

# RIT | University Council

## Meeting Minutes: October 12, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm.

### **Approve Minutes of September 21, 2022 Meeting:**

Minutes approved 30-0-2

### **President's Report:**

#### COVID UPDATE

- Number of cases is moderate, a decrease from the beginning of the semester. Everyone is still urged to get a Bivalent booster, as the weather is getting colder and everyone will be inside for long periods of time, it's possible that there will be an increase.

#### CONSTRUCTION

- The Shed is making really exciting progress, "jaw-dropping" some may add.
- As for the Wallace Library, we are looking forward to a completely redesigned library.
- As well as the work being done at Saunders College, pile driving has now been completed. Although there were some delays, we are making steady progress there as well.
- Other upcoming construction– at the Golisano Institute of Sustainability building, we need to consider taking down the fence since the project has not started yet and we want to consider the inconvenience of parking for people.

#### ONE PAYROLL

- Many employees have received communications about the One Payroll system.
- Our exempt (salaried) and non-exempt (hourly) employees are being paid on two different schedules. The university is looking towards moving both of those groups to the same schedule.
- This would mean salaried employees would get paid in arrears of about 6 days, which through one lens could be seen as a little investment. The 6 days would be paid with interest once the employee leaves RIT. We understand for some it may be more inconvenient, especially for some lower salaried employees.
- There is work being done on a bonus plan to help bridge the period of no pay. We are slowing down on One Payroll for the time being and working on having conversations with Faculty Senate and Staff Council.

#### COLLEGE NATIONAL COUNCILS

- We have progressed from having external advisory councils, to a much more systematic approach. The meetings will take place this week on Thursday and Friday.
- The President's Roundtable will also be in town this week. A number will also stay for homecoming.

- The purpose of these meeting is to offer guidance to deans, faculty and to assist with philanthropic fundraising just to name a few.
- Now we're all coming together at the same time. Much like building an army full of high level volunteers that can help with raise the profile of the university.

## HOMECOMING

- This past weekend, the hockey team beat Army in a tough game. Saturday night's game will be against Union College.
- Exciting news - America's Got Talent, magician Dustin Tavella, as well as comedian Seth Meyers from Saturday Night Live, are all expected to make appearances and do some entertainment and hosting during the event, respectively (So far sold over 2000 tickets for Seth Meyers ).
- Faculty and staff are encouraged to go, it's a great way to connect with students. Check online for all the activities going on and get involved in homecoming and other activities taking place on campus.
  - *Athletic Events*
    - Our women's hockey program has been revamped and we have tremendously improved. They have won the last couple of games.
    - Women's soccer team is also doing really well on our brand new athletic field. Our men's and women's cross country and swimming teams are also doing well.

## **Title IX Sexual Misconduct Climate Survey Overview** *(presentation files available on the [University Council website](#))*

Stacy DeRooy, Director of Title IX & Cleary Compliance

- In February 2022 we conducted the bi-annual students sexual misconduct climate survey which is required by New York State Education Law 129B (also know as the "Enough is Enough" legislation).
- Currently in our fourth iteration – this year is the first time we used the SUNY survey instrument. Previously, we used the Education Advisory Board (EAB) instrument but the SUNY instrument aligns more closely with Enough is Enough.
- Why do we have a survey? It helps inform decisions and shows trends in reports. It also helps us understand what students are experiencing who don't report.
- Institutional Research was instrumental in helping change to using Qualtrics as the survey instrument.
- We are taking the initiative to connect students with support instead of just leaving it up to them.
- Darcy Lena Williams helped with creating a new program that starting to take hold.
- Infographics on our program address the stalking concern on campus with two approaches.
  1. It shows students how to not freak people out.
  2. It also shows how to set boundaries and how to remove yourself from uncomfortable conversations.
- Even though all incoming students were in attendance at in person sessions where they received information on sexual assault prevention in 2019, 2020 and 2021, almost half of the students said that they did not receive the information. We have some digging to do to try and understand why students are advising that they are not receiving the materials.

## RESULTS

- We had a 13.2 % response rate which is lower than we've had in the past. The survey ran for three weeks with the last week during Spring break (may have contributed to low response).
- NTID's Pam Carmichael and her team were able to help so that this was the first time ever we were able to offer the survey completely accessible in ASL (video format to accompany every question). We had 3.8% deaf or hard of hearing students participate.
- Freshman were the largest population of students to participate.
- There was little to no difference in the change of percentage concerning the ethnicity of participants from 2020 to 2022.
- 83.2% of students had awareness of policies addressing sexual assault procedures on campus.
- According to findings, student feel that they do not receive prevention, education and awareness past their first year.
- Sexual harassment complaints have decreased from 2020. In terms of the nature of complaints that our office fields, sexual harassment is the number one complaint year after year. So to see that go down in terms of these unwanted behaviors is great news.
- Sexual assault incidents reported increased slightly from 7% to 9.3%. This does trend with our annual numbers of reported incidents as well.
- 11% of students who said they didn't report felt that it wasn't important enough, or that they didn't know it was sexual assault. This statistic is on trend.

