

Faculty Senate Minutes of Meeting **DRAFT**

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

Thursday, December 4, 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 (12:17)

**Agenda approved by acclamation**

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

**Minutes of November 20th meeting approved by acclamation**

[November 20, 2025 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes](#)

Agenda Item No. 4: Executive Committee Report; R. Zanibbi (12:18)

This is our last official meeting of 2025. Our next meeting will be January 15th and because we've had so many requests we will probably have to also meet the following week on January 22nd. That will probably be a zoom meeting. The Senate retreat is next Thursday. I believe we have at least 30 people who confirmed, both Senators and alternates. Unfortunately, I can't be there since I have to go to France next week for a doctoral student defense, but I will be there in spirit. We will make sure the agenda and discussion questions are made available in advance. A reminder about procedure: we're going to continue to use the new protocol for voting. In other words, when there is an item for discussion on the floor, we'll ask people to use the flag to indicate that they have a question, an open hand to indicate that they want to speak in favor of the motion and a closed hand to speak against the motion. And I will do my best to alternate between questions for clarification and then arguments for and against the motion. It won't be perfect but hopefully we can get more direct debate from both sides of a motion. Finally, anytime there is a policy ready for comment, whether or not it's being presented at the following meeting, I'll be putting it up on the drive, let you know that it's available and invite you to post comments.

I understand from Provost David that our Communications Officer Stephen Aldersley has been at RIT for 46 years during which time he has been very active in governance of the institution, including being involved in AAUP when it was very active back in the nineties, and restarting the chapter this year. In addition to advocating for all levels of governance to work together coherently, he has been a tireless champion for the role of faculty in the governance and mission of the institution. And now we want to recognize him for his accomplishments. I'm going to turn the floor over to Keri Barone.

K. Barone: Stephen, it's been my pleasure to serve on the executive committee with you for the past

couple of years. I feel like I've learned so much from you and just been so lucky to have you as a mentor and as a friend. And so I'm honored to present you with this plaque with a gavel. It reads: "Presented to Stephen Aldersley in Recognition of Exceptional Contributions to Improving the Structure, Inclusivity and Execution of Governance at RIT. With Gratitude, RIT Faculty Senate. December, 2025."

S. Aldersley: Finally a gavel. I've always wanted one.

R. Zanibbi: Stephen, richly deserved, if I may say so on behalf of myself and institution. Thank you very much.

S. Aldersley: May I say a couple of words? Lest the Senate think that I really am going to disappear, I'm not. There are seats over there on the side, I see Neil sitting on one, I may well come by on Thursday at noon in the future in the spring semester, maybe next fall, the following spring, I don't know, just to make sure Senate is functioning appropriately. I first joined RIT as faculty at the beginning of 1980, and very soon thereafter became involved in what was then the Faculty Council. I was on executive committee a couple of times and then unfortunately, and this was Al Simone's fault, and I've since become friends with Al, but at the time, he had this notion that we are all in this together, which is true to a large extent, of course, we are all RIT. But he had this corporate notion and I thought, Al, you're earning \$7,00,000-800,000, and at that time the faculty were lucky if they were on \$50,000. And I thought faculty may have slightly different interests than the upper administration, but Al prevailed because he was the president and Faculty Council became Academic Senate, which I was very much opposed to, and I still don't to this day understand why faculty went along with that, but they did. And so we had an Academic Senate for 20 years or so, and I dropped out of the picture for a while. But then probably around 2016 or 17, Tim Engstrom and Heidi Nickisher and a couple of other people and myself got together and we thought we really want to go back to a Faculty-centered Senate. That took two years, and in the end Provost Granberg helped make it happen. So that's why we are here today and we are now, what, five or six years old? I think Faculty Senate is on an upward trajectory. I think we really are making a difference as we should, because as faculty we are the core of the institution. Anyway, I don't really want to go, but I'm happy to leave the Senate in its current state because I think we really are doing a good job of representing the faculty interest in the university. So thank you for the recognition. I really appreciate it.

#### Agenda Item No. 5: Shared Governance Update; G. Vogler and I. Polatai (12:26)

Staff Council Chair, Gene Vogler: I know there was a lot of interest at the last Senate meeting in E 27, which is the performance appraisal policy for staff. It has now been presented to Staff Council. We have a number of things that we'd like to work with Leah on in terms of massaging language and reviewing different topics, especially in regard to the criteria for exceeds expectations. We feel they are a little too similar to the existing five rating. It feels like we've gone from a one through five system to a one through three plus five system by eliminating the four, which is problematic for a lot of staff. There's also some other language we'd like to add some clarifications to. And we'd also like to put the requirement back in that the information be presented, if not to University Council, at the very least to the Staff Council. So those are all things that we are intending to work on in the immediate future. Ironically we will meet three times before Senate meets again. Our hope is that by the time you meet in January, that E.27 will be in a position where you can take it back and do your part of the process on it.

Student Govt. Representative, Igor Polotai: Sue? recently got a visit from Faculty Senate to talk about D08, the policy on Student Academic Integrity. SG has some thoughts about the policy, so we're looking

forward to continuing to work with the Academic Affairs Committee to refine the policy further and we certainly invite them to come back with another update on that when you get further in the process.

R. Zanibbi: As a reminder to Senators policy D8 and D18.2, the appeals policy, are both up on the comments directory and you can review those whenever you feel ready. You don't have to wait for the meeting to come.

Next up, one of Stephen's initiatives, we have brief updates on college governance from CAD, Saunders and COS.

