

NTID Faculty Congress NFC Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2019
12 – 1:30 pm, SDC-2102

Chair: Jessica Trussell
Vice-Chair: Mark Rosica
Communications Officer: Austin Gehret

Attending: Mark Rosica, Austin Gehret, Adriana Kulakowski, Catherine Clark, Tao Eng, Patti Durr, Sandra Bradley

Absent: Jessica Trussell (Excused), Jennifer Gravitz, Edward Mineck, Marcus Holmes

Notetaker: Austin Gehret

Agenda Item	Discussion / Status	Action Items
1. Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Announcements: n/a 	
2. Review previous meeting Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review of 2/26/19 minutes: ● Vote on 2/26/19 Minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Motion: Austin ● Second: Catherine ● Approved – unanimous 	
3. CEOCA report subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Background: CEOCA report was within the top five issues raised by faculty last year. Would this report offer up information as to current thinking to NTID’s identity (i.e., is NTID positioning itself to be a bilingual institution? If so, how is that being modeled? How will this report continue to have an impact on NTID’s communication philosophy?) ● The CEOCA subcommittee of NFC reviewed each recommendation from the CEOCA report (appendix) and presented on their findings to NFC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation 1: administrative response was to refer the new wording to the NTID SD2025 team. Subcommittee learned that NTID’s SD2025 team would soon be set up after having awaited the RIT Board of Trustees approving RIT’s 2025 Strategic Plan. Denise Kavin, Rich Dirmeyer (co-chairs) for NTID’s SD2025 ○ Recommendation 2: administration agreed to recommendation. If NFC approves, the Subcommittee could attend an the student organization Tuesday night meetings (NTID Student Assembly) or email NSC to gauge student opinion on how this renewed commitment is proceeding. ○ Recommendation 3: administration agreed to removed definitions of ASL and English ○ Recommendations 4 and 5: administration agreed to recommendation but with clarification made to the definition of “bilingual.” Subcommittee asks the question as to how NTID is currently “functioning” as bilingual and encouraging students to develop their ASL skills 	

	<p>since there seems to be a lack of public commitment towards this. How are, and how many classes are being taught bilingually at NTID?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation 6: administration agreed to changing personal choice/preference to personal responsibility. One suggestion was for NFC members to inquire within departments about how personal responsibility for ASL and English is being implemented. An email could be drafted that will go to department chairs ahead of any inquiry. ○ Recommendation 7: Administration agreed that the proposed bilingual direct instruction model proposal should be assigned to the SD2025 committee to investigate the appropriateness of this recommendation. Subcommittee needs to follow up with the SD2025 committee to confirm if this is included in their list of charges. ○ Recommendation 8: Administration acknowledged that signing with voice may not be suitable for all NTID classrooms. Subcommittee wanted to investigate (old and new) LCBQ data to determine student characteristics and to inquire how professors are determining students' communication needs in the classroom. LCBQ data will be forthcoming from Peter Hauser. Access Services was limited in what they could release to the subcommittee regarding requests made by students. ○ Recommendation 9: Administration responded that FDI process has been replaced with requests through Access Services and requested additional input from CEOCA about appointing a dedicated NTID administrator to handle NTID classroom language/communication concerns. Denise Kavin, the former Chair of the CEOCA is functioning as the contact person. ○ Recommendation 10: Administration agreed to the recommendation with a request from CEOCA for further information on how best to address. Subcommittee could follow up with CEOCA to confirm if they provided this additional information to administration. ○ Recommendation 11: Administration agreed to the recommendation with a request from CEOCA for further information on how best to address. 	
<p>4. Provost visit to NTID, 4/18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provost Granberg will be visiting with NTID next month from 2:30-4:00pm in SDC 1300/1310. Reps are asked to encourage their department constituents to attend this event. A college-wide email invitation will be forthcoming from NFC's Ex. Cmte to the Reps encouraging participation.. 	
<p>5. Workload survey preview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workload was #1 priority for NFC following last spring's survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In fall, Austin and Jessica began work on a workload survey tailored to the current workload expectations guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mark will help Austin with making the necessary additions that

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jessica and Mark consulted with AVPAA about running a workload survey. Gary Behm was supportive of the idea as long as the survey reflected the guidelines faithfully. ○ Austin made changes to the survey during the current semester to respect those wishes. Previewing today, asking for endorsement by NFC. ● Support Faculty Workload Assessment (SFWA) committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is interest among members in this committee to collaborate with NFC as part of their charge involves reviewing current workload distribution within and among different departments. They are convening Thursday and would like to review survey in its current form. We need to find out who assembled and formally charged this committee before proceeding. ● Overload is currently a big issue for workload at NTID and is seen as not applied consistently across departments. The survey, in its current form, does not address overload in any manner. This needs to be resolved before the SFWA committee has an opportunity to make revisions. 	<p>address overload before next week's meeting.</p>
<p>6. Terms of service expiring this semester?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NFC reps with terms expiring 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Marcus will serve a second consecutive term (expiring 2022) ● NFC officer elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No volunteers for communications officer have come forth yet. ○ Elections will be held April 30th. 	
<p>7. Next Meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Next meeting 3/26, 12-1:30pm Mark and Austin will meet with Katie Schmitz and find out the status of the Communication TF recommendations we forwarded to the administration. Hopefully this will be discussed at our 3/26 meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review/modify/discuss the workload survey

Recommendations from the NTID Committee on Equal Opportunity, Communication and Access (CEOCA) and Actions Planned by NTID

April 2017

The Committee on Equal Opportunity, Communication and Access (CEOCA) was formed by NTID President Dr. Gerard Buckley to address language and communication concerns raised by the student-led Communication Access Now (CAN) movement in fall semester 2015. CEOCA members included three faculty, three staff and three students, as well as two co-chairs.

The committee was asked to review core institutional philosophies and values as written in Strategic Decisions 2020 and to better delineate NTID's position on language, communication and access in the classroom. The committee was also tasked with reviewing language and classroom-related communication practice recommendations made by other committees, present and past.

In December 2016, the CEOCA submitted their final report to President Buckley. In January 2017, President Buckley and the NTID Administrative Council (NAC), reviewed the report and made decisions on how to proceed. What follows is a summary of the recommendations made by CEOCA along with the NAC response and approved action.

It is important to point out that the CEOCA submitted its recommendations prior to the January 19, 2017 announcement by Dr. Buckley entitled "Moving Forward." The Moving Forward decisions included two major changes in the communications area that the CEOCA was investigating.

The first change involved a refinement of the NTID access Model, enabling all NTID students to request access services for NTID classes effective in Spring semester 2017. This new access model replaces the Flexible Direct Instruction model and has been positively received in its first few months of operation. The second change was the establishment of Advanced American Sign Language skills as the standard for faculty tenure and promotion, effective in 2018 with no exceptions. NTID is working to develop multiple tools for ASL skill assessment and to provide additional ASL training to assist faculty in meeting this new standard.

NTID began the Strategic Planning process back in the early 1990's prior to RIT's first efforts. Since that time, the processes have not aligned as they should. To better align NTID's planning processes with the greater University's 2025 Strategic Plan, NTID will begin a Strategic Planning 2025 update beginning in the 2017 – 2018 academic year. The NTID SD2025 process will use the RIT 2025 Plan as a point of reference and will be charged with reviewing several of the recommendations made by the CEOCA Committee.

Finally, it is important to stress once again that NTID will remain focused on its fundamental mission of preparing deaf and hard of hearing students to live and work in the mainstream of a rapidly changing global community. NTID will remain committed to preparing our students

for career success and developing the wide range of technical, professional and communication skills necessary to compete in the global workforce.

Recommendation #1- Institutional Values

The committee recommends revising the current list of Institutional Values (SD 2020, p. 3) to the following:

1. Excellence, integrity, credibility, social justice and equality;
2. Innovation in preparing students for lifelong learning and resiliency;
3. Cultural diversity, competencies and intersectionality including deaf and hearing cultures;
4. Acknowledging and practicing both ASL and English as the languages of our bilingual educational community, while continually developing competencies in both languages;
5. Social-emotive development including identity, resilience, leadership and self-advocacy skills;
6. Collaboration in instruction, scholarship and college service;
7. Shared governance, open dialogue and transparency; and
8. Access to incidental learning in and out of the classroom

Response:

The CEOCA was asked to use SD2020's core set of supporting institutional values (SD2020 p. 3) as a framework and foundation for understanding NTID's plans through 2020. The CEOCA has proposed revisions to the current listing of institutional values. The proposed changes will be referred for consideration by the 2025 Strategic Planning Committee that will be established in 2018. The NAC recognizes the value of the proposed changes and looks forward to a full community review process beginning in 2018. It is also important to recognize that RIT has established a set of Institutional Values as part of its Strategic Decisions 2025 process and consideration of integrating the University's values should be part of the next NTID strategic planning process.

Recommendation #2- Renewed Commitment to Diverse Student Body

The committee recommends revising the first paragraph under the section, "Renewed Commitment to Diverse Student Body" on page 9 of SD 2020 as follows:

ORIGINAL:

We reaffirm the diversity of our student body as central to our institutional identity serving as a fundamental source of enrichment for our enterprise. NTID will continue its commitment to admit and support qualified AALANA students; qualified students who use American Sign Language, spoken English, and both American Sign Language and spoken English, and qualified students with secondary disabilities and diverse learning characteristics.