**Q:** Can you define sexual assault because it includes a lot of things?

**A:** Our survey instrument broke it down in four or five different categories what constitutes sexual assault, including everything from unwanted touching all the way to penetration, including different behaviors in between like coercion.

**Q:** Were the questions at RIT similar to other colleges?

**A:** With the New York state survey instrument, we haven't done the comparison with the New York schools. They are not consistently reporting out the New York schools. There's a small consortium of private schools Title IX coordinators. We're trying to work with SUNY so that we can get on board with their analytics and begin to have those comparisons.

**Q:** I had these early talks about the disconnect that seems to exist between the students receiving the information, the preventative information about your orientation, and then actually, later on feeling like they actually absorbed that knowledge right. I'm curious, if you folks conduct surveys after orientation week about those programs or get solicit feedback from students about how they felt they if they heard information, you know, from more proximal to those presentations in addition to the February survey, Climate Survey?

**A:** Student Affairs conducts surveys throughout the school year that addresses a few sexual harassment questions. But it is worthwhile to look into further surveys in the future.

**Q:** For many years, there's been a certain perception about the title IX training that happens in sexual assault training habits or a new orientation, or it hasn't always been very positive. So I'm just curious what sort of feedback that we've received during that time?

**A:** We received a variety of feedback. There was a change in model (there was not a big in person session for all incoming students in the field house. There were different events available and different training opportunities available). The Greek organizations and athletes are all required to receive

training every year as our resident advisors and orientation leaders. So there are groups of students who absolutely receive training every year; that is required of us to provide that training.

**Q:** Because I study this, if there is an assault, why not call 911 instead of RIT?

**A:** Universities are compelled to treat this as a civil not criminal act. We are compelled to do something and empower the victim. We only call 911 if the victim wants us to. We will not engage law enforcement if the victim does not want that.

**Q:** This year's orientation was well received. Given that many students have to take this training, would it be beneficial for all students to be required to take the training over the summer before school starts in the fall?

**A:** We have a system in place for students active in many areas only have to take the training once. There's also a kind of a graduated program where some students need more information, right? If you're in a leadership role, you need a little bit more information than the general student body. But opening up those programs particularly if they were so well received, I think is a really good idea to look into that.

**Comment:** Just because I know that the online model worked really well for students. And it is just a lot easier to set up an online model and given that I don't have an exact statistics here, but it's probably a very strong chunk of students that are either not because art is right. And so it seems like maybe some of the missing trainings that they get from orientation today. Thank you

**Q:** Is there any formal training program for grad students (all – not just GTAs)

**A:** There is not. We have had it in the past. There was a different platform that we use for several years that had an actual module dedicated to graduate students because their needs are a little bit different. And quite frankly, when we have forwarded the trainings in the past to some graduate students, they were almost offended, particularly adult learners and so on and so forth. They felt like they didn't need it. So, we understand we need to customize training for graduate students. We do not have anything at this time. We can definitely look into it.

**Comment:** I think the general training that you have for all undergraduates are coming in should be mandatory for graduate students as well, because many of them come full time from other countries where they probably don't understand these terminologies. It causes issues

**A:** We do have training for international students. So, a large number of the graduate students, particularly the international students do receive training. And from what I understand a large percentage of graduate students are international students, so, they do receive the training through international student services in conjunction with our office.

**Q:** I see the 13.2 percent response rate, do you know last year's response rate?

**A:** Yes, 18 and 19 percent.

**Q:** Are there incentives for people to do this?

**A:** This past year, I think was our most robust effort in terms of marketing strategy. We handed out a lot of gift cards. We did a lot of tabling events. We publicized, we worked closely with marketing and communication to get the message out. We had some great response in some of our tables. We set up tables in GCCIS a couple of times. We had a lot of students coming by receiving goodies, collecting gift cards (\$5 gift cards for coffee and that didn't impact our response rate.

Comment: I am concerning of the validity of the 13.2 percent. Maybe we can add it the courses like 365 where students have to complete the survey and give them an incentive.

