

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
M I N U T E S  
December 4, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Boikess, Borisovets, Crews, Giraud, Gillett, Oliver (Chair), Schwartz, Simonds, Struble, Thompson, Willett

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Shobut

**ALSO ATTENDING:** *A. Esposito (ITC Co-Chair); P. Moghe (EVP for Academic Affairs), T. Shinbrot (BoG Faculty Representative)*

The regular meeting of the University Senate Executive Committee was held on Friday, December 4, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. remotely via Zoom.

**1. Chairs Report – Jon Oliver, Senate Chair**

Chair Jon Oliver called the December 4, 2020 Senate Executive Committee meeting to order at 12:00pm. He thanked Senator Karen Thompson for reminding him that the Ad Hoc Committee on Senate Attendance has yet to start their work. He assured her and the EC this is underway and should convene by January 2021. He also announced that Rutgers University will be hosting the BTAA Conference of University & Faculty Senates in October 2021 and a small committee of the current and past chairs has been organized and will meet on December 10.

**2. Secretary's Report – Mary Mickelsen, Senate Executive Secretary**

- The agenda for the December 4, 2020 EC meeting was approved
- The [minutes for the October 9, 2020 EC meeting](#) were approved as distributed by the Executive Secretary.
- Communications:
  - It was reported that the following policies were updated in the University Policy Library:
    - [Policy 80.1.1: Permission for External Companies to Film, Videotape, and Photograph at Rutgers \(PDF\)](#)
    - [Policy 80.1.6: Communications and Relations with the News Media \(PDF\)](#)
    - [Policy 10.3.13: Student Immunizations and Health Requirements \(PDF\)](#)
    - [Policy 100.2.12: Notice of Non-Discrimination for Language and Interpretation Services under the Affordable Care Act \(ACA\) Section 1557 \(PDF\)](#)
  - Mickelsen updated the EC on the proposed charge presented by Senator Kevin Schroth at the October 9, 2020 Executive Committee meeting on the Rutgers Smoking Policy at which it was decided this issue would be brought back up under Old Business at this meeting in order to allow for a community survey to be completed and added to the background of this charge. That survey will not be conducted until the beginning of next year, therefore this issue will not be reviewed again until the February 2021 Executive Committee meeting.

**3. Administrative Report – Prabhas Moghe, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs**

EVPAAB Prabhas Moghe delivered an administrative report, which included comments on:

- [Rutgers' 2020 Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science](#): Kenneth Irvine, SAS-NB Molecular Biology & Biochemistry; Brian Strom, RBHS Chancellor; Charles Weschler, Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences Institute; Hui Xiong, RBS:N/NB Information Systems

- Rutgers' Students named as [Marshall](#) and [Schwarzman](#) Scholars (names were held during this meeting while awaiting official announcements)
- The Pass/No Credit Option was passed for undergraduate students during the Fall 2020 semester. Moghe did caution students on taking advantage of this option since it could have adverse effects particularly for students going into professional and/or graduate schools. Students will have up until 1 week after semester grades have been posted to make their decision.
- Searches are underway for Camden Chancellor and Senior Vice President of Research while gathering input from the community via town halls, etc.
- SVP for Strategy Brian Ballentine is looking to improve the efficiency of RCM – refreshing the model in a way it will not continue to disadvantage collaboration across units and campuses
- Spring 2021 will offer more face-to-face class offerings while being mindful of the risks the winter/flu season could present. Possibility of ~85% of classes being virtual but will make case-by-case determinations. There will also be more of an opportunity for on-campus living with social-distancing guidelines in place.
- [Giving Tuesday](#) brought out more than 600 donors, but donations were still being tallied at this point.