PROPOSED:

We reaffirm the diversity of our student body as central to our institutional identity, serving as a fundamental source of enrichment for our enterprise. NTID will continue its commitment to admit and support qualified students of all cultures and backgrounds, students who use the languages of American Sign Language and English, and students with secondary disabilities and diverse learning characteristics.

AND

ORIGINAL: (p. 17)

Our students bring diverse languages and communication abilities and preferences to our educational community, and we wholeheartedly welcome them. The key qualities of NTID's communication environment are diversity and inclusiveness; our goal is to respect this diversity and strive towards inclusiveness.

PROPOSED:

Our students bring diverse communication modalities to our educational community, and we wholeheartedly welcome them. The key qualities of NTID's communication environment are diversity and inclusiveness; our goal is to respect this diversity and strive towards inclusiveness.

This presents an opportunity to move away from communication 'systems' and signs to academic languages, which has been a serious gap in deaf education. Instead, we should use these 'systems' to build and enhance language and cultural literacy.

Response:

We will accept this recommendation, stressing that NTID will continue its commitment to admit and support qualified students: (1) of all cultures and backgrounds; (2) who use the languages of American Sign Language and/or English in all of their forms; and (3) with secondary disabilities and diverse learning characteristics.

Recommendation #3- Defining American Sign Language

The committee recommends deleting the text defining English and ASL on pages 9 – 10 of the Strategic Decisions 2020 document in its entirety. We do not recommend posting a formal definition of either English or ASL, as there are no uniformly accepted definitions for them.

ORIGINAL:

“With regard to communication diversity, we take as a defining frame of reference the 1992 Strategic Plan’s approach to English and American Sign Language as follows:

“By English is meant the spoken, written and signed forms of English. By American Sign Language is meant the range of form from meaning-based, English-like signing with ASL features to more purely structured American Sign Language.”

Response:

We accept the Committee’s recommendation to delete the text defining English and ASL on pages 9 – 10 of the Strategic Decisions 2020 document in its entirety.

Recommendation #4- Commitment to an Inclusive NTID Community

The committee recommends revising the ‘Communication’ section re: communication and language use (SD 2020, pages 17-18) as follows:

ORIGINAL: (page 17)

“Our students bring diverse languages and communication abilities and preferences to our educational community, and we wholeheartedly welcome them. The key qualities of NTID’s communication environment are diversity and inclusiveness; our goal is to respect this diversity and strive towards inclusiveness.”

PROPOSED:

“Our faculty, staff and students bring diverse communication modalities to our educational community, and we wholeheartedly welcome them. The key qualities of NTID’s bi-lingual and multi-cultural environment are diversity and inclusiveness; our goal is to respect this diversity and strive towards inclusiveness.”

Response:

We will accept this recommendation as proposed, noting that “bilingual” means that ASL and English are both used in instruction and throughout NTID, and that NTID will continue to strongly encourage all students to develop their ASL skills.

Recommendation #5- Recognizing ASL and English as the Languages of the Academic Community

The committee recommends revising this section as follows: (SD 2020, page. 17)

ORIGINAL: (page. 17)

“We reaffirm for Strategic Decisions 2020 the tenet established in the 1992 strategic planning document: the hallmark of our community is recognizing, studying and using English and ASL as the languages of our educational community, with all community members sharing responsibility for respecting the language preferences of students and colleagues”

PROPOSED:

NTID acknowledges ASL as a legitimate language and recognizes itself as a bilingual institution where both ASL and English are equally respected and valued as languages of instruction and learning.

The hallmark of the NTID community should be recognizing, studying and using English and ASL as the languages of our bilingual educational community, with all members sharing responsibility for acknowledging the varied language competencies of our students and colleagues.

Response:

We will accept this recommendation as proposed, noting, as above, that “bilingual” means that ASL and English are both used in instruction and throughout NTID, and that NTID will continue to strongly encourage all students to develop their ASL skills.

Recommendation #6- Changing ‘Personal Choice/Preference’ to ‘Personal Responsibility’

ORIGINAL: (p. 18)

For a student, decisions about communication and language use in the classroom, co-curricular activities and social interactions are matters of personal choice in the context of shared responsibility for supporting the understanding of others.

For a faculty/staff member, decisions about communication and language are matters of professional responsibility in meeting students’ communication needs in the classroom, co-curricular activities and social interactions. Faculty and staff are expected to fulfill the educational responsibilities of facilitating communication through respecting and accommodating the languages and communication

preferences and needs of the individual students with whom they work, and of serving as role models for students in doing so. Within the teaching/learning partnership, faculty/staff are expected to do everything possible to meet a student's existing characteristics with regard to communication and language, with students expected to continuously develop their communication and language skills and versatility over time.

PROPOSED:

Members of the NTID community – administrators, faculty, staff and students- need to be cognizant of their own competencies and needs when it comes to using ASL and English. Our institutional responsibility is to model and provide clear, effective use of both languages.

