Thursday, October 28, 2021
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

PRESENT
Alepoudakis, Baxter, Beattie, Betlem, Button, Castillo, Courtwright, Coyne, Flagg, Gallagher, Harrington, Harris, Heyman, Hull (AS), Inclena, Lawton, Lindsay, Milliken, Oware, Prescott, Reeder, Sood, Starenko, Stiner, Strowe, Teal, Watters, Vo (FS), Zehr, D Ziebarth, R Ziebarth

EXCUSED
Moore

ABSENT

PRESENTERS
Ian Mortimer, Vice President Enrollment Management and Associate Provost for Adult & Online Education
Jackie Nicholson, Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics
Jo Ellen Pinkham, Associate Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer
Judy DeCourcey, Director of Benefits & Wellness
Stacey DeRooy, Director of Title IX and Clery Compliance
Renee Milliken, Staff Council Elections Committee Chair

INTERPRETERS
Dana Cardona and Jennaca Saeva

MEETING called to order by G. Reeder at 2:00 p.m.

MINUTES of 10/14/2021 approved

HIGHLIGHTS

- Items of note from the Chair’s Report include: a change in vaccination and exemption requirements for RIT students, a special election is underway for an exempt Block 6 representative and details about openings on various University Committees.

- Ian Mortimer, VP Enrollment Management and Associate Provost for Adult & Online Education, provided an update on Fall enrollment.

- Staff Council welcomed the new Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Jackie Nicholson, who shared her vision for the future of RIT Athletics.

- Open Enrollment Benefits Information was presented by Judy DeCourcey, Director of Benefits and Wellness.

- Stacey DeRooy, Director of Title IX and Clery Compliance proposed revisions to policy D19.0 (Student Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct) and C27.0 (Title IX Sexual Harassment for Faculty, Staff & Students). A vote to endorse these revisions will take place at the next Staff Council meeting on November 18, 2021.

- A special election was held for a new Staff Council Executive Committee Member-at-Large.
CHAIR’S REPORT

Thank you to our interpreters: Jennaca Saeva and Dana Cardona

- There has been a change in vaccination and exemption requirements for RIT students. There will no longer be a philosophical exemption available and students at the Henrietta campus will be required to submit evidence of being fully vaccinated by January 9th. Any student working for RIT in any capacity is required to become fully vaccinated with uploaded documentation by December 8th. This is in response to the FDA’s approval of the Covid vaccine and the new Executive Order from President Biden with regards to federal contracts.
- As part of the construction for the SHED, the Cary Graphic Arts Collection and RIT Archives have temporarily relocated within Wallace Library and will be available by appointment only.
- We are currently seeking SC reps to fill open seats on the following committees
  - Faculty Senate DEI
  - Parking & Transportation Advisory Group
  - Presidential Awards for Outstanding Staff Selection Committee
  - UC Alternates
  A qualtrics survey for these open seats was included in the email you received Tuesday: https://rit.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9ZZgOmssvNYk4OG. If you are interested, please fill out the survey ASAP.
- Elections is working to fill an open position in Block 6 and a call for nominations was sent out this morning. If you know anyone who may be interested, please encourage them to consider serving on Staff Council. If you have any questions, please contact Denise at stafcoun@rit.edu. Block 6 encompasses:
  - College of Art & Design
  - College of Engineering Technology
  - College of Liberal Arts
  - College of Science
  - Golisano College of Computing & Information Sciences
  - Institute of Health Science & Technology
  - Kate Gleason College of Engineering
  - Saunders College of Business
- Our Communications Committee has prepared a Qualtrics survey to collect information on staff’s use of Social Media. You should have received this survey yesterday afternoon through RITmail. We would appreciate your time and response to this survey as it will help us determine the best ways to communicate with staff. Thank you to all of our constituents who have already responded. We have received almost 300 responses so far! https://rit.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5pOisZxpPutC5g2
- As a reminder, in addition to reaching out to your SC representative, staff are encouraged to use the suggestion form found on the Staff Council website. Your questions and feedback are sent directly to the SC office where we will research your concerns and report back during the old/new business portion of our meetings. While you have the option to remain anonymous, it is helpful if you provide your name and email so we can directly respond to you with answers. If you choose to share your contact information, please know that only the Staff Council Coordinator has access to the form and does not share any names and only shares the details of the concerns or questions.
- Just a reminder for all reps to check constituent lists at least once a week and block captains to please follow up with reps to ensure emails are going out.
- Academic Senate Update: none
- Student Government Update: none
ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Staff Council welcomed Ian Mortimer, who provided a summary of enrollment for Fall 2021

RIT currently has 3198 undergraduate students - almost 8% higher enrollment than in 2020
  • We saw an increase in Engineering Technology, GCCIS, KGCOE, Saunders and the College of Science
  • AALANA was down about 60 students
  • About 1 in 5 new students are starting at RIT with the vision and goal of an accelerated dual degree (completing a graduate degree as part of their undergraduate experience)
  • Saunders students are showing an interest in the four plus one (MBA) program

Moving forward there are three main priorities:
  • Lower admit rate
    ▪ RIT has around a 70% admit rate while our competitors are around 50%
    ▪ In order to lower the admit rate we have to either have a lot more applications or make better decisions on those we admit
    ▪ The profile of our students is equitable if not better than those at other schools
  • Gender equity
    ▪ Creates a richer community overall
    ▪ Women retain better and graduate at a higher rate
    ▪ Need to understand and reposition some of the things we do in the STEM area to make them more appealing to women
  • Retention
    ▪ Trying to use our statistical modeling process to anticipate first year retention
    ▪ Use that intelligence and start applying it to anticipate future graduation rates
    ▪ There is a lack of progress in graduating students in higher education overall

We are in the process of developing and launching a new business division called RIT Certified, where we can lean in to and become more relevant in all areas of higher education
  • RIT is looking at a pretty big demographic cliff that is coming in about 4-5 years as our primary supply source is changing
  • Only being relevant to high school students and/or international graduate students is not a sustainable practice for our institute
  • The fastest growing space in education currently is skills-based training based on non-credit offerings
    ▪ Quicker completion time
    ▪ Lower price point
    ▪ Connected to the demands of the employment market
  • RIT also has a portfolio of about 30 online master’s degrees
    ▪ RIT Certified will work with Academic Affairs and faculty to put a spotlight on the true demand for these online credentials
  • Global partners in Dubai and Croatia are seeing huge opportunities for non-credit certificates within the European Union and the United Arab Emirates
  • This is a natural evolution of the relationship with our co-op partners
    ▪ These partners already trust RIT for the placement of co-op students
Q. Why are male students graduating at a slower/lesser rate? Is anything being done to address why that student population is having problems graduating?
A. That’s a great question. Part of the reason is because we have a lot of programs that are 80-85% male and if you are in one of those majors, your chances of graduating are a little bit lower. That isn’t because of your college or because you are male. There is just something within this that is not working and that is what we are trying to figure out.

Q. Do you think the RIT climate and the negative treatment of female students in classrooms is a reason for lower numbers of women students?
A. What I think we have learned is that when you have a lower percentage of women in a culture that may be a bit more male-oriented, the climate and culture is a part of the reason. And that is what we are trying to shore up.

Q. Will the non-credit certificate courses be in edX?
A. The role of eX is very important in the non-credit environment and will continue to be a part of the RIT distribution but not the only distribution channel.

Q. Realizing RIT Certified is in early stages, can you speak generally to the needed development of new Outreach and Recruitment strategies and processes to reach adult learners looking for re-training and/or certification in skills?
A. Starting out, the way this typically works is that you want to solve the workforce development challenges of your local market first. This will be in a somewhat of a closed circle area where RIT is trusted and known. Then it branches out from there while you create pathways and partnerships to other areas in the wider, regional market.

Q. What would be needed for Colleges with online Masters to “double up” their programs?
A. We need truth telling on what the market is asking for in terms of an online master’s degree. RIT has exceptional faculty and some online degrees that are very high quality, but there’s just not a large market for those programs. With some adjustment and tweaking to be more relevant, we can use the four p’s (product, price, promotion and placement) in order to determine the best online master’s degree programs.

Q. Will there be any financial discounts for RIT employees in RIT Certified?
A. I do not know the answer to that, but I will find out! That is a wonderful question. An item of note in chat -- there are professional development trainings at RIT that do have discounts for RIT staff and faculty.

Q. This is exciting and seems, in some ways, to be RIT returning to its roots -- Mechanics Institute and Rochester Athenaeum.
A. It is interesting that as the world changes, it comes back full circle. The spirit of this comment is that the world goes through shifts and changing needs and I think RIT’s DNA of solving the problems of employees and employers is really valuable at this given point in time in our history.
RIT ATHLETICS UPDATE

Staff Council welcomed Jackie Nicholson, who spoke about the future of RIT Athletics.

- First 100 days has been filled with departmental, student-athlete and external constituent meetings
  - Learning the RIT way and what motivates our coaches and athletes
  - Has had the opportunity to meet with every captain and the seniors of every sports program
  - Spending time with alumni and members of the community to learn more about how other individuals can better support RIT athletics and RIT overall
- Student-athlete engagement is a primary focus
  - Want to ensure the student-athletes are enjoying their experience so that they continue to be engaged after graduation
  - There are about 700 RIT student-athletes and we will be working to bring them all together with occasional events
- Looking to launch a strategic plan for Athletics in January of 2022
  - Plan will encompass the next 5 years
  - Just finished a survey with division staff and student-athletes to find out what they want included
  - Will engage in staff, faculty members and alumni student-athletes in the next couple of weeks for input
- Strategic priorities
  - Academic experience and student-athlete development
  - Program integrity
  - Competitive success
  - External and University Relations
- Opportunities for growth
  - Exposure for RIT Athletics by getting more people on our campus
  - Engagement with other student organizations and clubs
  - Expansion into the Henrietta & Rochester community through sports
  - Alumni student-engagement beyond alumni weekend

Q. Welcome to RIT! Would you be willing to tell us where you are from and what made you excited about coming to RIT?
A. I am originally from Glassboro, New Jersey but have spent the last 20 years in the south. I learned about the institution and what RIT has to offer and that this is probably one of the largest Division III athletic programs across the county. I was attracted to the opportunity to come to an institution with such a great athletic tradition and even stronger academic profile. I also now have the ability to be closer to home!

Q. We talk at RIT that Division I may be a possibility down the road. Is that something you would like to be a part of?
A. I want us to be really strong competitively so that if we do make the jump to Division I we will be successful, not just be Division I in name only. It is still on the table and we will go through a Division I study sometime in the next twelve months to really look at if that is something RIT, Rochester and Henrietta can support.

HR OPEN ENROLLMENT

Staff Council welcomed Jo Ellen Pinkham and Judy DeCourcey, who provided updates to the 2022 Benefits Highlights.
• For this enrollment period we have been requesting a lot of input and feedback from various areas and groups across campus along with individual faculty and staff and senior administrators
• Also collecting data from benchmarking surveys, reviewing the claims data and meeting with consultants and our healthcare actuaries in an effort to best set rates for 2022
• Important to review and understand the key terms about your coverage
  o Copay: set dollar amount the patient pays for service (ex. $40 for an office visit)
  o Deductible: annual amount patient must pay before plans begin to pay (ex. $250)
  o Coinsurance: percentage of eligible expenses the patient pays (ex. patient pays 10% and plan pays 90%)
  o Out of pocket maximum (OOP): maximum amount a patient will pay in the plan year for covered services before the plan pays 100% for covered services for the rest of the plan year
• 2022 Medical/Rx Coverage Decisions
  o Add coverage for hearing aids and replacement of functioning cochlear implant processor to POS B, POS B No Drug, POS D, and Blue PPO (currently covered only under POS A)
  o Adopt Rx utilization, diabetic and opioid management programs for patient safety and shared cost savings
  o Maintain current Rx formulary due to extent of potential disruption for participants, despite significant cost savings
  o Revert POS A to copays for select services (inpatient hospitalization, outpatient services and advanced imaging)
  o POS B and POS D will maintain the deductible/co-insurance cost structure
  o No changes to the prescription drug plan or copay services
    ▪ POS D has an annual deductible of $1250 for prescription drugs – same as in previous years
• 2022 Medical/Rx Cost Sharing
  o Large employee premium contribution increase for POS A
    ▪ POS A – 14.7%
    ▪ All other plans – 3.5%
  o RIT and employee split of the premium equivalent is approximately 75% RIT / 25% employee
    ▪ Varies based on plan, coverage level, and salary level
    ▪ RIT assuming majority of the premium equivalent increase for 2022
• Other Benefits
  o Dental – removing the 2-year lock-in with an increase of <$2/month
  o Vision – no change
  o Life Insurance – no change
    ▪ Special feature for 2022 only: elect/increase supplemental life up to 3x pay, no approval required
  o AD & D Insurance – no change in coverage but a rate decrease
  o LTD Insurance – no change
  o Identity Theft Protection – no change
• Mental Health and Other Resource Offerings
  o MDLive telemedicine with RIT medical coverage
  o Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
  o Better Me Wellness
  o Virtual workshops live and recording posted on Better Me website
  o Care.com
• Employee communications during open enrollment
Hard copy newsletter sent through inter-office mail to all employees
- Emails to all employees and targeted emails to POS A participants
- Live meetings for FMS & Auxiliary Services
- Zoom webinars will be held live but recorded and posted on the HR website
- Virtual Benefits Fair
- [https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/benefits-open-enrollment-0](https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/benefits-open-enrollment-0)

**Q.** How much did you say the LTD rates were increasing?
**A.** When you log into Oracle to look at your enrollment, you will see what those rates are in a pay period.

**Q.** You mentioned that MD Live includes therapy appointments. Are these appoints with an approved therapist through MD Live? If you have someone you built a relationship with, it’s very difficult to switch. Are existing therapists included?
**A.** It’s possible that your therapist participates with MD Live. This program is for employees and any employee family members covered under the plan. It does have to be a therapist that participates in the program so you would need to check with your therapist directly. If you do not have a current therapist, this is a great opportunity to build that relationship with someone.

**Q.** It was really loud in my office when you were discussing the changes to the different medical insurances. What is happening with A?
**A.** POS A will continue to have copays for the three services where we introduced deductible co-insurance for 2021 – inpatient, outpatient and advanced imaging. POS B and D will continue to have a deductible for those services and A will have copays.

**Q.** Will the newsletter also be sent electronically or posted somewhere for people who are not coming to campus regularly?
**A.** The HR website has a separate open enrollment page where everything will be posted, including the newsletter, rates and comparison book.
- [https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/benefits-open-enrollment-0](https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/benefits-open-enrollment-0)

**POLICY C27.0 – TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT FOR HARASSMENT FOR FACULTY, STAFF & STUDENTS**

*Staff Council welcomed Stacy DeRooy, who reviewed proposed changes to this policy.*

- Policy was created in 2020 in response to an extensive overhaul of Title IX Federal Regulations
- Revisions include
  - Mutual resolution agreement – option talked about in the policy for the involved parties
    - Added a note to refer to Policy D19 since that policy more thoroughly discusses the mutual resolution process
  - Cross examination – removed immediately when the change in the law came through in August
POLICY D19.0 – STUDENT GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Staff Council welcomed Stacy DeRooy, who reviewed proposed changes to this policy

- Policy was created in 2015 in alignment with NYS 129-B
- Several revisions since the creation of the policy, largely based on the changes in the federal law
- Current revisions include
  - Refinement of language – “evidence packet” replaces the old language of “preliminary investigation report”
  - Mutual resolution agreement – added language to give clearer examples of this agreement and discussion about violation of this agreement

VOTE: POLICY C06.0 – POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT & RETALIATION

Moved and seconded
Vote: 24 in favor; 1 opposed; 1 abstentions
Motion carried

VOTE: POLICY C15.2 – FACULTY/STAFF ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

Moved and seconded
Vote: 25 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstentions
Motion carried

OLD BUSINESS

- A constituent expressed concern over being told they would not receive holiday pay this year due to Christmas & New Year’s Day falling on Saturday.
  - The employee receives holiday pay for the observed holiday and one and a half times the regular hourly rate for hours worked on December 25 and January 1
  - Information relating to holiday pay can be found on HR’s website: https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/premium-pay-practices#holiday
- We had a concern sent through the Staff Council suggestion form that there was not enough information regarding ramifications for student non-compliance with policies regarding the Covid-19 vaccine. Provost Granberg sent a message to Faculty on 9/28 to remind them of the Covid non-compliance process. Following is the detailed explanation provided by Sue Provenzano to Faculty:
  - To provide context about the SHIB interruption: RIT and NYS policies and regulations require compliance with immunization requirements which includes a range of things such as submission of health history, historically required immunizations like MMR, Covid-19 vaccine and/or submission of exemption paperwork. The consequence for students of non-compliance with these requirements is disenrollment from the University. Under current policy and similar to the rules for employees, those with exemptions in place must also participate in COVID testing if they are on campus. There are a small number (under 50) who are not yet fully compliant with these regulations and are facing separation from the University via disenrollment or suspension. Given the high stakes and our commitment to student centeredness, we want to provide every possible opportunity for students to become compliant prior to this final step. In
addition to comprehensive outreach via every channel available to us (email, phone, text, etc.) we also use a technology interruption as a way to get the attention of this final group. This step is only used when they have reached this penultimate step in the compliance process and are facing a separation in the near future (typically within a week to ten days). Students are generally aware of what is needed and the message directs them to the Wellness Portal or Student Health Center for assistance. Once they make contact and take initial steps toward compliance, their access is reinstated temporarily while they work to complete the process. Academic Affairs and Student Affairs partner on this effort annually to ensure compliance with NYS and RIT regulations and policies as outlined by senior leadership. As noted in the provost’s message, we wanted to make faculty aware of the interruption in case students come to them with requests to excuse late assignments or other course requirements due to the interruption. Faculty do not have to grant such requests and they are not expected to do any kind of follow up in regards to the interruption.

- Melinda Ward will also ask MarComm to add a FAQ on the RIT Ready page about non-compliance

- Regarding concerns about faculty being unmasked behind the plexiglass barriers, the Safety Plan reads:
  - Faculty shall wear a face mask in classrooms. Vaccinated faculty may choose to remove their face mask when behind a Plexiglas barrier in teaching settings. If vaccinated faculty choose to remove their face mask they shall remain behind the Plexiglas barrier. Unvaccinated faculty in teaching settings must wear a face mask at all times, even if they are behind a Plexiglas barrier.
  - Students shall be required to wear face masks in classrooms. If a student does not wear a face mask, they may be asked to leave the classroom by the faculty member. If a student fails to leave the classroom when instructed to do so by the faculty member, that student shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, proceedings under RIT’s Student Conduct Process (D18.0)

- In summary, the Plan requires that students, staff and faculty wear a face mask in classrooms. Only vaccinated faculty may choose to remove their face mask and only while behind a physical barrier in order to enhance teaching. Interpreters are free to move around in order to create more physical distancing. A conversation between the interpreter and faculty member is recommended before the class begins to set expectations.

NEW BUSINESS

- A few constituents have asked if HR is still sending out the length of service certificates.
  - For Length of Service Awards HR works with designated Length of Service liaisons for the various colleges and divisions in support of recognition. If a constituent has not received their certificate for a milestone year, please reach out to TalentDevelopment@rit.edu for support

- A constituent expressed frustration that many departments have people working from home in higher need (customer service) areas, resulting in a sense of unfairness for those who come in every day. It makes the work hard for those who are here and have to wait for these staff members to attend to their needs.

- Several buildings on campus, particularly building 14, have been areas where people are having issues with cell service. Calls were not received and text messages were not sent. Can this be addressed?
  - A recommendation was made for people to switch to cellular over wi-fi if their carrier allows it

- Going back to the masking concerns and faculty…are we able to get some clarification on the equity of Covid guidelines and the justification for why it is permissible to remove a mask in certain areas considering you are in a large indoor space? It is important to ensure that we have equity across both faculty in staff and those areas.
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SPECIAL ELECTION

- Carla Betlem was elected by a vote of affirmation as the next EC Member-At-Large

COMMITTEE BREAKOUT SESSION

- Staff Council standing committees met to discuss their plans of work

MEETING adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Staff members are encouraged to contact their Staff Council representative with comments or questions on these or any other topics.

The voice of staff in shared governance

Staff Council is an advisory body to the President (or his/her representative) on issues and decisions which impact RIT. Staff Council Members communicate to staff about university news, events and initiatives, and act as a conduit providing staff feedback and insights on university issues. Additionally, Staff Council initiates policy proposals and revisions, and raises issues for university consideration.

Share your suggestions!

RIT | Staff Council

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