#### Agenda Item No. 6: College Cohort Reports (12:30)

A. Adrion (for CAD)

Just a couple of things that are not exactly governance issues but some larger topics that in all our college meetings come up over and over again. A lot of the issues we've been raising in the School of Film and Animation have also been discussed in all college meetings, one of which is exploration of AI. I know we are talking about AI as a university, but we're trying to evaluate and come up with some guidance or language for faculty regarding AI use. I don't need to tell you that there's a lot of excitement around AI and certainly it's an incredibly powerful tool that has a lot of potential in the school of film and animation and art and design. However, there's a lot of concern about creation, self-expression and plagiarism, etc. So we've created an AI committee. We have some folks who are researching how this tool is being addressed in other film schools in an attempt to provide some guidance to faculty that they can share with students about the many different ways AI can be implemented. There was a student PawPrint in our school. There's been a lot of student resistance toward AI, feeling perhaps that it is encroaching on self-expression and taking over the fun jobs that students are here to learn how to do well. We want to engage with students and in fact we have a town hall set for next week really to look for student feedback and hear where they're at, what AI tools they are using. There's so many different kinds of AI integrated in many different platforms. Faculty also have some concerns about displacement of entry level jobs with AI, certainly regarding environmental impact and copyright infringement. I'm sure many of us can relate to concerns about students using AI and ChatGPT for paper writing rather than engaging with challenging material. Provost David may be able to speak about this more fully than I can, but I know there is a digital summer institute that is looking into working with AI in creative spaces and they're developing some classes on that.

M. Reisch: One of the things they're starting to do is trying to look at whether the students are going to be using AI in this summer program or not. There does seem to be a lot of pushback just from students overall.

A. Adrion: We're attempting to engage with this in a very thoughtful way. Obviously there's a lot of potential and power with AI and we certainly recognize that, but students have a lot of strong feelings about it. As to faculty, we've had a number of conversations about the DSO in Faculty Senate. Kate came to the School of Film and Animation to speak to us about some of the DSO accommodations. There have been a lot of consistent questions about the GENIO software (that used to be GLEAN) where students can record classes. Faculty have raised issues of privacy where students in our classes are often pitching ideas, sharing personal information, and the fact that they are not aware that these classes are being recorded for students to use for accessibility, which of course we want to support, but there are certainly some privacy concerns there. A feeling from faculty that they may not quite be able to opt out of that

accommodation. There have been concerns about potential threats to academic freedom if these recordings are used in a way against faculty and also concerns about potential lack of control once the content is recorded, whether that's training AI, etc. Kate addressed some of these issues early on this semester, we appreciate that. But some of these issues have yet to be fully resolved that come up again and again. I think it was Keli DiRisio who suggested a possible solution that faculty could record themselves and post to GLEAN rather than it be in a larger software. So we've had a lot of conversations about accommodations. Otherwise, something we often hear in our college, and maybe this is shared throughout the university, but I've been on four search committees and persistent concerns about compensation issues and not feeling that RIT perhaps is at the same level as other regional and national peer institutions, specifically U of R, but really across the board which results in challenges in hiring faculty. Last year we barely had a cost of living increase and no merit increases and just kind of the persistent sense of faculty being asked to do more with less, which I'm guessing many of us can relate to. So not necessarily so much governance in CAD but key persistent issues that we've been discussing constantly that I know have come up in Senate that we wanted to share.

Q. Song: In the College of Business, we have something different. I want to talk to you about our policy on faculty governance. Actually we already had a policy last year and we voted to share it in H drive so everybody can see it. It's a pretty detailed document, but we did receive some feedback. So we have a plan to revise the policy to clarify certain things, for example, the policy talks about how to give charges to different committees, but then people talk about follow through. So we have room for improvement. We will continue working on the revision next semester. We really think it's important to have a policy. It covers everything including how the faculty governance committee is formed, and how charges are proposed, how we follow up and how to organize faculty meetings. The biggest and most challenging thing that we are working on right now pertains to annual evaluation and the Saunders workload model. We have been communicating with the dean's office and they are willing to work with the faculty to potentially make changes that faculty can agree on. This semester, we formed a joint committee with two department chairs representing the executive committee together with members representing the faculty. The joint committee has met twice and we're going to continue intensively to meet next semester to discuss these issues. But there are challenges. In case you are not familiar with COB's workload model which the dean's office proposed, it says that if you publish in certain elite journals, you get your teaching load reduced. If you're not publishing in those journals, and if you don't meet the number of publications, then you have to teach more. So that's the basic idea with the workload model. It has some issues including that it's not aligned with our existing annual evaluation. That's probably the main focus right now. When the model came out a couple years ago, faculty had a lot to say about it. The other thing I want to mention is that a representative of the Faculty Governance Committee can now participate in meetings of the college administrative leadership. That's proven to be really beneficial. There's a lot of discussion and faculty can get information immediately. At the last meeting we talked about teaching policy, for example, grade distribution or the team projects. Faculty believe we should have something to say about such things since we own them, and I'm pleased to say that the dean was very receptive towards our suggestions. That was significant progress. Another big topic is upward evaluation. I know the FAC is working on this as well, but we're also discussing it in our college. We hope to get more feedback on how to conduct an upper evaluation for associate deans, which we've never had before. We are also revising our tenure policy.