**A:** Yes, that is a great idea.

**Student Success Update and Discussion** (*presentation files available on the [University Council website](#)*)

Ellen Granberg, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Chris Licata, Vice Provost, Academic Affairs

**21-DAY REPORT: ENROLLMENT**

- Total enrollment is a function of student retention. When we think about enrollment – it is head count and full time tuition. It is related because if a larger number of students comes back for the next year, enrollment goes up.
- If a substantial proportion of students do not come back for the next year, the new round goes down.
- Enrollment number is calculated based off of full time tuition paying people, when you take the part time people and put them together, to get the full time equivalent.
- We were at a drop of 34% with 13,235 last year and 11,000 undergraduate students this year.
- Graduate students were up, we have 1500 this year.
- If NTID students were calculated in these figure we would be at 60,000, but they are not because their budget is calculated separately. These numbers are in relation to the budget.
- Graduate enrollment declined across colleges, except Sustainability.

**21-DAY REPORT: STUDENT SUCCESS INDICATORS**

- In Fall 2022 74% of students graduated within 6 years, the highest we've seen. In Fall 2021 it was 71%. The 2025 goal is 78%.
- For on-time graduation (within four years) the goal is 60% by 2025. In past years it's been in the 40's. It is now 56% and previously (Fall 2021) it was 58%.
- The 6 year graduation rate has stayed the same for the most part (69%-71%), whereas on time graduation has increased. The six year graduation rate has been harder for us to move, but on time graduation rate is getting better.
- The main goal is focusing on the retention rate within first and second year, which would tremendously improve both numbers. We would need retention to reach 93% in first to second year persistence, in order to hit the 78% graduation rate.
- We also focused a lot on the gap between our AALANA students and non- AALANA students. Last year the gap was 10%, this year the gap was 6%. We hope to continue to narrow this gap.

- We want to focus on the root cause of the low retention rate, so we are reaching out to families who have left and asking them for reasons.

## STUDENT SUCCESS SUPPORTS

- Mandatory advising for first and second years
- Mid-career advising- to ensure students are on track
- Advising team reaches out to students who are not registered for the next semester to support them.
- Academic alerts and Kudos help students know where they stand and encourage them to keep going.
- Policy Revisions:
  - LOA policy (leave of absence) - advisors reach out to students and ensure they have a return plan in place.
  - Withdrawal policy - students cannot withdraw below a full-time student status without approval from department chair.
  - Academic action policy - probation and suspension made more student friendly, and provide them with supports too.
- Creating new programs through collaborating with Student Affairs and Academic affairs and directing students to the Academic Support Center when we are notified students receive a D or F in their first semester.
- Dr. Munson is taking a meeting every quarter with the leadership team to specifically focus on student success.
- Also working with a steering committee to get feedback as well.
- New predictive analytics that will provide student data to advisors and also can provide a platform for advisors to reach at risk students.
- New academic advocacy program pilot – one point of contact (Student affairs and DEI) to provide additional support.
- New dashboard to provide more information.
  - How do we use the data to talk about changes needed? We are excited about this and the potential for curriculum and course modification.
- We are using the Pulse survey results to discuss what students are saying about pain points.
  - Academic support system will now reach out to students to see how they can be supported with additional training because we have to get a handle on these root causes.
  - There is a study to reach out to students about why they left RIT.
- New Undergrad Provost – Dr. Neeraj Buch who will join in Jan 16, 2023.
- We think we are concentrating on the right things but we do have more to do to get our numbers where they need to be.
- It is very important to engage students – important for student well-being. Talk to students and get to know them and to try to relate to them. Make RIT a caring community. There is always something we can do.

**Comment:** RIT is academically challenging and we cannot assume that all students who come here came from academically challenging school, so they need that support. We need to foster a community so that students know who to talk to about issues and problems. Expenses could also be another factor because RIT is pricey and there is a stress about paying bills and real life adult problems. Most students are financially dependent which adds an additional stress on top of overwhelming classes. Some

students don't feel properly supported financially and academically. When you add the extreme temperatures of living spaces, sometimes being too hot or cold, it adds to the discomfort. The dorms are not nice and need many improvements. Some students feel they can get the same or better education for less money (like at MCC). We need to foster community and really connect with the students. A better IT system is needed. I am a third year and used to it, but it may be hard for first years. Let students know about these problems and that they are working to fix it.

**Comment:** In SOIS I am working to create a mentorship program with older students and younger students which can be easily replicated in other colleges. A big issue with first year students is a lack of personal autonomy. They do not get to choose classes for first semester since their schedule is given to them. Then you're kind of just stuck with it because add/drop dates go by so fast. Giving them a little bit more of an opportunity to choose what they want to do that very first semester and promoting personal autonomy through things like individualized study or just being able to have more space to pick your own classes. More space is needed for students to explore their passions. We have so many resources on campus that I feel like people just don't know about. Academic support, the writing commons availability and ASC could be promoted more for first years.

