



**Dean, Undergraduate Studies and Associate Provost for Student Success
Rochester, New York**

THE SEARCH

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) seeks a highly collaborative and ambitious senior level academic administrator to serve as its first Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Associate Provost for Student Success. The dean will have an exceptional opportunity to champion the quality of the undergraduate academic student experience at RIT and to bolster the extraordinary reputation of the university and its students across the nation and the globe.

RIT has seen improvement in some key student success metrics over the past several years, and the dean will ensure that RIT continues this progress, particularly as it relates to six-year graduation rates and student success gaps. The dean will report to the provost and work closely with deans across campus as well as coordinate with university functional units to develop and implement policies that will lead to greater student success. The dean will be a strategic thinker and an adept relationship builder, using firsthand knowledge of the evolving landscape of undergraduate education to be an effective communicator, advocate, and partner. They will also play an important role in facilitating cross-college conversations that support development of innovative undergraduate curriculum.

RIT was founded in 1829 and today is a nationally ranked doctoral university that prepares students for success in a globally integrated society. Over the past 10 years, RIT has seen advancement in every key institutional metric. Applications have increased 70 percent. Enrollment has grown 20 percent to nearly 19,000 students, with both student caliber and the diversity of the student population on the rise. Cooperative education, a pillar in the university's educational philosophy, has thrived, both domestically and internationally, helping to demonstrate the value of an RIT education with a 95 percent post-graduation employment rate. Faculty have grown in number, diversity, and scholarly stature as RIT has increased its research productivity while remaining deeply student focused. Transforming RIT: The Campaign for Greatness, a \$1 billion fundraising campaign that was publicly announced in July 2018, is focused on continuing to advance these hallmarks of the university. As of November 2021, the Campaign raised \$842 million of its total goal.

RIT seeks an innovative leader and an exceptional communicator with demonstrated experience and achievement in improving student success. The dean will develop and implement new strategies to meet key student success goals in the university's current strategic plan and beyond; foster collaboration across multiple university constituencies; and continue to foster an environment that is diverse, inclusive, caring, and committed to the student populations that RIT serves; partner with the deans and their teams to remove barriers to success; and use data to inform and evaluate strategy.

RIT has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in this recruitment. All inquiries, nominations, and applications with cover letters should be submitted in confidence to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

Rochester Institute of Technology

[Rochester Institute of Technology](#) is home to leading creators, entrepreneurs, innovators, and researchers. The university enrolls 16,668 undergraduates and 3,050 graduate students in more than 200 programs and across nine academic colleges, four international campuses, as well as other degree-granting units, making it among the largest private universities in the U.S. RIT is internationally [recognized and ranked](#) for academic leadership in business, computing, engineering, imaging science, liberal arts, sustainability, and fine and applied arts. RIT is also home to the [National Technical Institute for the Deaf](#) and offers unparalleled support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The [cooperative education program](#) is one of the oldest and largest in the nation. [Global partnerships](#) include several international campuses. The university revised its 2025 strategic plan, [Greatness Through Difference](#), in the fall of 2018. The plan leverages RIT's unique history with a renewed focus to use the interdisciplinary power of technology, the arts, and design to shape the future and the world.

In 2019, RIT moved into the high research activity institution or "R2" category under the updated Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Learning, ranking it among the top six percent of colleges and universities in the nation for research activity. *U.S. News and World Report (USNWR)* now ranks RIT No. 117 in its "National Universities" category. The publication also ranks RIT No. 12 in the U.S. for co-op or internship programs and No. 52 among best-value schools. Sponsored research awards totaled \$82 million in fiscal year 2020. Today, RIT counts more than 135,000 alumni around the world. Its endowment is currently valued at more than \$930 million, and the university benefits from sound financial management. For more information on RIT, please see the appendix at the end of the document.

Leadership

President Munson

RIT is led by Dr. David C. Munson, Jr., who became the 10th President of Rochester Institute of Technology in 2017. Dr. Munson has 40 years of experience in higher education, which includes serving as the Robert J. Vlasic Dean of Engineering at Michigan from 2006 to 2016. He earned his BS degree in electrical engineering (with distinction) from the University of Delaware in 1975. He earned an MS, MA, and PhD in electrical engineering from Princeton University.

Provost Granberg

Ellen Granberg, PhD, became the first woman to serve as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at RIT in August 2018. As the university's chief academic officer, Dr. Granberg oversees nine colleges, two degree-granting units, and the international campuses. Key initiatives under Dr. Granberg's leadership include increasing undergraduate student success, expanding doctoral education, improving facilities for instruction and research, and leveraging RIT's strengths in innovation, creativity, and cross-disciplinary collaboration to advance the academic mission of the university. Before coming to RIT, Dr. Granberg served as the Senior Associate Provost and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs at Clemson University. Dr. Granberg holds a BA in history from the University of California at Davis and an MA and PhD in sociology from Vanderbilt University.