One of our main challenges is getting faculty to participate. Some faculty are very active while others are quiet. I hope to be able to engage everyone because there is a kind of expectation that the faculty governance committee will do everything. But we have limited capacity. So we are trying to create a culture whereby faculty who propose a charge can form their own task force or their own subcommittee. That way, hopefully, everybody is involved and it becomes true faculty governance within the college. Another thing we are talking about concerns department chairs. Normally administrators don't attend our college governance meetings. But department chairs are faculty members and some chairs really want to attend. However, when they come, the meeting dynamics change. We are struggling with that, whether

for example we could have a policy whereby chairs don't attend certain meetings, which would allow junior faculty to freely express their opinions. We actually need help from Senate on this because I'm not sure whether we can have such a policy.

R. Zanibbi: It's not up to Senate. In my own college in the past there have sometimes been meetings where chairs weren't present, but the default is chairs do attend. Chairs are members of faculty. I think to exclude them wholesale would be bad. But I think having some meetings where it's only non-administrators can be okay if it's done in good faith.

Q. Song: Sometimes we've asked them to excuse themselves, which I don't think they were very happy with. So then we're quiet for a while and they feel free to come. But when they're there we see different things. We would like to learn from Senate what other colleges do in their own governance committees. We're open to any suggestions. In short, we think Senate may have a role in advising college faculties how to structure and run their governance committees.

J. Lanzafame: One of the things that came out of the request to do this is faculty in COS have started having a discussion about exactly what governance means at the college level. And this gets back to some of the points Qian was making. Policy E.36 does govern college meetings that our faculty led but it doesn't specifically define who leads them. Traditionally COS senators have been doing that, but there's also a faculty affairs committee within COS that crafts college policies. So I think both of those groups to some extent qualify as faculty-led groups, but we don't really officially communicate. We want to think more about that because as the executive committee was touring the colleges, we noted for example, Saunders and GCCIS actually have separate college bodies that are not Senator-led, whereas all-college meetings in other units like COS and KGCoE are led by senators. In any case, E.36 is silent on exactly who should be doing that. The College of Science just wants to be more purposeful about that. So we're going to work on that this year. In terms of things that have been done at the college level, going back two years and similar to Saunders, our dean and the faculty affairs committee did craft guidelines around scholarship which of course dovetails with the whole workload issue. Those have been approved by the faculty en masse but are not uniformly popular. Last year we brought forth a rolling three-year plan of work so we're no longer looking just at single years in isolation. Currently the faculty affairs committee is trying to better quantify service loads related to committees, which of course also dovetails with workload. So I think COS and Saunders are both largely concerned with workload models at the moment.

R. Zanibbi: Thank you all very much. That was very informative. I got a lot more information than I was expecting. We're going to continue to do this with the other colleges, because I think this is a very useful exercise and provides a lot of perspective across the institute because sometimes we can get lost in our own colleges.

[CAD Presentation](#)

[SCB Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 7: Task Force on Student Retention; C. Hull (12:50)

C. Hull: There was some question as to whether we would be able to find anything at all that faculty could do to help with retention and graduation. But we have in fact found some stuff partly from faculty writing in with suggestions, and partly from stuff members of the task force came up with by talking to various other people. One of the things we found was that Senate passed a policy that said after two

probations, you're done. It was because we had a revolving door problem. A student might do probation, come back, do a second probation, and come back, in a never-ending cycle. But it turns out that sometimes you have somebody who goes on probation twice, then decides they need a different major and they're being successful there when some major event happens, like a death in the family, and they have a bad semester. Normally they'd then go on probation, they'd recover and then graduate successfully. But because they've already had the two previous probations before, they're done. This is not going to affect a huge number, but we don't actually need to affect thousands of students in order to make a difference and in any case, if we make five students' lives better by not kicking them out while they're dealing with something like that, we feel that's a good thing. So we have developed a suggestion to say that maybe after you have changed majors once, if you have a good semester in your new major, you can get one probation back. Only if you change once though. We have some other proposals. One of them is for the possibility of a BA degree. It looks like if we allowed colleges to have BA degrees, some colleges would be able to graduate more people. We do not yet agree about what exactly we are going to recommend around that. We welcome input from anybody else who's interested in a BA degree.

R. Zanibbi: When you say bachelor of arts degrees, do you mean plural or you mean singular?

C. Hull: I mean we should have a policy that allows colleges who want to have bachelor of arts degrees to offer them. We're thinking of suggesting to ICC that they come to Senate with a recommendation for a policy about what BA degrees at RIT would look like, if we were to have them. One suggestion that came from someone not on the committee was that we should look at MIT. It turns out that MIT has a phenomenally great graduation rate and partly maybe that's because they get a different caliber of students than we do, but they also do a couple of really interesting things that we're looking at. We're not currently prepared to actually air all the details but we discovered that one of them has been talked about on Deans' Council. We have some other stuff percolating that we hope to bring back. As a task force, though, we shouldn't be bringing our suggestions directly to Senate. Instead, we should be taking our recommendations to ACC or ICC and asking them to decide whether something is worth bringing to Senate. Our goal is to help students graduate who deserve to graduate by helping to find pathways where they can legitimately earn a rigorous RIT degree and then go on and be successful in their careers afterwards. Please reach out to me with any ideas or if you want to join the Task Force.

D. Olles: Are there any advisors on the task force?

C. Hull: No. This is supposed to be a faculty task force, but I've been talking to advisors myself and I think some of the other members have been too. Perhaps Staff Council could let advisors know we're doing this and we'd like to hear from the people who do advising. I think the thing about probation being a problem was originally identified by advisors.