**Q:** To clarify, more choice for open electives and more choice in academic classes?

**A:** Correct

**Comment:** I took AP computer science in high school. I've been coding since sixth grade. So when I came to university, I had that knowledge, but not all 4000 AALANA students have that ability to accomplish that. I think some of the intro courses are maybe too challenging for at least a lot of students. I am curious to see how many people change their major after the first year. If there's a higher number of people changing in the first year, that might be something related to from a general perspective. Not to mention the weather's influence on the wellness and moods of students.

**Comment:** Speaking from experience. A lot of my friends initially in the computer science program just dropped out of either computer science because they went through a really difficult intro course and they had no exposure to the material prior. Some of the intro courses may be too challenging. I am interested in seeing how and when students are changing their majors. Also extending add/drop period may be beneficial since not a lot of material has been covered by the current deadline, especially first years who have not had any experience in college life. Winter time is challenging in Rochester for motivation for students to go to class. Northeastern is the college we should be comparing ourselves to – high retention and graduation rates – maybe look at them instead of Uof R. There is still a disconnect in collaboration with an academic advisor. Academic alerts – make sure advisors are following up with the students beyond the initial contact. Some students are motivated to get in contact with advisors and others are not. Start incentivizing collaboration – we should work together to apply what we learn here. Coming back from co-op (3rd years and up) – not enough talk about this when student comes back – some students are not motivated when they come back. On co-op you realize that, okay, maybe 10% of my education really applies, because you've learned majority, which is the benefit of schooling. And so, when you come back, you're really in that mindset of well, I'm basically done and I enjoy the professional workforce a lot more.

**Q:** In terms of its kind of outreach, what would you like faculty members to do more of and the advisor rather than just email. What would that look like?

**A:** if your sending out an Academic Alert, and the professor is genuinely that aware, maybe inviting the student for the office hours, and to just work on clarifying material because class is 15 weeks, right? If you miss a week or two weeks, your classmates, the professor isn't your responsibility. If you miss two or three classes, and now you're just so far behind, and so lost, a lot of times making that effort and telling us hey, I'm lost, helps.

**Comment:** Getting involved on campus and just being aware of the opportunities can help and is really important from the emotional perspective. With the campus culture, there's a place for everybody, in extracurricular, sometimes you really got to dig for it but I think among the clubs I think there's something for every single first year and it's just a matter of promoting it in a way that it reaches the audience's. I am a RA and involved in SG. I am currently in a small department and receive great support. Students need more focused support (from advisors) who remember small details and are easily accessible regardless of program size. Falling behind in classes can happen very fast. The transition from high school to college is challenging. In college, not all professors readily provide that information that you are missing when you fall behind. Some students are not comfortable reaching out to fellow classmates for course information. COVID provided more accessible information which has been removed now that we are returning to a new normal.

**Comment:** So I am an Academic Advisor. I would say probably the main reason my students who choose not to return to RIT is financial. They didn't like their major and/or their majors not what they expected. And I think the not expected is almost more than they're changing. We are a very heavy cohort program. In the College of Business, we do have a peer mentorship program, it is optional for our students. Our freshmen this year, they are cohorted all together and don't have any flexibility in their first semester, in their second semester there is a little bit more. So, I think the flexibility that was spoken about, you know, I have students who come in with very lofty goals of I want to double major, I want to do a minor, I want to do these things that you can't jump into. But that just the financial concerns, truthfully, is they can't afford the textbooks and they fall behind. It might not be a popular thing to say in this room, but I don't like the current withdrawal policy as an academic advisor. I understand the purpose, but if a student's going to fail a course, they're going to fail the course whether we let them withdraw from it or we don't. I'm all for kind of a barrier to it and talking to someone, but the prevention piece has been difficult for working with students who can't withdrawal so they decide they are not going to go to class. They think it is better to pass three than try and do mediocre with four when I'm already so far behind. So I think the academic struggle is the major piece along with financial. Thank you.

**Comment:** I am a mom of a freshman student who already wants to leave RIT which does not make happy at all, I think it is too early. She is happy with academics – (classes, advisors, professors, etc.), the issue is the social aspect. Orientation week is wonderful but then it stops. My child is not introverted and has tried to be more social (signs up for club and no response back), this is a big struggle for first years. Maybe extend orientation beyond the first week.