Student Success

RIT's Greatness through Difference 2018-2025 Strategic Plan lists improving student success across a variety of metrics as one of the university's key goals. Specifically, it has set a goal of an on-time graduation rate of 60 percent and a six-year graduation rate of 78 percent by 2025. The university has experienced significant improvement in on-time graduation rates for four and five-year programs, increasing from 49 percent in the 2016-17 school year to 58 percent in the 2020-21 year. While on-time graduation rates are on target to exceed the strategic plan goals by 2025, improvement of the six-year graduation rate has been slower. The rate for 2021 was 70.8 percent after the university set an all-time high of 72.7 percent the previous year.

The university has also made some progress toward closing the graduation rate gap for ALANA (African, Latin, Asian, and Native American) students, with a current gap of 10 percent and falling, approaching the strategic plan goal of 8 percent or less. First year persistence has also been improving and stands at 87.5 percent, compared to the 2025 goal of 93 percent.

Such success has been made possible by strategic efforts, including but not limited to, the implementation of a professional advisor model and curricular management system; mandated advising in years 1 and 2; the use of predictive analytics and alert systems; and a strong focus on underrepresented student success. Existing support structures to achieve these goals include robust [Academic Support](#) units, including the Academic Success Center, Academic Advising, the Expressive Communication Center, and more.

In looking for further ways to monitor and advance student achievement, RIT is piloting a student success predictive analytics model to see how students are progressing each semester. Highly trained faculty and staff at RIT can use this model to pinpoint where the area of difficulty lies for every student and step in to assist. The pilot program began in the 2019-2020 academic year. RIT also recognizes the critical role of faculty in student success and retention, particularly in first year courses. That is why it has committed to hiring 40 innovative and collaborative faculty members over the next five years, with a particular focus on increasing the number and percent of female faculty in STEM fields and African American, Latin American, and Native American faculty in all fields. Finally, the dean will need to understand that improving student success will come as a result of changes made beyond academic structural improvements. Critical too will be the health of the less tangible but equally important sense of belonging and community each student needs to thrive. The dean will need to take these mental and physical health needs into account as they make changes to support students from all angles.

ROLE OF THE DEAN

The dean will report to the provost and oversee the Office of the Registrar, the university Advising Office, and the Innovative Learning Institute (ILI). Direct reports will include the executive director of the ILI, assistant vice president for student success, university writing program director, associate vice president for academic affairs and registrar, the Eugene Fram chair of applied critical thinking in academic affairs, and an administrative assistant. The dean will also chair the Student Success Steering Committee.

The dean holds ultimate responsibility for the quality of the undergraduate academic experience. Broadly, this refers to improving measures of student success, supporting the development of innovative and interdisciplinary curricula, and ensuring maximum effectiveness of the undergraduate education infrastructure. They will need to work in partnership with enrollment, student affairs, finance &

administration, academic leadership, and senior leadership in order to garner university-wide attention and buy-in to the efforts that will advance these critical elements of the RIT undergraduate experience.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE NEXT DEAN

The next Dean will address the following opportunities and challenges:

Achieve key student success goals by 2025 and foster a university-wide aspiration to continuously improve student outcomes

As a research university with a strong reputation for student engagement and preparation, maintaining and improving the educational experience for students and ensuring their success is a paramount goal that is spelled out specifically in the university's strategic plan. Although the metrics in the plan provide ambitious short-term goals, the work on improving student success at RIT will continue after they have been achieved. Achieving and building upon these goals within the context of a large and academically diverse campus with a growing research mission will present challenges. The next dean must be a creative and action-oriented leader who will make decisions informed by data and with the support of college and university leadership. They will bring their expertise to bear not only in assessing current work and leading new initiatives, but also in communicating the importance of continuing the work across all academic units and functional areas at the university. They will advocate for support and resources, thinking critically about efforts and outcomes, analyzing data, and participating in the national conversation around student success to position RIT as a national leader in this area.

Continue to foster an environment that is diverse, inclusive, caring, and committed to the student populations that RIT serves

As a leading research university with a strong commitment to the principles of diversity and inclusion, RIT expects the dean to help foster an environment in which all members of the university community may learn, live, and work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and nondiscrimination. This individual will be committed to RIT's status as a diverse academic community and work to ensure that student success efforts continue to uniquely support the needs of all students. This will include closely following student success outcomes of different student groups and working with faculty and staff to address pedagogical, financial, or cultural issues that exacerbate the student success gap.