D. Olles: The reason I ask is your example of a death in the family is something I'm dealing with now with a student with the same situation. He's going to fail all of his classes and he had no idea that he could apply for a leave of absence. This was a father who died and I said, you need to go talk with your advisor. Obviously this might be the student's fault for not communicating, but I'm wondering if there's something else that could be done in cases of a death in the family or serious injury or serious illness. Putting a student on probation doesn't seem reasonable to me.

C. Hull: I agree. How this came to us was advisors saying that sometimes our hands are tied. We really, really do not want to put this person on probation. If the policy didn't say we had to do, we wouldn't be doing it. So an exception along these lines would allow for this.

M. Laver: The original proposal for the neuroscience degree was for a BS/BA and back when I was in the dean's office, we were working along those lines. We decided to postpone the BA, not because it was

impossible or because the powers that be said no, but rather because it was uncharted territory. We wanted to get something stood up, so we concentrated on the BS. But my understanding is that since they were going ahead with that, it was possible to bring in a BA where 75% of your credits have to be Gen Ed. I know you may have to amend the charter to allow BAs, but I thought we did that when we took the opportunity to bring in the architecture degree.

C. Hull: To the best of our knowledge, RIT does not have room in the policy for a BA degree. But we're suggesting there be one. Given the amount of feedback we've had from faculty and certain disciplines who want to have a BA and feel that they can't, it seems to me like if they could, they would have one already. They believe it would help us retain students we're not retaining right now. And for pedagogical reasons, they feel like a BA degree would allow us to teach students differently than BS students. But right now, I don't think it's possible.

P. Padmanabhan: I know that in KGCoE, the dean has been talking about this for over a year now. I believe we have our own task force set up by the dean, so it might be worthwhile for you to reach out and ask them.

C. Hull: I would be very happy to have somebody from KGCoE join the task force, and maybe they could explain the flow chart thing to me.

J. Lanzafame: With regard to the third suspension, I was on the AAC when we made the change to the current policy. I would suggest your task force look back at the reasons for it. An exemption perhaps for death in the family makes sense. Having a third try in a new college, the AAC were intentionally trying to eliminate that because prior to the change, students would go from college to college to college and they would re-start the clock each time under the old policy. We're not doing them any favors if we continue to collect tuition and they continue to rack up loans and they're not making progress.

S. Johnson: The Task Force has considered that and it would only be a one-time thing with a change of program. So if they tried to do it again, they would not get an additional probation.

L. Villasmil: I just want to say that the main reason I am enjoying the task force is because I see it as a holistic approach to improve retention. Some students know exactly what they want but other students are simply trying to find what drives them. It's not the same thing as shopping.

#### Agenda Item No. 8: Policy P05.0 (Diversity Statement) Edit; K. Jenkins (1:03)

On behalf of the office of the President and also the office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Access, Engagement and Success, I would like to share recommendations we have regarding RIT's Diversity Statement. Going back to June and RIT's response to federal actions on higher education, President Munson, the then board of trustees, DEI committee and also the Division of Diversity and Inclusion instituted name changes. And what we ended up with was an Access, Engagement and Success Committee for the Board of Trustees, the standing committee and then the Division. There were also several colleges that followed suit in terms of DEI initiatives or titles, for example, the College of Science, GCCIS and NTID. Similar changes were made for faculty senate. The DEI standing committee was changed to the AES standing committee. In keeping with this guidance, there is a recommendation that we move forward in making these modifications to the diversity statement to the effect that the statement will no longer be called a diversity statement. And you will see the changes that will take place that are highlighted here: building an inclusive environment, and commitment to diversity, those being changed to a commitment to community, and focus on building an environment where membership in the

community allows for all of us to reach our fullest potential. Then you'll see the commitment to community, our current president's name, and then the new name of our division. So these are the changes that are being recommended at this time in keeping with other changes that are taking place at the university.

Senator ?: I recall serving on the task force that discussed many of these things earlier. My question is hypothetically, if there were to be at some point in the future, an election that led to a different federal government, should we expect that you might be coming back to reverse these changes? Or are these changes that you'll be comfortable living over the long haul?

K. Jenkins: I think the latter. We are comfortable with these changes which represent the work that has always flowed from these spaces, work around access of students, staff as well as faculty, their engagement and their success at the institution. So I don't see that necessarily changing should there be changes at a higher level.

A. Adrion: I think that the words that you chose are reflective of the mission and I think that they're smart and fine choices. I just want to say for the record how unfortunate it is that we're in a place where so many intelligent people are having to wordsmith things to avoid legal action. I think it's quite scary as I think many of us do. I think you're responding to it well. And again, the mission appears to be exactly the same, but what a waste of so much effort and names on doors and titles and things like that for I'm not sure what benefit.

M. Laver: Thank you, Keith, for your good faith efforts here. I think your office has done a great job. I almost hesitate to bring it up, but when you build something, you build it and then you're done with it. When you nurture something or foster something, it's a continuing work. You're never done with it. You're always fostering, always nurturing. The only thing I would possibly humbly submit is maybe consider nurturing rather than building, nurturing an environment just because it gives you the connotation of continually working on it and not just building it and then forgetting about it. Would you be amenable to such a change?

K. Jenkins: University Council has already endorsed this particular change. It is before Staff Council today, their second meeting regarding it. So, it would probably need to go back to all of those.

M. Laver: I withdraw my amendment. I'd just like to make the point.

J. Chiavaroli: I am hundred percent in favor of this. As my colleague said, whether it's someone from outside forcing the changes or whether it comes internally, it's always beneficial to engage in introspection and examination of what you have and I find this a very much more inclusive statement that incorporates our goals.

M. Reisch: I was just wondering if this change is the result of an existing lawsuit or are we complying in advance?

K. Jenkins: There was no lawsuit. This is pre-compliance. It gave us a chance to introspectively look at all of our initiatives at the university and where we had opportunity to enhance. And in this particular regard, that introspection led to the question: what is the work that we are really engaged in? This mirrors the work that we have been engaged in and continue to be engaged in and that supports the values of this university.

P. Padmanabhan: Is it necessary to have the name of the president and VP spelled out?



K. Jenkins: I may yield to Chris on this, but it has always existed with the president's name and whoever was in this particular office, for example, the two people who were my predecessors.

C. Licata: *Inaudible*

K. Jenkins: Tamaira, that may be something that we might have to look at. But I do know that when I came in, we changed it from President Destler to President Munson.

Senator ?: I sort of remember when we started on this policy quite a while ago, the president wanted his name on it as a way of indicating that he had approved it.

**Motion: To approve the described changes to the RIT Diversity Statement.**

P. White: Second.

**Motion passed: 34/1/3**

[Policy P05.0 Presentation](#)

[Policy P05.0 Red Line Document](#)

Agenda Item No. 9: Policy C03.0 (Intellectual Property) Changes; J. Eilertsen (1:13)

I have four separate proposed changes to the IP policy. I'd like to field questions as I go through each one, since some are more controversial than others. The first refers to student-donated IP. This scenario has come up several times where a student has a great idea which may be a commercializable invention, but they don't have the resources to pursue a patent. We want to give them the ability, or at least spell it out quite clearly in the policy that they can donate it to RIT if they wish. And if they do, we want to clearly say what they get for doing it, which is they'll be treated just like any other RIT personnel who has created IP and assigned it to RIT. The statement we'd like to add to the policy is just for clarification as to how the revenue will be distributed.

I. Puchades: How is it currently done?

J. Eilertsen: It's not done. If the student owns the IP themselves, we can't file a patent on their behalf. So the solution would be for them to donate it to RIT and then RIT would take it on.

J. Lanzafame: This probably comes more under procedures and policy, but since a donation has no obligation from RIT to commercialize it, if ten years later the student wanted it back, is that in the agreement the student would sign at the time of assigning the rights to RIT or could essentially RIT own it forever without any attempt to . . . ?

J. Eilertsen: We could own it forever, but the point is there's no motivation for us to do that. We want the students to be successful, and we want to commercialize IP because RIT gets a reasonable cut of any licensing.

J. Lanzafame: I don't want to ascribe bad intent to you, but I would hope that it would be part of the agreement with the student that in the case where something is not being promoted, the student would

have the opportunity to regain the rights.

J. Eilertsen: Absolutely. Yes.

C. Hull: I did not understand the answer to Joe's question. Let's say I'm a member of a group of students and we do some really cool stuff that we're really excited about. We can't patent it, so we assign it over to RIT which looks at it and says, 'Yes, maybe'. Five-ten years go by and we are all successful engineers who now have the money. Nobody has patented it. It hasn't been circulated. We go back to RIT and say, you aren't commercializing it and we want it back. The policy doesn't say RIT has to say 'yes'. Is that correct? If so, I'd like to make a motion that the policy has to be at some point the student has to be able to get it back.

J. Eilertsen: We could do that. I agree with the intent. Why not? A similar situation happens when its faculty-generated IP that RIT owns and we want to abandon it. We're obliged to assign it back to the faculty member or the staff. I have to check the policy, and it may already be in there, but of course we can make it clear because that is the intent of the statement to the student about what happens in the event they donate the IP to us.

C. Hull: If I'm a student and I'm looking at this policy, I'm not going to know all the context. So it should be spelled out very clearly so that a student looking at that can say, okay, five years later if RIT never does anything with it, I can come back. Then I would be more comfortable giving it to RIT in the first place.

J. Eilertsen: Absolutely. I will do that.

G, Tsouri: My assumption is that in most cases student-IP is generated as senior design, but students have all kinds of reporting they need to do, like reports, putting up posters in the hallway, etc.. I think all of those things count as public disclosures. So I would imagine for this to really work students need to be given some guidance on protecting themselves regarding public disclosure. And that might interfere with the requirements of the program.

J. Eilertsen: I'm not so sure. I can appreciate that would be an issue that needs to be addressed, but students can already donate their IP to RIT. We want to create a statement that makes it absolutely clear what happens when they do. It's a great point, and I think we can address that.

R. Zanibbi: It sounds like this point might be worth thinking about a bit, but let's move on to your other proposals.

J. Eilertsen: The next proposal pertains to those instances where students participate in programs like Studio 30 or the quiz startup program. I'm sure many of you are familiar with these. They receive a support stipend, but RIT has absolutely no interest in owning the IP that they generate or that they enter these programs with. So we want to make the policy clear to address that simply by adding this statement under this section that, should students sign agreements when they participate in these programs, that agreement takes precedence and RIT takes no ownership of the IP. Again, it's trying to clarify the situation a bit with student-owned IP.

The third one I hope is the least controversial. Our current IP policy is not quite correct. Where a faculty member creates scholarly works, like journal articles, RIT doesn't take ownership. That's pretty clear, but the policy doesn't quite say that. So we want to make sure our it aligns with what's actually done on and in addition, we want to expand the ownership of the copyright of scholarly works to staff as well as faculty.

B. Thomas: Sorry, I'm lost, you want RIT to take over scholarly works?

J. Eilertsen: Just the opposite. Right now faculty own the copyright to journal articles and that's across the board at every university and that's how we treat it here. But the policy doesn't quite say that. We want to make sure the policy aligns with our practice and we figured as long as we're amending it, we should include staff who also sometimes create scholarly works.

