the current coordinator leaves, it is the option of the Senate chair to take over the position.

R. Zanibbi: That's not going to happen.

H. Ghazle: We have a person who is very eager and happy to serve. We are always looking for people like yourself. Welcome to the Senate!

Motion: to approve the appointment of Ivona Bezakova as Eisenhart Committee coordinator

Motion passes 39/0/0

Eisenhart Presentation

Eisenhart Policy E12.1

Agenda Item No. 10: Communications Officer Election; S. Davis (1:27)

S. Davis: The result of the election for Communication Officer is Michael Laver 17, Heid Nickisher 14, with two abstentions. I therefore declare Michael the winner.

Agenda Item No. 11: New Business; R. Zanibbi (1:29)

M. Laver: I'd like to introduce our newest senator from the College of Liberal Arts, Kevin LeBlevec.

S. Aldersley: I'd like to announce that the RIT chapter of the AAUP, which went into hibernation I think in 2022 is being revived. The chapter's inaugural meeting will be this coming Wednesday at four o'clock. So if you are a member of AAUP or you're interested in AAUP, and you don't have to be a member to come to the meeting, I would ask that you contact me for more details. I was on the AAUP executive committee in the nineties when the chapter had 120 members compared to the dozen we have now. I'm very much hoping we will get back to that kind of number.

K. Barone: As the DSO fellow, I will be hosting the director of the DSO, Kate Torres, for an open hour on November 7th from 11:00 til 12:30, when you will be able to ask any questions that you have. I know we weren't able to get through all the Q&A in Senate. I ask that you please share this information as widely as possible with your constituents. It will be on Zoom and the link will be shared in the executive report for this meeting and more formally at a later time. The other group that will be joining us for that meeting will be the Department of Access Services. So please bring any questions that still remain about DSO accommodations, Genio, flex plans, interpreting services. You can also send questions to me in advance. The meeting will be recorded.

A. Adrion: What is AAUP?

S. Aldersley: The American Association of University Professors. It's a national organization that's been very active recently mostly because of the actions of the federal administration, but it also interests itself in local affairs within institutions.

B. Thomas: What happens when you retire?

S. Aldersley: You can continue as a member. From participating in National and State meetings, I would say that there's a lot of retired people who take leadership positions in AAUP.

I. Puchades: I've had a couple of comments from my constituents about the fact that when they returned from sabbatical, they were assigned more courses than they normally take for that semester.
I know it's been a question as to whether that was allowable by policy, but the policy doesn't say anything about it. I would like to get some clarification from the FSEC. It seems like it happens quite a bit where for example, if you're teaching two courses in the fall and one in the spring, when you take sabbatical in the fall and come back in the spring, you're assigned two courses because you were gone for one semester.

H. Ghazle: That really is college-based. Usually workload is discussed and agreed upon between the faculty member and the supervisor and of course administration in the college. That goes into the POW. It should be taken care of prior to the sabbatical.

S. Aldersley: This issue is broader than the example you gave. For example, when somebody comes back from maternity leave, or from any sort of leave, there have been instances where what subsequently transpired was not exactly fair. I encourage you to think more about that and maybe come up with a motion to change whatever the policy is, because it is an issue.

C. Hull: On the topic of governance, I would like to point out that there are universities where there is a faculty representative on the board of trustees. And I would like us to investigate the possibility of having a faculty trustee at RIT. I think that it would be beneficial, for example, to have somebody in the room when they come in and say that the faculty are all being paid above average, who could bring up some facts and figures in response. It has also come to my attention that where we might expect the provost to

speak up for us when these sorts of things are being said, he is asked to leave the room. So he can't speak for us. He's not considered to be a trustee either. But whether or not that changes, I think we should also have a faculty trustee who is not the provost. I bring this up as something I think the Senate should consider.

R. Zanibbi: What do you think the possible action item might be?

C. Hull: Maybe the chair of Senate could talk to the chair of the board of trustees and start a conversation around this topic or whatever else the executive committee thinks is appropriate.

R. Zanibbi: Believe it or not, that possibility was already shared in a conversation I had last week. I thought it was an important thing to share because not only does the provost not participate in executive session, the deans don't either. I think this is just how people thought about it when the institute was created. But it means the academic side of the house isn't involved in those conversations at all, aside from the president. So yes, there are a lot of questions there. One of the challenges is that the bylaws that govern the trustees require a two thirds vote to change their membership. I think we should consider what changes would be the first increment that might be actionable. For example, if the provost isn't a member, adding a faculty rep would be difficult.

C. Hull: I'm a management professor. One of the things I teach is how you constitute a board of directors. This is not it. Adding the provost, adding a faculty member would make our board of trustees stronger and allow it to more effectively carry out fiduciary responsibilities.

R. Zanibbi: I don't know that the board of trustees would disagree if we make a good faith characterization of what we're proposing and what the business case is. In my experience they're not deaf to this at all. I'm talking to trustees and they want to know what's happening on the academic side of the house. So can we maybe have an action item for you to propose, a thumbnail sketch of what you think that body would ideally look like?

H. Ghazle: Yesterday we had a meeting on professional leaves or sabbaticals. We have a committee that takes a look at proposals from faculty. The committee is short one senator. So your help is needed. Laverne coordinates the whole thing but it's the faculty who make the decisions. So I need one of you to volunteer to join the committee. I have reps from CET, from COLA, from CHST and KGCoE.

M. Coppenbarger: I'll do it.

K. LeBlevec: What is the eligibility for serving on this committee?

L. McQuiller: The composition is defined in policy E18. To be on the committee you need to be tenured. There are two representatives from either the deans or department chairs who are appointed by the provost's office, and then three members who are tenured, appointed by Senate. And you can't have overlapping colleges.

Agenda Item No. 12: Adjournment; R. Zanibbi (1:42)

Attendance 10/23/2025

Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended	Name	Relationship to Senate	Attended
Adrion, Amy	Alternate CAD Senator	X	Laver, Michael	CLA Senator	X
Aldersley, Stephen	Communications Officer/ SOIS Senator	X	LeBlevec, Kevin	CLA Senator	X
Alm, Cecilia	CLA Senator		Liao, Wenjie	Alternate CLA Senator	
Anselm, Martin	CET Senator		McCalley, Carmody	Alternate COS Senator	X
Arena, Jason	Alternate CAD Senator		McLaren, Amy	CAD Senator	X
Barone, Keri	Vice Chair/CLA Senator	X	Newman, Christian	GCCIS Senator	X
Boedo, Stephen	Alternate KGCOE Senator		Nickisher, Heidi	CAD Senator	Excused
Brady, Kathleen	NTID Senator		Officer, Cindy	Alternate NTID Senator	x
Brown, Jeremy	GCCIS Senator	Excused	Olles, Deana	COS Senator	X
Brown, Tamaira	Senate Coordinator	X	Olson, Rob	Alternate GCCIS Senator	
Butler, Janine	NTID Senator	X	O'Neil, Jennifer	Alternate CET Senator	

Butler, Joshua	Alternate NTID Senator		Osgood, Robert	Alternate CHST Senator	
Chiavaroli, Julius	GIS Senator	X	Overby, Katrina	Alternate CLA Senator	
Chung, Sorim	SCB Senator	x	Padmanabhan, Poornima	KGCOE Senator	x
Cody, Jeremy	COS Senator	x	Perry, Andrew	Alternate SOIS Senator	
Coppenbarger, Matthew	COS Senator	X	Puchades, Ivan	KGCOE Senator	X
Crawford, Denton	CAD Senator	X	Ray, Amit	CLA Senator	X
Cromer, Michael	Alternate COS Senator		Reinicke, Bryan	Alternate SCB Senator	
Cui, Feng	Alternate COS Senator		Reisch, Mark	CAD Senator	X
David, Prabu	Provost	Excused	Rich, Lexi	Alternate CET Senator	
Davis, Stacey	NTID Senator	X	Ross, Annemarie	NTID Senator	
De Wit Paul, Alissa	Alternate GIS Senator		Sanders, Cynthia	NTID Senator	x
DiRisio, Keli	CAD Senator	Excused	Shaaban, Muhammad	Alternate tKGCOE Senator	
Eirikur Hull, Clyde	SCB Senator	X	Song, Qian	SCB Senator	x
Ghazle, Hamad	Operations Officer/CHST Senator	X	Staff Council Rep	Amanda Hughes	X
Ghoneim, Hany	Alternate KGCOE Senator		Student Government Rep	Igor Polotai	X
Hardin, Jessica	CLA Senator	X	Sweeney, Kevin	Alternate SCB Senator	
Hartpence, Bruce	Alternate GCCIS Senator		Thomas, Bolaji	CHST Senator	X
Jadamba, Basca	COS Senator	X	Tsouri, Gill	KGCOE Senator	X
Johnson, Dan	CET Senator	X	Villasmil, Larry	CET Senator	X
Johnson, Scott	GCCIS Senator	X	Warp, Melissa	Alternate CAD Senator	
Kavin, Denise	Alternate NTID Senator		Weeden, Elissa	GCCIS Senator	X
Krutz, Daniel	Alternate GCCIS Senator		White, Phil	Alternate GCCIS Senator	X
Kuhl, Michael	KGCOE Senator	X	Wiandt, Tamas	Alternate COS Senator	
Kwasinski, Andres	Alternate KGCOE Senator		Worrell, Tracy	Alternate CLA Senator	
Lanzafame, Joseph	Treasurer/COS Senator	X	Zanibbi, Richard	Chair/GCCIS Senator	X
Lapizco-Encinas, Blanca	KGCOE Senator	X	Zlochower, Yosef	COS Senator	X

Interpreters: Sonya Chavis and Taylor Gilster-Call

Student Assistant: Ella Kolodziej

Presenters: Lauren Hall, Elizabeth Hane, Leah Bradley, Joe Johnston, Ashley Meyer, Stacey Davis and Ivona Bezakova