**Comment:** I lived with the students for three years in the dorms. One day I was going to a meeting and the students stopped talking until one mentioned that “he is one of us”. The divide between students and faculty is evident and we need to bridge the divide. The students feel that the faculty talk down to them and do not connect. Faculty needs to be flexible and work with the students. Allow them to make mistakes. Care is important. Don't look at students as customers. I have seen students leaving. Why are we signing so many withdrawal forms? Ask the students why they are leaving. Students are overwhelmed with where they should go for certain things. Maybe have “one stop shop” for services.



**Comment:** My daughter attends another university (freshman) and was not feeling well but was not confident in reaching out to professor about her illness. We need a system to help students reach out and get answers. My college did a study – students need a clear understanding of the program. RIT is very rigid and it is difficult to change programs and to start from the beginning.

**Comment:** Fostering relationship between faculty and staff is important. Students of color feel that RIT only likes them when it is convenient and that they are not really valued. We need to break down the barriers.

**Comment:** With the state of mental health in the US – there needs to be background checks or examinations on first years because you cannot succeed if you are struggling with mental health issues. Also, we have a large international population – many other countries shun mental health and students will not share when they are struggling.

**Q:** How do we provide more follow up?

**A:** I will send out an email with more information.

#### **New Business**

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Attendance – see next page

**Attendance October 12, 2022**

Name	Relationship to UC	Attended		Name	Relationship to UC	Attended
Abushagur, Mustafa	Member-FS			Luciani, Teo	Member-SG	x
Aldersley, Stephen	Member-FS			Marhevka, Ashton (sub - Daniel Amburgey)	Member-SG	x
Bamonto, Suzanne	Member-FS	x		Masaline, Melissa	Member-SC	x
Blixit, Hailey	Member-SG	x		McKeen, Jenai	Member-SG	x
Buckley, Gerard	Member-Dean			McQuiller, Laverne	Non-Voting Member	x
Buckley, Larry	Member - Dean			Milliken, Renee	Member-SC	x
Castleberry, Phil	Non-Voting Member			Mortimer, Ian	Non-Voting Member	
Crawford, Denton	Member-FS			Mozrall, Jacqueline	Member & EC	
D'Amanda, Elisabetta	Member-FS			Munson, David	Non-Voting Member & EC	X
Edwards, Doreen	Member-Dean			Nasr, Nabil	Member-Dean	
Erllich-Scheffer, Katherine	Member-SC	X		Newman, Atia	Member & EC	
Faber, Josh	Member-FS	X		Olabisi, Joy	Member-FS	X
Finnerty, Bob	Non-Voting Member	X		Peterson, Dustin	Member - SC	X
Genseler, Sam	Member-SG	X		Pinkham, Jo Ellen	Non-Voting Member	
Ghazle, Hamad	Member-FS	x		Prescott, Joanna	Member-SC	
Granberg, Ellen	Member & EC	x		Provenzano, Susan	Non-Voting Member	
Hall, James	Member-Dean			Raffaella, Ryne	Non-Voting Member	
Harrington, Gabrielle	Member-SC			Ramkumar, S. Manian	Member-Dean	X
Herman, Vanessa J.	Non-Voting Member			Rosenberg, Morrgan	Member-SG	X
Heyman, Emily	Member & EC	X		Sheffield, Chip; SOIS	Member-FS	
Hoopes, Trishelle	Member-SG	X		Slusarski, Diane	Non-Voting Member	x
Hudson, André	Member-Dean			Sparkman, Torrence	Member-FS	
Huenerfauth, Matt	Member – Dean	x		Springer, Greg	Member-SG	x
Jaff, Malik	Member-SG	X		St. Jean, Bill	Member-SC	X
Jenkins, Keith	Non-Voting Member	X		Stenport, Anna	Member-Dean	
Johnson, Dan	Member-FS			Strowe, Brendon	Member-SC	x
Johnson, Sandra	Non-Voting Member			Trierweiler, John	Non-Voting Member	X
Johnson, Scott	Member-FS			Wang, Yong Tai	Member-Dean	x
Johnston, Joe	Non-Voting Member			Watters, Devon	Member-SC	x
Jokl, Todd	Member-Dean	X		Watters, Jim	Non-Voting Member	
Khanna, Aditya	Member & EC	x		Zehr, Jeremy	Member-SC	x
Laury, Dino	Member-FS	X				
Lezette, Michelle	Member-SC	X				
Loffredo, Joe	Non-Voting Member					

**Key: EC=Executive Committee; FS=Faculty Senate; SC=Staff Council; SG=Student Government**

Interpreters: Danielle Cohen and Kirsten Borkowski

UC Coordinator: Tamaira Brown