I. Puchades: Do you think this could lead to a potential conflict of interest where someone does a lot of their work using RIT resources and then publishes under a different department or a different company that does not include RIT. For example. I could develop some new process and then publish it under my company name even though I'm using RIT resources and the paper I'm writing is during my work time.

J. Eilertsen: That happens now. Faculty own the copyright.

B. Thomas: You're trying to give our work away to RIT! I think it would be nice to have faculty own their work if they want to set up their own companies outside of RIT. I should have the right to do whatever I want to do outside of RIT.

R. Zanibbi: James already clearly said this. You own your copyright. If I work here and then move to France and I publish the paper there, it's still my copyright. It's nice if you credit the place you were at and most faculty members when they move do that, though not all do and it's not just our school that suffers from it.

J. Eilertsen: The last one pertains to patent incentive payments. I think this has come up before. In general, we want to get rid of patent incentive payments. So when an RIT member submits an invention disclosure to OVPR and we file a patent application, there's a small \$500 payment that is split among the inventors. We would like to delete this from the policy. If RIT commercializes a patent that a faculty member is an inventor on, they still get 50% of the licensing revenue.

R. Zanibbi: Just for context, Prabu, I believe you presented this last year and we voted in favor. It's in the minutes.. I think this is the same modification, we don't need to discuss it again.  
In general, James, I've made a few notes about some of the comments senators have made. Can I ask that you come back after you have made some changes?

[Policy C03.0 Presentation](#)

[Policy C03.0 Red Line Document](#)

#### Agenda Item No. 10: Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Updates; N. Hair (1:27)

The Center on Teaching & Learning has an annual survey out to our primary audience, the full-time teaching faculty. We send surveys out to you in two flavors every year. One is on academic technologies and the other is on the academic services that we provide to you. Two things have come out from the latest survey. I want to thank Senators because the number of faculty that completed it went through the roof after you went back to your constituents and asked them to complete the survey for us.

Faculty are, it seems, very happy with the quality of our service, and the provision of the services that we offer you through our help desks, through our individual consultations, and through the work of our classroom support teams that work hard over the summer to make sure that our out of date classrooms are

being renovated as quickly as we can pursuant to the funding that we have. You are also happy with our annual summer teaching and learning conference, the summer institute, and you also appreciate the work that our faculty fellows performed for you. That came through very clearly. The other thing that came through loud and clear is that you don't like the look of MyCourses in terms of some of the user interface actions that we have inside that. So we have gone away and worked through a process to identify a number of suitable changes. Some of you in this room have actually been part of that process to make sure that we can alleviate some of the concerns. I'm going to turn it over to one of my colleagues who was the mastermind behind these changes which you can take back to your constituents and your colleges.

J. Sadue: I'm the assistant director of learning design and technology in the CTL. We're excited to share some of these updates that are coming on March 6th for courses in the coming summer semester. The changes result primarily from faculty feedback. We've noticed a lot of dissatisfaction with the user experience inside of MyCourses, but also we have some forced changes coming from the vendor and we wanted to get out in front of those changes so that we could control the timeline and change the system without interrupting instruction. So that's why we're doing these changes right now. The two dates you need to be aware of regarding what will be a new look and feel are March 6th, and then a full system update on May 11th. That's because we only have two days between active semesters and we have one day between spring and summer to flip everything over in the system again without disrupting instruction. The three changes are listed above. But what we also did to make sure that faculty voices were represented was hold two faculty focus groups in early fall semester and groups looked at all of these changes we were proposing, gave us really important feedback so that we were able to make some adjustments and ensure that the changes would fit your instructional needs. People have described the changes like a new coat of paint or fresh wallpaper, nothing that should be too daunting for you. My team is developing written and video tutorials to help you through this. We'll be holding group training and then you can always meet with us if you have questions about the transition. I'm now going to show you a preview of what these things will look like. When you log into MyCourses (Brightspace is our actual tool), this is the page you'll land on instead of the current page. We've tried to clean it up, it's super busy right now. We moved announcements to the upper right corner and you'll notice that the Nav bar now has color on it to help with accessibility so people can differentiate it from the other parts of the site. This will not become active until May 11th. The new MyCourses home or default template is what's going to load into the system for the summer courses. And then again on May 11th, we have reconfigured it with some new widgets. You'll see the content browser in the center that helps students to get quickly to the content of your course, which is the most important part of your course and it automatically feeds all of your information to the front for you. There'll be an instructor widget on the side and we've changed some of the wording of the Nav bar to make it more intuitive so that instead of Panopto, which is our video tool, you see 'course video'. So hopefully that'll trigger people to get to that information faster. We're just showing you what can be done in the system. You don't have to use the default template. You can take it back to however you like it. The new content experience is the biggest change. Right now it's called 'Content Tools.' That's where you put all your content for students which you can then link to activities inside the system. The new content experience that you're seeing right here looks really great. It's streamlined. It has new iconography on the side. This is what's called a persistent nav bar. That means the nav bar will stay static. Students will be able to get through your content more easily without getting lost in it. The biggest feature of the new content experience is that activities, like quizzes, assignments, discussion forums, etc. are embedded 'in line', meaning that if a student's going through your content pages and then they come to an assessment, they get to take it right there. Right now the way content tool works is if they click on that assignment, it takes them to another tab. So now everything will be seamless for the students right in one spot. If you teach online, that's going to be really lovely. So there's other little bells and whistles in here like coloring on the side that you can add to customize things. But overall, those are the big changes that are coming with the new content experience. Like I mentioned, our team's here to help you through the transition. We just wanted to make sure you all knew this was coming.