Each member also has a personal responsibility for clear language use—ASL and English—both within the classroom and out, as well as a responsibility for ensuring understanding of and by others.

Response:

We will accept this recommendation as modified below:

NTID administrators, faculty and staff need to be cognizant of their own competencies and needs when it comes to using American Sign Language and English. Our institutional responsibility is to model and provide clear, effective use of both languages. As such, our administrators, faculty and staff bear a personal responsibility for clear language use—ASL and English—both within the classroom and out, as well as a responsibility for ensuring understanding of and by others.

NTID will continue to strongly encourage all students to develop their competencies in both American Sign Language and English.

Recommendation #7- Bilingual Direct Instruction Model

PROPOSED:

The committee recommends renaming the 'Direct Instruction' model, to 'Bilingual Direct Instruction' model.

Response:

We agree that it is time to review how NTID's model of direct instruction is operationalized within the new access model that is currently being implemented. We will ask the SD2025 to Committee, which will be formed in 2018, to evaluate the appropriateness of this

recommendation. It is important to remind ourselves that we are in the first semester of a major change in our Access Model and need time and experience to evaluate how best to describe the evolving model of direct instruction at NTID.

Recommendation #8- Sign with Voice

PROPOSED:

The committee does not support using the 'sign with voice' approach as a solution to language and communication struggles in the classroom. This sentiment was expressed quite often, quite strongly, during the community forums and via the online survey.

There are instances in which specific individuals effectively communicate using both sign and speech simultaneously. However, sign with voice does not necessarily have a place in classrooms where there are students of diverse competencies in ASL and English. This was also expressed during a student panel discussion at the November 19th, 2016 Convocation at NTID.

Response:

We acknowledge the committee's recommendation that signing with voice does not necessarily have a place in all NTID classrooms.

Faculty at NTID remain responsible for ensuring that, to the extent possible, classroom communication and language use is accessible and clear to all students. With the change in the access model that was recently implemented, students in NTID classrooms are able to request and receive access services when necessary. NTID will continue to provide training and support to faculty to ensure that they are meeting the needs of students.

Recommendation #9- Flexibility in Direct Instruction (FDI)

PROPOSED:

The committee recognizes that the Flexibility in Direct Instruction (FDI) process is a positive step in our mission to provide effective classroom accommodations. This process is relatively new, and we realize that NTID is continuing to tweak and improve it. Suggestions for improvement include:

- Clarification of the difference between 'language' usage and 'communication' systems in all relevant documents
- Ease of access by students, faculty and staff

- Adding FDI information to NTID's MyAccess website
- Transparency regarding the review and determination process
- Continuing to differentiate FDI from access services, and services for students with disabilities
- Being cognizant of the needs of Deafblind students

AND

The committee suggests that NTID consider delegating a qualified, dedicated administrator to serve as the central point of contact for coordinating all issues and concerns related to the use of language and communication in the classroom, including the FDI process. A possibility is to integrate this with the new Chief Diversity Officer position.

Response:

FDI has been replaced with a new access model, and RIT's Disability Services Office continues to evaluate reasonable and necessary accommodations for disabilities unrelated to deafness. Given this, we are requesting additional input from the committee on its recommendation for a "qualified, dedicated administrator to serve as the central point of contact for coordinating all issues and concerns related to the use of language and communication in the classroom."

Recommendation #10- Differentiating between Language and Communication

The committee recommends that the NTID community, including faculty, staff, students and administrators, be mindful of and continue dialogue about differentiating between language (specifically, ASL and English) and communication (how information is delivered). Merriam-Webster defines communication as:

"...the act or process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviors to express or exchange information or to express your ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc., to someone else."

The committee is working with the natural assumption that fluency in ASL and English leads to effective communication skills, not the other way around. NTID has had a tendency to use the terms 'language' and 'communication' interchangeably which has led to much confusion. These two terms are two very different things.

In a survey, a faculty member captures this sentiment succinctly: "If all you needed to be a successful educator was to know the language (any language), we wouldn't need methodologies and strategies."

Response:

We will accept this recommendation and request additional information from the committee on how this can best be addressed.

Recommendation #11- Communicating with External Publics

The committee has the following recommendations:

- For NTID to be successful in recruiting students, we need to find ways to communicate with diverse audiences and help them see how they can fit into the RIT/NTID culture while embracing their diversity.
- NTID must understand the current and future student population and structure itself to be responsive and appealing to this population. NTID should present itself as an opportunity to become immersed in such a unique academic environment, the only model of its kind in the world.
- Administrator, faculty and staff must be better informed about the diversity of the target audience and better understand the marketing strategies employed by Admissions to get prospective students to enroll.

Response:

We accept this recommendation.

Appendix A- Additional Recommendations

The CEOCA Co-Chairs will be asked to work with the Office of the President and identify appropriate entities and individuals to follow up on the recommendations contained in Appendix A.