Facilitate conversations across colleges to develop interdisciplinary programs

RIT's unique position as a university that intentionally blends technology, the arts, and design presents many opportunities for interdisciplinary programs that can't be found at other institutions. The dean will play an important role in helping develop these collaborations and enable colleges to navigate barriers to innovation around the undergraduate curriculum. The dean will serve as a convener and connective tissue between colleges, enriching RIT's already distinctive academic environment.

Opportunities abound to work in partnership with deans and associate deans across colleges to launch cohesive degree programs, both in person and online, in emerging fields such as environmental sciences, gaming, and artificial intelligence.

Partner with deans and their teams to remove barriers to success.

The dean will lead its team in supporting the colleges and their efforts to improve student success, functioning as a true partner and expert to enhance current practices and enable colleges to develop new initiatives that can be tracked and assessed. An understanding of the challenges faced by the colleges will enable the dean to apply a lens of organizational innovation to incentivize and champion initiatives to address student success. The dean will encourage strategies critical to improvement, including but not limited to evaluating program curricula to identify bottleneck courses, engaging faculty and staff at the college and program level in improving student success, and encouraging partnership with enrollment management to better understand admitted students' readiness.

Other key relationships to cultivate at the college level will be with associate deans, chairs, and advisors. The dean will need to reflect upon its team's existing student success partnerships and develop and refine those working relationships in pursuit of new collaborations. The successful candidate will work to understand how all parties' workloads, limitations, and expectations shape undergraduate student success and which levers can be pulled to lighten loads and focus energy on common goals.

Use data to inform strategy and evaluate success.

The dean will need to be able to sift through a massive amount of available information to draw accurate conclusions and set appropriate goals that drive creative initiatives forward. Partnering with institutional research and enrollment management to inform strategy, the dean will analyze data and seek out opportunities to better understand issues holding back student success in various contexts. It will be the responsibility of the dean to find ways to better understand the changing landscape of students at RIT and work across the university to support evolving student needs.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

RIT seeks a dean with exemplary academic achievement coupled with strategic vision, energy, creativity, and dynamism. They should be an outstanding communicator, with the interpersonal skills and charisma to connect with a broad campus audience, including senior university leadership, faculty, staff, and students. The successful candidate will bring many of the following skills and qualities:

- A record of scholarly achievement appropriate for appointment as a tenured full professor at RIT;
- A record of demonstrated success in improving student outcomes;
- An exceptional collaborator and convener of people who grows interpersonal relationships while advancing toward an overarching goal;
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills and excellent interpersonal skills that build trust;
- Superb listener;
- Demonstrated ability to build trust and manage through influence with constituencies at all levels;
- Demonstrated history of using data to drive decisions;
- Demonstrated commitment to principles and practices promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion and fostering an environment that welcomes and respects people from all backgrounds;
- Deep devotion to student-centered, experiential learning, and the ability to support it conscientiously and effectively;
- Unimpeachable character and personal integrity; humility and ambition appreciated;

- Empathy and a genuine desire to see others succeed and do good in the world;
- A politically adept problem solver with well-honed problem-solving skills and experience navigating a large organization.

TO APPLY

RIT has engaged Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the firm as directed below.

Greg Esposito, Partner

Ellen Egitton, Associate

Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/search-detail/S8-315>

RIT does not discriminate. RIT promotes and values diversity, pluralism, and inclusion in the workplace. RIT provides equal opportunity to all qualified individuals and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, age, marital status, sex, gender, religion, sexual orientations, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, veteran status, or disability in its hiring, admissions, educational programs, and activities. For more information or inquiries, please visit [RIT/TitleIX](#) or the U.S. Department of Education at <https://www.ed.gov/>

The hiring process for this position may require a criminal background check and/or motor vehicle records check. Any verbal or written offer made is contingent on satisfactory results, as determined by RIT's Human Resources. RIT uses E-Verify to confirm employment eligibility for new and existing employees working on federally funded contracts that contain that requirement. Before considering employment with RIT, please read the language from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Social Security Administration and the Department of Justice by clicking on the associated links below:

- [English E-Verify Participation Poster](#)
- [Spanish E-Verify Participation Poster](#)
- [English Right to Work Poster](#)
- [Spanish Right to Work Poster](#)

You must have Adobe reader to view these posters.

RIT provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities under the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the New York Human Rights Law, or similar applicable law. If you need reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, and you wish to discuss potential accommodations related to your application for employment at RIT, please contact Isaacson, Miller as indicated above.