M. Laver: Just a quick comment. Panopto probably comes from Panopticon, which is Jeremy Bentham's ideal prison in which prisoners can be observed from any angle and thus always being observed.

J. Cody: Where is everything going to go?

J. Sadue: When you copy your course over, everything will upload as normal. Your old course home will just come over what we have there. The one thing that does change is that overview that used to be at the top there. That no longer exists. It's going to come up as its own module. It doesn't go away, it doesn't disappear. It just has its own little module at the top.

D. Johnson: Further to the prison thing . . . Any update to the grading application, which really seems like torture. I'd almost rather have toothpicks under my fingernails.

J. Sadue: I'm sorry. Unfortunately we do not have control over the grading design. The changes I've described are the things we can change right now. Brightspace is our vendor and so if you have issues you need to direct people to Brightspace and complain loudly for us so that they can make those changes.

N. Hair: The good news is Dan, we do have a very good working relationship with D2L. We're almost one of their ambassador organizations and we work closely with them. I can reflect upwards to their senior leaders that there are issues with certain areas. It's not just RIT, it's across the board that people have issues with that particular functionality.

D. Johnson: They randomly use terms and terminology that change and all the buttons move every time you do anything. It's almost unusable.

B. Thomas: You guys put up something a few years ago that we need to upload captions to videos. I got nothing back.

N. Hair: There is a point of trouble in paradise. We have a problem with data. Going back to your point about your homepage and the number of courses that you have. I have taught at RIT now since 2004 and I was shocked to discover when I went on today to find out I have 160 course shells I still have access to since 2004. People have retired, people have moved on. There is a data risk with maintaining a lot of these old pieces of information. It's fun to walk down memory lane and see the people that I was working with in 2004, but it seems a little unnecessary when we think through some of the legal issues that we've been alerted to with regard to this. Ian and his team are looking at tightening up some policies our end to try and reduce the risk that we face as an organization and to work within reasonable bounds to make sure we can continue to operate efficiently in maintaining these systems for you so that we can get to the right source of courses for you quicker and solve problems that we're facing. We're proposing therefore four changes to the way in which we have operated up until now and there's very good reasons for all of them. #1, we are proposing that we begin to remove courses that are seven years old or older. That has implications, I know, for a number of programs for ABET accreditation, for AACSB accreditation and other accrediting bodies. But we've been alerted to the fact that there are security risks with maintaining this level of data in terms of the terabytes that we currently have. I'll give you an example of the data problems we face. We are contracted for 6.1 terabytes of data a year. We currently have 91 terabytes of data going back to 1994 when we also ported over Blackboard course shells into our system. So we have to do something about that. The good news is it's very easy to download a course onto your local system, your local drive. It took me 30 seconds and we're going to go through the process of training faculty how to do it quickly and effectively so that they can retain the data they want. So that's #1. We're also looking to take down committee shells where it's been two years since they've last been accessed. Again, we've been given advice that we should not be maintaining data for very long periods of time. #2, we have an educational technology systems integration policy that we're bringing forward. As some of you may be

aware, occasionally a faculty member wants to integrate an external software package within MyCourses. The system is built such that we can help you manage that process. But there are a number of very important steps that we need to take as an institution to make sure that we are not facing potential legal issues down the line. It involves working closely with the ISO office for instance, making sure that we have deans sign off approval, and data sharing agreements with our external partners. We've not made it very clear to people in the past that there is a set of procedures that we need to make. We codified that and therefore we're putting forward a policy on systems integration. The third is access management. So in the past people have been able to add local accounts that do not have RIT affiliated accounts associated with them. That is a huge security risk that we need to take care of. We've heard that very loud and clear from our legal representatives and also from our ITS colleagues. So we are also proposing that any future local accounts must have an RIT account attached to them in order to guarantee through DUO multi authentication processes that there is security that we can stand behind. I'm going to give Ian a chance to speak to that because I've forgotten some things and I know he's going to know. And then finally the shell creation on MyCourses: going back to my initial point that our primary mission is to focus on the teaching faculty teaching courses full time and making sure that you and your students are having good experience with this system, we have seen an awful lot of non-SIS credit related activities being posted onto my courses that then will sit there for years and years. We are proposing a process that will allow us to approve or, in limited cases, deny the creation of those. I'll pause now and let Ian speak to anything I've overlooked.

R. Zanibbi: I'm afraid we're out of time. If anyone has questions, please send them directly to Neil. Chris has kindly agreed to give us the Cliff's notes for his presentation because he's a gentleman and then we'll move on to new business.

