

March 2, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

We are rapidly approaching the mid-point of the semester and spring break. The semester is going very well and we are working to carefully and thoughtfully lift COVID-19 restrictions as conditions improve in our region.

### **COVID-19 UPDATES**

#### **COVID-19 Vaccination Update and Masking Practices**

The deadline for uploading proof of [COVID-19 vaccination boosters](#) into Oracle has been delayed until the end of the semester. This action was taken in response to a number of factors that indicate the prevalence and impact of COVID-19 is rapidly dropping in our region. As we continue to see these declines, the university leadership is planning for the next steps in our COVID-19 response. The next major milestone is the week after we return from spring break. If conditions continue to improve, changes to current restrictions look likely. Until then, the mask mandate will continue.

#### **Stay Informed**

The [RIT Safety Plan](#) continues to guide our COVID-19 response and the [RIT Ready](#) website is the best source for staying informed. I encourage you to check both frequently as we move to lifting restrictions and returning to more normal operations.

### **SPRING SEMESTER UPDATES**

#### **Registration Update**

Shopping carts open on Monday, March 21, for fall 2022 registration and enrollment begins on Monday, April 4, 2022. As a result of feedback received from recent pulse surveys completed by both students and faculty, colleges have the option of scheduling up to 15% of their courses online.

For summer registration, shopping carts open on March 14 and enrollments begins on March 21. There is no cap on the number of online courses colleges may offer.

#### **Search Updates**

Work continues on three critical searches for Academic Affairs. The search for the [next dean of GCCIS](#) is progressing well. The searches for the next associate provost/dean of the RIT Graduate School and associate provost/dean for Undergraduate Education/Student Success are also underway. All three searches should be completed by early fall.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

It is exciting to see the many events and activities planned for the remainder of the semester. I have highlighted just a few below.

#### **Critically Thinking about our COVID Stories**

The Fram advisory boards and the COVID Stories planning committee invite all of our campus community members to participate in sharing our individual COVID stories, making meaning from our experience, and building momentum for moving forward. I encourage you to consider participating in at least one session of this upcoming event. Sessions include teaching and learning, work/life balance, the student experience, misinformation and more. This event will be held on Tuesday, March 15. For more details on the virtual sessions and to register, please click [here](#).

### Outstanding Undergraduate Scholar Awards

I invite you to join the celebration of [RIT's Outstanding Undergraduate Scholars](#) at a ceremony and reception on Thursday, March 17, in the Gordon Field House and Activities Center. The ceremony begins at 5:30 and will be immediately followed by a reception. All participants and guests will be required to wear masks and show proof of vaccination; faculty, staff and students can show their [RIT SpiRIT pass](#).

### Guest Speaker: Nadine Strossen

In continuing efforts to create a culture of free speech on our campus, former ACLU president Nadine Strossen will give a talk later this month on her recent book, HATE: Why We Should Resist It with Free Speech, Not Censorship. For more details about this talk scheduled for March 30, please click [here](#).

### Honoring Outstanding Faculty and Staff

The Celebration of Teaching and Scholarship, honoring the 2021-2022 recipients of university awards for excellence in teaching, scholarship, advising, and more, will be held on April 12, 2022, in Ingle Auditorium. The ceremony will be immediately followed by a reception in the Davis Room. For details, click [here](#).

### Commencement Speaker Announced

After two years of modified commencement ceremonies, planning is underway for in-person commencement ceremonies on Friday and Saturday, May 6-7. [Kimberly Bryant](#), entrepreneur and founder of Black Girls CODE will be the keynote speaker at the Academic Convocation on Friday, May 6, starting at 10 a.m. in the Gordon Field House and Activities Center. Ms. Bryant, along with 2020 Commencement Speaker Jody Powell, former director of the Peace Corps, and former RIT Minnett Professor G. Peter Jemison, an artist, filmmaker, and leading authority on Haudenosaunee history, will receive honorary doctorates during the Academic Convocation. For more information about 2022 Commencement, please click [here](#).

### Provost's Office Hours

Provost's Office Hours will continue monthly through the rest of the semester. Each office hour includes an update on the university's response to COVID, important news relevant to Academic Affairs, and time for questions. Notes and presentations are posted on the [Office of the Provost website](#) following each session. All faculty and staff in Academic Affairs are welcome. You may [register here](#).

### FINALLY...

I encourage all Academic Affairs staff to take advantage of the recently announced [Staff Appreciation Paid Day Off](#). You have all worked so hard to keep students and faculty on track throughout the pandemic and I hope this time away will be helpful as we close out the academic year. I am grateful to everyone – faculty, staff and students – for upholding RIT's health and public safety measures. Your work has kept us well, our campus open, and we are well positioned to continue our transition to living with COVID. Thank you for your efforts.

As always, I encourage you to reach out with your questions and concerns by sending an email to [provost@rit.edu](mailto:provost@rit.edu). Have a wonderful spring break!

Sincerely,

Ellen Granberg, Ph.D.  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs