

# RIT | University Council

## Meeting Minutes: October 20, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes from September 8, 2021, Meeting**

The minutes were approved by 29-0-0 Yes-No-Abstained

### **Confirmation of Academic Calendar 2025-2026** (*presentation files available on [RIT Digital Archive](#)*)

Joe Loffredo, Assoc. VP Academic Affairs & Registrar

The calendar was introduced last spring but was not brought to governance groups until the past few weeks. It has been fully endorsed by the governance groups. I am seeking University Council approval of the 2026-27 school year calendar. If approved, it will be added to the slate.

- Classes begin in the Fall on August 18
- October break
- Reading day
- Six days of exams ending December 16
- Spring Semester begins January 11
- January 18 will be off for MLK Holiday
- Commencement: May 7-8
- Back to a 12-week summer.

The 2025-2026 Calendar was endorsed 29-0-0.

Per the Administrative Policy – *Development, Maintenance and Publication of Academic Calendars*, the Academic calendar characteristics are subject to periodic review. At the discretion of the provost, but no less frequently than every five years, the provost will appoint and charge a committee with the responsibility to review the Academic Calendar Characteristics and recommend changes, if necessary. I am going to recommend that a committee review the policy in the spring.

### **President's Report**

Homecoming was awesome! It was different from past years, and we knew we would not have a lot of alumni visiting. We still had lots of parents and it felt like a "mini Imagine RIT" on Saturday on campus. I really Tig Notaro, Dueling Pianos, and the Hockey Game.

### **Pandemic Status:**

We do have COVID in our Community. The only people being tested on a regular basis are those who are nonvaccinated. We find about 1 employee and 1 student per day. Last week the cases doubled, but now they have gone back down. We still feel like the campus is very safe. Almost everyone is vaccinated and wearing masks and we are grateful for everyone's cooperation. All student activities and experiences are proceeding in a semi-normal way.

The biggest news is the new requirement that *all employees be vaccinated by December 8<sup>th</sup>*. There has been a student requirement in place and 96% of students are vaccinated. The employee rate was about 95% before the mandate had been put in place. A directive has been issued by the federal government requiring institutions under

federal contract to be fully vaccinated, which applies even to those not under federal contract and those who are not on site.

Our general counsel spoke with outside attorneys and other institutions, and we determined that we really must require vaccination for all employees. This was made in similar announcements by local schools like Nazareth, as well as Cornell. For a very small fraction of our employees, this announcement has been troublesome. I would be happy to have a conversation with anyone who is concerned about the vaccine. Staff are recommended to speak with the director of the SHC if they are concerned as well. We do not want to lose any faculty or staff over this issue.

### **Research Updates:**

On the research front, things are going well on our campus. In terms of dollar values submitted this fiscal year and proposals awarded to RIT, we are at an all-time high. This will be an amazing year for research productivity. The Board of Trustees will be pleased to see this.

### **Work on facilities:**

- The SHED still has a lot more steel to go up, and we will see it getting bigger over the next month. Come visit the 7<sup>th</sup> floor in Eastman to get a good bird's eye view of the work that is being done there. It is a very complicated project because it also involves renovation of the library. The library has been fully gutted, and the ceiling will be higher in the library as well.
- Athletic field construction is going well. The baseball and softball fields will be finished this fall and the artificial turf will be installed soon.
- The track is essentially finished except for the final coating but has been delayed due to the rain. It is now scheduled for final surfacing in the Spring.

### **Ammonia leak at Polessini:**

The refrigeration systems use ammonia and the premises had to be vacated. The fix is complicated. We now have a temporary refrigeration unit and they are working to decide if they will fix the system or have a new one fully installed. The ice melted during this process as well.

### **Title IX Annual Report** (*presentation files available on [RIT Digital Archive](#)*)

Stacy DeRooy, Director of Title IX & Cleary Compliance

The Title IX Annual report came out this week through the new staff email system.

The Title IX Framework has been in place for about 3 years now. Title IX Office staff and Deputies were reviewed as well as Key Campus Partners.

### **Primary Policies Addressing Sex Discrimination & Harassment**

- Faculty, Staff, and Student: C27.0 Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment for Faculty, Staff, and Students.
- Employees and Visitors: the primary policy is still C06.0 Policy on Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation.
- Students: D19.0 Student Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct Policy. If student behaviors do not fall in the scope of C27.0, we also have D19.0 (Student Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct Policy)

We did very well in 2020 with educating the campus community. We have mostly online modules which has given opportunities to reach student groups and helps with tracking compliance with training. There is a new student Title IX module. Student leaders and athletes have been offered primarily online training, but in-person training events are accessible by request.

### Complaints Calendar Year 2020

There was an interesting drop in complaints, which is not too surprising. It is 100% attributed to the pandemic. We are currently beyond where we were before the pandemic in terms of complaints. This year, alcohol and other drug use involved in the incident have been incorporated into analysis.

- 14 sexual assaults - 6 had alcohol involved
- 8 harassment cases – 6 had alcohol involved

Twenty-three percent of cases involved deaf or hard-of-hearing students. Five years ago, this was at about 50%. Domestic violence cases, sexual assault, stalking, and sexual harassment all decreased.

We see many reports come in from faculty who have already consulted with advisors. It is a group effort and is coming in as a shared responsibility. When a 3<sup>rd</sup> party reports, the process is to outreach to the complainant. Out of 23 cases reported by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, in 18 cases a complaint was withdrawn. The complainant did not want to do anything and did not return messages for outreach. Faculty and staff are understanding their obligation to report.

We see a significant decrease from 2019 of employee cases. Additional 9 cases that were assessed and determined outside the scope of the office. However, even if a case is determined outside the scope of the office, we do the intake, outreach to the complainant, and make an assessment. The primary type of complaint is staff-to-staff.

### Areas of continuous focus:

- There is a stalking problem on campus that has been shared on social media.
- Stalking is mostly low-level but is occasionally significant and indicating threat.
- Most cases are being seen as “the creepy person.” They won’t leave the other people alone and keeps reaching out to them for dates, etc... We have partnership with Spectrum Support Services and workshops are provided.
- GCCIS created a harassment simulator to convey the experience that women-identifying students are having “Gamer Girl”. Rolled out in the RIT 365 program for first year students this semester. This college also has a Deputy Title IX Coordinator

### Enhanced Procedures

- Now a 3-person panel for all Title IX hearings, including an attorney. A pool of attorneys has been created and one is selected for the decision.
- The Title IX Partner Program has grown from an effort to include faculty and staff in the process. Now have a group of folks who are highly trained and may be called upon as an advisor, advocate or a hearing or appeal panelist for employees. There is continuous training and debriefing with Student Conduct Team and Public Safety. Looking to offer the best experience through the process. They have yet to have a C27.0 panel for employees.

**Q:** When you mentioned that alcohol is involved, is this specific to the complainant, the perpetrator, or just a general factor?

**A:** It is general, alcohol is involved somehow in the case. Most of the time this is related to both individuals being under the influence of alcohol.

**Q:** You stated that there was a decrease in most cases are being attributed to COVID. Have we assessed the training and awareness projects we have out, and may those have had impact that is not relevant to COVID?

**A:** We believe there is a direct correlation to the pandemic. We are at almost double the complainants (78 total) now that people are back on campus. It is a good thing to have a higher level of complaints because people are getting the message that there is an office dedicated to reporting. We know that these things are underreported because we are nowhere near the amount of reporting that is likely equivalent to the actual incidents.

**Q:** Are there any trend lines on bystander reporting?

**A:** Yes. The third-party reporting is bystander reporting. This is someone who was told or may have been an actual witness.

**Q:** Is that higher or lower than last year?

**A:** We have not done the comparison, but we will and will get back to you.

Type	Complaint Withdrawn 2018	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party 2018	Complaint Withdrawn 2019	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party 2019	Complaint Withdrawn 2020	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party 2020
Dating/Domestic Violence	5	5	6	5	1	2
Stalking	3	2	4	1	2	4
Sexual Assault	23	15	14	9	11	11
Sexual Harassment	13	11	15	11	4	6
Total	44	33 or 75%	39	26 or 67%	18	23 or 78%

**Q:** Are there differences with trends on-campus vs off-campus?

**A:** We don't see a significant difference but have a different policy. C27.0 is strictly on campus and D19.0 and C06.0 are on or off campus reporting. There is not a significant difference in the amount. Those off campus may also engage law enforcement or an outside resource.

**Q:** Is there an issue with people who do not report because they don't see the odds of anything beneficial really happening?

**A:** We see the outcomes of the reports. The complaint can withdraw and have an informal resolution. Informal resolution does not mean that things are brushed under the rug. This is a victim-centered process. Victims are not strong armed, and they make the decisions. When complaints come to our attention, they are given all the options. Many victims elect to do something short of the full investigation. Of those that do enter the full investigation, a 50/50 statistic has found responsible/not responsible in these cases. The complaints are given the full process and they are informed that the person may not be found responsible and ask them to think how they may feel about that.

**Q:** It looks like we suspend the person and then they come back and are suspended again.

**A:** That was not the scenario. It was one person with two allegations at the same time.

**Q:** "Conviction" rate – there were allegations coming in from two people at one time and then was suspended. They are uncomfortable with students only being suspended for a single semester in a case like this.

**A:** We typically have 2-3 expulsions per year. Last year showed nothing typical. The expulsion signifies the severity of the outcome. Most of the time, a student is asked to leave for at least a year and student must go through counseling and a meaningful life experience before they are allowed to return. They have a permanent no-contact order with the other people on campus and schedules are monitored. We do the work to ensure the complainants are not re-victimized.

**Q:** How involved are you with the year 1 program?

**A:** We would like to be more involved. We were very fortunate to partner with the RIT 365 program. Students had a week to focus on Title IX material this year.

**Q:** In the case where there were two cases running simultaneously, what was the result?

**A:** Two separate outcomes. This was not a circumstance to combine the claim. There were two distinct events.

**Q:** In a case where you have the same person committing two violations or assaults, would that not warrant an expulsion?

**A:** The Student Conduct Office is responsible for the outcomes and decisions. Suspension is within the scope of the outcome and past precedent is looked at to ensure consistency.

**C27.0 Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment for Faculty, Staff and Students – REVISIONS** (*presentation files available on [RIT Digital Archive](#)*)

Stacy DeRooy, Director of Title IX & Cleary Compliance

Proposing minor revisions for C27.0. Only a few cases have gone through this policy to date due to its narrow scope. It was approved as an interim policy in August of this year.

Mutual resolution option: The full detail is in D19.0. The more significant change is in cross-examination. This is one the biggest changes that was brought last year. You will see that is excerpt meant that if any of the parties refused cross examination, any of the statements that the person brought forth previously would not be able tot be used. This has been removed and allows them to proceed if anyone has refused examination.

**Q:** What is the difference between C27.0 and D19.0?

**A:** Last year under the May 2020 Trump administration, a new set of Title IX regulations came out. C27.0 is the “true” Title IX policy. The distinction is geography based. Title IX now requires that someone comes forth with sexual harassment when it happens on campus. It does have other policies that impact other behaviors off campus. These issues are also happening off campus, but we still respond to those through D19.0. which has been on the books since 2015. All Title IX references are in C27.0. Everything in the scope of severe, pervasive and objectionably offensive is a higher threshold in C27.0. Anything more than petty slights or trivial inconveniences falls under D19.0 and C06.0.

**D19.0 Student Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct Policy – Title IX – REVISIONS** (*presentation files available on [RIT Digital Archive](#)*)

Stacy DeRooy, Director of Title IX & Cleary Compliance

Created in 2015 to come into 129B law in NY state “Enough is Enough.” Revisions are minor.

What was previously called the “evidence packet” is now the “preliminary investigation report.”

We have had people who have come to an agreement and did not uphold their end of the agreement. Language has been added to prevent a breach. This will be coming to the individual governance groups.

**Q:** Are you anticipating bringing another round of updates in May under the Biden Administration?

**A:** It will be at least two years to undo the law from the Trump administration. No sweeping changes are anticipated any time soon.

**Enrollment Update**

Ian Mortimer, Vice President Enrollment Management

We did well from a new student headcount in terms of further diversifying headcount. We did okay in terms of gender distribution. Fell short in Latino/Latina admission.

- In the College of Science, this year we increased the new student headcount significantly by engaging incoming students in a new way. Our science students are our best students academically coming out of high school. They are about 30 points higher on the SAT. The science area of our NSE indicated that these students are well equipped. These students are typically going to high-end brands after graduation.
- In Saunders, they are looking to combine Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Lot of students are looking to continue here with their MBA.
- Mechanical Engineering yields have been going down due to the competitiveness of this space. They overenrolled in the Mechanical Dual Degree by about 30 students or so.
- CHST: Enrollment went down. Eighty-five percent of CHST students identified med school, and about 50% of students in the Life Sciences. We provide access to med-schools, but quietly.

**Admit Rate:**

- Students are incredibly capable in terms of profile coming out of high school. Looking to meet gender goals and diversity goals. Looking to drive down the admit rate to make RIT more equitable in comparison to other schools.
- They are focusing on choosing students that have a higher chance of enrolling.

Connected to this is understanding the science and math of creating a class and trying to evolve it to predict first year retention. Looking more into retention rate and graduation rate beyond the SAT scores and the high school GPA. Need to better understand the attributes of what makes someone successful or unsuccessful here. This will help the graduation rate and retention.

**RIT Certified**

- They have been working to understand how students are using RIT and the goal here is to make us less susceptible to the risks while we exist in an industry that is getting pounded.
- The pandemic has created a new sense of urgency of time for individuals to retool and reskill. This has accelerated because of all the opportunity in the employment market.
- Individuals are seeking this type of training opportunity. About 20% of this type of training is offered by universities. Interested in low cost, quick-to-completion courses from a credible source.
- There is a real demand for this training. Our brand and ethos is all about helping people find good work.
- We are not the early adoptees in this space. U Penn has a 24-week cybersecurity certificate (\$15k). We are in the middle of the adoption stage.
- Global Cybersecurity Institute is already running a cybersecurity bootcamp. This needs infrastructure support to grow the market.
- The other piece of this is where heavy lifting is required. We are looking in the mirror of our current, online Master's degree portfolio. Some are going well, and some are lacking markets or have expired. Looking to prune where they need to. This will take about 10 months and will deliver a comprehensive demand assessment for academic leadership to make decisions.

**What does success look like?**

- We have a natural ecosystem that connects well with the nontraditional student. The international campuses, co-op partners, NTID, and Alumni are all assets that give value to the RIT Ecosystem.
- Need to diversify revenue outside of traditional markets. It is an imperative.

- Rochester is going through a quasi-renaissance. At the old College of Continuing Education and Professional Studies in the '80s there were 5,000-night students.

**Q:** Is there a target acceptance rate that RIT is wanting to hit?

**A:** We do not want RIT to be an inaccessible brand as well as not conveying a sense of elitism. Tuition in the \$50,000s indicates high quality but not inaccessible.

**Comment:** I am excited to learn about adding another brand to our university. The rebirth of the continuing education is exciting. The health field plays a major role in delivering what you are talking about, and we have a major role as a health college. I see no place better than the college to deliver such information.

**Response:** The structure is being put in place.

**Q:** Is there any plan to combine research and scholarship to be more accessible with students?

**A:** We have not been established as a major research institution. This is the first year where we are working to have research focused activities. The College of Science was the first focus area because of Cassandra as a partner. People seem to be sparking to us being ranked for co-op and careers and research.

**Q:** Have you thought about doing something like a "research day?" Like an open house?

**A:** Great idea. We will do this.

**Q:** What was international enrollment for graduate students?

**A:** This was more positive than we anticipated. Late in August, consulates in India and China prioritized Undergraduate and Graduate student visas. They clipped the goals for international students on the Graduate student front and we are still trying to figure out Undergrad, we are only about 7% Undergrad international.

**Q:** I came from Georgia Tech. They were reverse engineering the process. Identify the customer and corporations first. They were designing the program according to specific needs initially to become successful pilots. Companies were looking for trusted partners to lead conversations on diversity, equity, and inclusivity and managing culture building. Those areas were not areas they might have thought to initially look at that school for but remarked that many traditional universities were not looking to satisfy those needs for corporations. We enjoyed getting to know some of those corporate partners.

**A:** The Chief Business Officer is stating that this is externally driven. There are things that we can solve for the local and regional economy that will take listening and engagement.

**Q:** We have had a consultation of a person running continuing education at NYU. He will be splitting his time here to drive the business operation

**A:** We must make sure that whatever we do is consistent and has the highest level of quality to the consumer.

**Q:** Data around AALANA students...what are the challenges in recruiting and retaining these students?

**A:** Committee of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity... AALANA as a category is a dangerous thing to do. The letters represent three very different cultures. Up until this year they have lumped their numbers into this category. They are starting to break apart the African, Latino/a, and Native population. The AALANA number is down because of the Latino/a population being down. Some qualitative conversations have indicated that a lot of Latino/a individuals are staying home because of the pandemic.

- Their challenge within all three identity groups is not so much that they are not competitive or being admitted, the challenge is purely higher-level demand. The yields flow through consistently and don't have enough at the top of the funnel to grow by May 1.
- They have embarked on an exhaustive evaluation of how the University is being projected to non-white viewers and how to use the philosophy of micro-affirmations. Not doing enough grassroots work in the non-Rochester community. They have learned a lot by thinking about the differences of people and how to create more demand.

- Also gone to the field with a brand health tracker to get an understanding of a variety of different audiences. Have funding to dig deeper with the AALANA audience. Started asking questions of the applicant pool. In addition to major, they have been asked more about what they care about especially in terms of things more experiential.
- Co-op is a measure of interest that was lower for African American students than all other groups. The co-op brand is working to help social mobility and could be impactful for helping RIT and those who have been marginalized.

**Comment:** RIT is expensive. For people who are part of the AALANA community, they typically would rather go to a state school because it is less expensive. These students are focused on not getting deeply in debt.

**Answer:** Forty-three percent of recent RIT grads have higher first year incomes than the total family income as the family reported on the FAFSA. Financial aid is a complicated process by nature. We have a new Financial Aid Director that seems to understand the value of simplifying financial aid. For the super debt sensitive student, a credential coming from RIT Certified would be very valuable.

**Q:** Rochester City Scholar (RCS) Program: When those students get here, we need the infrastructure to retain them. How can we build this?

**A:** There are major performance differences of those who go through the summer program and those who do not. Most RCS students go through the summer experience. Those who go through this program outperform all AALANA students on campus.

**Q:** Gender: Where are we this year and where are we hoping to be?

**A:** We don't have the right game plan. After this year, we hope to find ways to move the needle. We are hoping to make better informed decisions. Performing Arts Scholars are 50/50 male/female.

### **Student Government Goals & Objectives 2021-2022** (*presentation files available on [RIT Digital Archive](#)*)

Lucas Randrianarivelo, SG President

Christopher Ferrari, SG Vice President

Some of you have been here a few months and others for years. You return, but SG has to pass the torch on every year. Personnel, platforms, etc. change. We realized some things shouldn't change and have developed a shared set of values that should carry forward. Every day we try to uphold them and hope the student body will understand they can trust them.

### **SG Platform**

- **Personal Wellness – Mind, Body and Spirit:** Have found a lot of students don't know how or where to get help. We are promoting resources, collaborating with the Student Life Center to create workshops to promote physical health and working with the Schmitt Interfaith Center – resources, events – don't have to be religious to go there. Held a roundtable discussion with CaPS Director, David Reetz in October to explore what can do about academic distress.
- **Professional Development:** Collaborating with University Advancement to launch Tigers Connect Platform – students can reach out directly to get career mentoring tips from alumni, thus changing the way RIT students find employment, and serve as a back door to many of the companies our alumni work at. Can get resume to hiring managers, negotiate starting salary, etc.
- **Social Experience:** If we don't get anything done but this, we will feel successful. Helping to market clubs, RSOs, Greek Life and Athletics. Collaborating with CAB to bring a concert to campus. Doing a strategic breakdown of how students get involved: Campus Groups, Posters in the tunnels, social media, etc. Reminder that college is only 50% academics – there is so much more to it than classes. The experiences, people we meet that will be meaningful are other things. Tracking data on what is working to get students involved as quickly as possible.



**SG Initiatives**

- Bylaw Changes: Went through an impeachment trial last year. In the process of adding a Recall Amendment to the Bylaws. Best way to get power back to the students.
- With the change to the Faculty Senate, we lost our vote. Looking to add more student input in policy making. Having very productive conversations re: policies D05.0 Grades and D08.0 Academic Integrity.

**SG Highlights**

- SCB & CET Senators are hosting Office Hours in their home colleges
- CAD Senator is representative for our SG Global Consortium
- CHST Senator is working on establishing a tutoring center
- NTID/Cross-Reg/NSC Senator is working to improve accessibility for Deaf/HoH students
- Dir. of Programming - Retreat & Dunkin' with your Delegates – first retreat held in over 2 years
- Dir. of Tech. Services is re-vamping the SG Website
- Committees are having productive conversations on improving the lives of students at RIT

**New Business**

- None

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

**Attendance – See next page**

**Attendance October 20, 2021**

Name	Relationship to UC	Attended		Name	Relationship to UC	Attended
Abushagur, Mustafa	Member-FS	x		Loffredo, Joe	Non-Voting Member	
Aldersley, Stephen	Member-FS	x		Maggelakis, Sophia	Member-Dean	
Betlem, Carla	Member-SC Alt.	x		Merrick, Alexa	Member-SG	x
Buckley, Gerard	Member-Dean			Milliken, Renee	Member-SC	x
Button, Amy	Member-SC			Mortimer, Ian	Non-Voting Member	x
Carrington, Keira	Member-SG	x		Mozrall, Jacqueline	Member & EC	x
Castillo, Jaime	Member-SC	x		Munson, David	Non-Voting Member & EC	v
Castleberry, Phil	Non-Voting Member			Nasr, Nabil	Member-Dean	
Crawford, Denton	Member-FS			Pinkham, Jo Ellen	Non-Voting Member	
Cummings, Twyla	Non-Voting Member			Provenzano, Susan	Non-Voting Member	
D'Amanda, Elisabetta	Member-FS			Pyatt, Adrian	Member-SG	
Edwards, Doreen	Member-Dean			Raffaella, Ryne	Non-Voting Member	
Ferrari, Christopher	Member-SG	x		Ramkumar, S. Manian	Member-Dean	x
Finnerty, Bob	Non-Voting Member	x		Randrianarivelo, Lucas	Member & EC	x
Gallagher, Maureen	Member-SC	x		Reeder, Gina	Member & EC	
Ghazle, Hamad	Member-FS	x		Robinson, Natalie	Member-SG	
Granberg, Ellen	Member & EC	x		Sheffield, Chip; SOIS (sprg 2022)	Member-FS	
Haake, Anne	Member-Dean			Shuey, Jay	Member-SG	x
Hadi, Abu Syeed	Member-SG			Sood, Neha	Member-SC	x
Hall, James	Member-Dean	x		Sparkman, Torrence	Member-FS	x
Harrington, Gabrielle	Member-SC	x		Stenport, Anna	Member-Dean	x
Herman, Vanessa J.	Non-Voting Member			Stiner, Holly	Member-SC	
Heyman, Emily	Member-SC			Teal, Michelle	Member-SC	x
Hudson, André	Member-FS	x		Tolossa, Natnail	Member-SG	x
Hull, Clyde	Member & EC	x		Travis, Luca	Member-SG	x
Jenkins, Keith	Non-Voting Member	x		Trierweiler, John	Non-Voting Member	x
Johnson, Dan (fall 2021)	Member-FS	x		Vo, Carol	Member-SG	x
Johnson, Sandra	Non-Voting Member			Wang, Yong Tai	Member-Dean	x
Johnson, Scott	Member-FS	x		Watters, Devon	Member-SC	x
Jokl, Todd	Member-Dean	x		Watters, James	Non-Voting Member	
Kahn, Sunny	Member-SG			Williams, Eric	Member-FS	
Laury, Dino	Member-FS	x		Zeglen, Lauren	Member-SG	
Lindsay, Susan	Member-SC	x				

**Interpreters:** Carolyn Kropp and Allison Merkle