Moghe then engaged in a short question and answer period which included clarification on the above topics and the following:

- Pass/NC offerings for Graduate Students, particularly on the Camden Campus and how this affects the current Camden Campus policy;
- The SAS-NB Writing Program PTLs that were reinstated after being laid off earlier this semester, have yet to hear from the NB Chancellor's office on their approval of the appointments
- Gender pay equity issues
- The extent of faculty consultation surrounding the Pass/NC option for Fall 2020

#### 4. Student Affairs Report – Salvador Mena, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Vice Chancellor Mena delivered his report on the services Student Affairs provides and included the following which specifies the unit's efforts surrounding the support of students during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Health & Wellness
  - Testing clinics open to on- and off-campus students totaling over 17k to date;
  - Education on good decision-making practices utilizing CDC guidelines on prevention and exposure reduction;
  - Mental health services
- Student Support
  - Launching mobile food pantry in response to an increase in food insecurity;
  - Technology support services to include the distribution of over 300 laptops;
  - Emergency student funding
- Student Engagement & Accountability
  - Opportunities for virtual engagement with students and their surrounding community service projects;
  - Assisting students in doing their part to not spread the virus in their home towns
  - Holding certain organizations/individuals accountable for their actions when ignoring Rutgers and CDC COVID regulations;
  - Making personal visits to the NB wards in a show of institutional support for students living in off campus housing;
  - Distribution of Rutgers face masks to students along with holding virtual town halls educating students on ways they can be a part of the solution and not perpetuate the problem
- Spring 2021 Planning

- Reviewing the possibility of increasing the student housing population to 2800 in NB;
- Orientation for Summer 2021 will be virtual;
- Options for Commencement 2021 are being considered and are fluid based on the state of the virus;
- Continuing to hold all large events/programs virtually and encouraging all students to be flexible.

Mena then answered questions on the following topics:

- Pass/No Credit option for students;
- Victim Assistance/Violence Prevention funding for Newark, Camden, and RBHS;
- Efforts being made by the SA department the Senate could assist in

## 5. Committee Business

### Issues/Proposed Charges

#### **Proposed Charge to Research and Graduate & Professional Education Committee (RGPEC) on Investigation of Changes to the Rutgers University Patent Policy – Tory Shinbrot, Engineering (F)**

**Proposed Charge:** *Review the changes made to [University Policy 50.3.1 Patent Policy](#). Investigate potential impacts the changes may have on research, and innovation & technology transfer. Also, determine whether appropriate faculty input was considered prior to board approval, especially considering the changes revise the distribution of invention income.*

**Background:** The policy for distribution of patent revenues was quietly changed on 6/10/2020 from a longstanding distribution approach that better supported the inventor and originating research unit to a new policy that diverts funds to the president, chancellor and RCM center (not necessarily the institute or department where the research originated). Faculty were not consulted, and this diversion reduces incentive for innovation as well as taking funds from responsible research organization and sending the funds to upper administration.

Supporting Documents:

- [Rutgers University Patent Policy 50.3.1 – June 2020](#)
- [Rutgers University Patent Policy 50.3.1 – Pre-June 2020](#)
- [Patent Policy Distribution Comparison](#)
- [Riman Patent Policy Impact](#)

Shinbrot discussed the reasoning and background for the charge. The EC discussed the validity of the charge and after some wordsmithing, it was agreed to issue the charge to RGPEC with an April 2021 due date and the following language:

*Review the changes made to University Policy 50.3.1- Patent Policy. Investigate potential impacts the changes may have on research, innovation & technology transfer, faculty retention and recruitment, and the financial viability of research units. Explore the extent of faculty input and notification prior to the change in policy. Make recommendations on appropriate processes for faculty consultation on these and similar issues in the future.*

**Proposed Charge to the Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee (ASRAC) on Re-Examination of the Add-Drop Period During COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond– Carolyn Moehling, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education**

**Proposed Charge:** Consider if and how the Add-Drop period should be adjusted for Spring 2021 assuming that the University will once again be offering most instruction remotely. Also, evaluate the standard structure of the Add-Drop period and assess whether the changes instituted by the Senate several years ago -- in particular, having the Add period extend one day beyond the drop period -- have had the desired effects.

**Background:** The move to fully remote instruction changes the way that students are able to get information about courses and instructors. Accordingly, we may want to consider changing the Add-Drop period to be responsive to the challenges created by the remote instruction environment for our students.

Several years ago, the Senate recommended that the Add period be one day longer than the Drop period. The notion behind this was that the longer period to add would allow students to take advantage of the seats opened up by other students dropping courses. Some advisors have observed, however, that students often do not drop courses by the drop deadline precisely because they are waiting for seats to open in other courses. Given that the policy has been in effect for a number of years, it would be helpful to investigate as to whether it has had the desired effects.