Clery Act Safety Information:

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) is committed to the safety and security of all members of its community. The Clery Act information is provided in compliance with federal law to inform current and potential RIT students and employees of crime reporting procedures; Campus Safety law enforcement authority; crime statistics for three previous calendar years; and other matters of importance related to safety and security on campus. You can obtain a copy of the annual Safety and Security report online at: <http://www.rit.edu/fo/publicsafety/federalcompliance.html> and selecting the link for the Annual Fire and Safety Report or by contacting the Office of Public Safety at (585)475-2853 or by sending a request to RIT Public Safety 61 Lomb Memorial Drive Rochester, NY 14623-5603.

APPENDIX

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

History

From its beginnings, RIT has been deeply connected to the educational and practical training needs of citizenry and industry. The university's roots go back to 1829 when the city's founder established the Rochester Athenaeum, a literary society that offered public lectures and debates and attracted such luminaries as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Oliver Wendell Holmes. In 1891, the Athenaeum merged with the Mechanics Institute, which had been created and funded by local business and community leaders to provide technical training to meet local industry's growing demand for skilled workers. The merged institution—the Rochester Athenaeum and Mechanics Institute—combined cultural education and practical technical training. In 1912, cooperative education was added to the programmatic mix and the core foundation was in place for Rochester Institute of Technology, as it has been named since 1944.

In 1968, RIT left downtown Rochester for a 1,300-acre new campus in the suburban town of Henrietta. The new landscape also led to RIT being chosen as the home campus for the federally sponsored National Technical Institute for the Deaf. Since the original campus opened, the university has added 50 more buildings, eight PhD programs, and several international locations.

Diversity and Inclusion

RIT has long recognized the importance of diversity for enriching the educational experience and preparing students for productive lives as professionals and community members. The university has been recognized as a prestigious "Diversity Champion" by *INSIGHT into Diversity* magazine for four consecutive years (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019). In addition, RIT is a five-time recipient of the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award, recognizing colleges and universities that demonstrate outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. Adding a social and educational dynamic not found at any other university are nearly 1,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing students supported by RIT's [National Technical Institute for the Deaf](#). The Division of Diversity & Inclusion works collaboratively with academic and administrative units to provide a holistic range of services and support. Collaboratively, the division enhances access and success for historically underrepresented students, faculty and staff, along with supporting education and scholarship, in addition to ensuring a welcoming, inclusive, vibrant, and accessible environment for everyone.

Governance and Administration

Rochester Institute of Technology is governed by the Board of Trustees, consisting of 49 active trustees, including the president of RIT and representatives of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, the Women's Council of RIT, and the National Advisory Group of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, plus 31 individuals holding emeritus or honorary status.

University Council is an integral part of shared governance at RIT. It brings together representatives from the three governance groups of the university: Academic Senate, Staff Council, and Student Government. The president, provost, vice presidents, and deans are also represented on the Council, which addresses university-level policies and facilitates communication among the constituents of the university.

Rochester, New York

Situated between Lake Ontario and the scenic Finger Lakes region, Rochester is the third largest metro area in New York. As of the 2010 census, the metropolitan statistical area had a population of 1.08 million. The region is rich in cultural and ethnic diversity and is known for its intellectual capital, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit. *Scientific Reports* named Rochester 18th among “the world’s leading science cities,” and *The New Republic* reports Rochester as one of the most innovation-intensive metro areas in the country. Significant investments are underway to revitalize and enhance the downtown core. *Atlantic Magazine* listed Rochester as one of 35 innovation hubs in the country, based on start-up companies, patents, and entrepreneurs per capita. Rochester is a six-hour drive to New York City and a three-hour drive to Toronto, and its airport includes non-stop flights to 18 cities in the U.S. and Canada.

The region has an exceptional quality of life, with cultural amenities and recreational activities; affordable healthcare and cost of living; excellent schools; and the arts, culture, sports, and nightlife of a big city with the ease and comfort of a small town. It is one of the least-congested cities in the U.S., with an average commute of under 20 minutes. The region has been ranked 6th among 379 metro areas as one of the “Best Places to Live in America” by *Places Rated Almanac* and first by *Expansion Management Magazine’s* ranking of metropolitan areas having the best quality of life in the nation. Rochester is located on the historic Erie Canal, which is populated by idyllic villages and is edged by a 363-mile towpath now enjoyed by runners and cyclists. The Finger Lakes Region is home to glacial lakes, a Great Lake, and waterfalls; wineries, craft breweries, and wide-ranging cuisines; and many locales for skiing, hiking, golf, fishing, and other outdoor adventures.

The Rochester region is home to 19 colleges and universities, enrolling more than 83,000 students. It is one of the most academically productive regions in the country, ranking third in college degrees per capita and first for degrees in STEM fields, according to the latest *U.S. Department of Education* reports.