[CTL Presentation](#)

#### Agenda Item No. 11: AI Hub Year 1 Report; C. Collison (1:42)

What I want to do today is basically talk about what the AI hub has done in the first year of its operation. There's quite a lengthy internal report out there, not published anywhere and it essentially talks about all the things we've covered. I was planning to go into a little bit more of a deep dive into some of the highlights, but I'll start by saying that the Task Force wrapped up on April 1st, 2024 with a bunch of recommendations regarding scholarship, innovation, experiential aspects of AI on campus life and teaching and curriculum. We've tackled most if not all of these topics. And so here's a list of the highlights in the report. We've launched an AI foundry, which allows students, computer science students for example, to listen to potential customers and build tools so they get a leg up into the real world. And this is almost going to be a stepping stone towards the incubator, working with Johan Klarin there. We've done a lot of outreach: we've worked at Imagine RIT; I have a newsletter that came out a few times last year. We have expanded research capacity by joining up with Empire AI and we've built a collaboration with the University of Rochester. AI sits across the entire university and not just in academic affairs so we've spent a lot of time talking to people over in ITS for example. We've had a number of enterprise pilots. We had one during commencement, which a lot of volunteers were trying out. We reached over 300 students with Tutor Bot, which was written by a colleague, Tom Fuller. And we have generated for now approximately \$50,000, with another grant going in. These are great ways to leverage particular course technology to actually bring in money and larger interdisciplinary funding opportunities for RIT. We've worked a lot with Kirsten Borkowski of NTID, and generated some opportunities there, overlapping with the AI Foundry. It's me, 50% of my time, with \$60,000 of funding received. All three

subcommittees essentially said we need an AI hub, so I took the position. We're basically planting lots of seeds, trying to water them as we move forward with the strategic framework and trying to decide which of them need to be watered the most. I want to give a shout out to other partners, Neil Hair, you just heard from a great partnership with the Center for Teaching and Learning and the summer Institute, also the Fram chair, Jen Schneider, because critical thinking is important as we have students start to work with AI. There are things popping up all over campus. This was sort of everything up through August 31st.

R. Zanibbi: Chris, I'm very sorry to interrupt. We are going to bring you back to talk about this. One last word?

C. Collison: Things are a little quiet at the moment as we try to figure out how we use AI in alignment with the university's priorities in the Strategic Framework. After the board of trustees meeting in February, I think that would be a great time to come back and say not only what we've done but what we intend to do.

[AI Presentation](#)

Agenda Item No. 12: New Business; R. Zanibbi (1:47)

P. David: By way of some quick updates, there are discussions underway in the College of Liberal Arts about consolidating some requirements. I've asked the dean of CLA to come in January to give us an update on that. Second, with regard to master's programs and metrics we have on student success in terms of graduation and enrollment, we have asked the deans to think about consolidation of some programs. For example, where you have two programs of only five students and three students a year, think about pulling those together if it makes sense. Otherwise there has to be a serious discussion about sunseting some of these programs. I don't want you to be surprised and I'd like for us at some point in January or February to have Diane and some of the folks who are thinking through it to come and give us an update. I have talked to the Graduate Council and we're trying to figure out a process. The third item I want to tell you about is, along with the change from DEI to AES, there's one change we must make that's tied to faculty senate. The provost's office currently has three faculty associates. One representing the interests of women, one representing the interests of diversity and the third one for NTT faculty. With the shift to AES, I request that we just call them faculty associates without specifying that they represent women or any special identities. There will still be three faculty associates, but they don't have a specific tag indicating who they are representing. Regarding the first two items, as you think about every university in the country negotiating and thinking through these things, the fact is the budget situation's not going to improve. We're not going to get new students, we're not going to get international students. Our grant money is not going to increase over the next three or four years and in the meantime, we have to deal with budget realities. I mentioned trust is important, so I'll try and be as transparent as possible, but we have some difficult decisions.

S. Davis: Yesterday I brought up to University Council that one of my constituents complained that one of their students in a wheelchair was not able to get to class on Tuesday afternoon because of the lack of snow removal.

J. Cody: The Parking Committee met on Tuesday. John Connelly is in charge of parking and transportation and he does a great job. He's limited by budget as well. But there were some issues that were brought up that we should address or at least talk about. One thing is the rollover from year to year. There were concerns with that. Fairness is one of the issues. Students are a transient population, so they're not always going to be able to roll over. We thought that would work well for reserve spaces, but possible

for general spaces too. Another thing I wanted to talk about is the waiting room and getting onto the site to get a reserve parking permit. The waiting room is essential because otherwise the system would crash. The group is going to really push clarity on how that works.

P. Panmanabhan: Maybe it's more about managing the process. It does create a lot of faculty anxiety and stress. So maybe the way to do it is you run a survey initially, look at the demand and then offer the supply based on the demand.

B. Thomas: I have two questions for you to take back to Parking. Number one, they need to bring back ? lot parking because as it is right now, you're stalking just one place. And if you can't find parking there, you have to go all the way back to general parking, which I don't think is ideal. Walking in the snow, we used to have ? lot parking. I liked it. I paid for it. They can bring that back. Number two, can we have access to the parking people directly instead of having to go through university services or whatever they call themselves? Right now, you have to call university services, then they have to call parking to get answers to your questions before they get back to you. We need to be able to make a call to the parking office directly and speak to somebody. It's very important. I don't want to be going to an office which doesn't have an answer to my question.

Agenda Item No. 13: Adjournment; R. Zanibbi (1:55)



Attendance 12/4/2025

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	X	McCalley, Carmody	Alternate COS Senator	X
Arena, Jason	Alternate CAD Senator		McLaren, Amy	CAD Senator	
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	X	Officer, Cindy	Alternate NTID Senator	
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		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	X	Rich, Lexi	Alternate CET Senator	
Davis, Stacey	NTID Senator	X	Ross, Annemarie	NTID Senator	X
De Wit Paul, Alissa	Alternate GIS Senator		Sanders, Cynthia	NTID Senator	
DiRisio, Keli	CAD Senator		Shaaban, Muhammad	Alternate KGCoe 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: Nicole Crouse-Dickerson and Sonya Chavis

Student Assistant: Ella Kolodziej

Presenters: Clyde Hull, Keith Jenkins, James Eilertsen, Neil Hair and Chris Collison