Moehling was not available to speak to the charge, however the committee did have a productive discussion around the topic. It was decided to issue the charge to ASRAC with a January 2021 due date, considering the anticipated recommendations by the committee will need to get to the Administration in time to make a productive change.

**Proposed Charge to Academic Standards, Regulations and Admissions Committee to Investigate the Need and Impact of Pass/No Credit Option Among Rutgers – Zayaan Syed, SAS-NB Student**

**Proposed Charge:** Study the effect of P/NC option on students' ability to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. Make recommendations in regards to whether the P/NC option should be available to students for the Spring 2021 semester.

**Background:** Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in March, 2020, Rutgers University has taken a series of measures to both prevent the spread of disease and support students. One of the measures implemented is the P/NC option. In Spring 2020, students have the option to switch their course grade to a Pass (for any grades above F) or No credit (for grades in F) in the week after they have received their final grades. Many schools in the Big Tens have initiated similar yet distinct measures. Currently, students still face many adversities due to the pandemic. Since the option of Pass/No credit or the lack of it has potentially significant impact on students, the Rutgers Senate should study how the option has impacted students' ability to cope with the pandemic, compare the results with other schools in the Big Tens, and recommend whether the option should continue given the status of the pandemic, students' learning environment and needs.

**Proposed Charge to Instruction, Curricula, and Advising to Consider the Implementation of a Pass/No Credit Grading System for The Fall 2020 Semester – Submitted by: Charlie Jay MacCaayan, SAS-NB Student**

**Proposed Charge:** The committee should consider options regarding an alternative grading option for the fall semester. Whether it involves a similar system to the spring with a fully pass/no credit option, a pass/fail option, or a credit/no credit option. All options should be considered given fairly by students and faculty given the continuing damaging effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the population.

**Background:** The University Senate should seriously consider this option given the lack of action from the Office of Undergraduate Education at Rutgers. The fact that they are waiting for action from other universities speaks to the lack of leadership being taken to address student needs. It's a sad concept to hear from a student's perspective. That that is what the university thinks of its students. It therefore demands action from the bottom up instead, through the powers vested to your body. Many administrators have to realize that students cannot be swayed into utilizing university resources for mental health so that they can just power through the semester. Current as well as emerging obstacles such as Zoom fatigue, seasonal depression, and the bleak nature of quarantining again to combat a second wave of COVID cases have set a number of students back either minutely through stress or immensely to a point that the work itself looks daunting. Give students a signal that the university is considering to be flexible, because right now the silence is deafening to the thousands of students stuck in such a terrible predicament.

**[Student Caucus Resolution in Support of the Implementation of a Pass/No Credit Policy for the Spring 2021 Semester](#) - Senator Gavin Mayes, SAS-NB (S) and Senate Student Caucus Leader**

Based on the administration's recent decision to instate the Pass/No Credit option for Rutgers undergraduates, and on the ICAC report on S-2016: Lessons Learned from the University-Wide Online Learning which recommends the Pass/No Credit option as part of their resolution, the committee collectively decided to not discuss the above related charges and the Student Caucus Resolution on the Support of the Implementation of a Pass/No Credit Policy for the Spring 2021 semester until a decision is made on the docketing of the report.

**Committee Reports/Resolutions:**

**Instruction, Curricula, and Advising Committee (ICAC) Response to Charge [S-2016: Lessons Learned from the University-wide Online Learning](#) – Natalie Borisovets, ICAC Chair**

**ICAC was charged as follows:**

*Evaluate the current policies, practices, plans and outcomes for remote instruction across the University in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Assess any lessons learned from the transitioning to online learning because of the pandemic.*

Senator Borisovets reviewed the work of the committee and the subsequent recommendations. The EC discussed the report and concluded it was ready to docket for the December 11, 2020 Senate meeting barring a few minor grammatical changes.

**Information Technology Committee (ITC) Response to Charge [S-2017: Evaluation of the University's Continuity of Operations](#) – Adrienne Esposito, ITC Co-Chair**

**The ITC was charged as follows:**

*Evaluate the IT implications of remote instruction, research and telecommuting necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Examine issues including the range of remote instruction offered to students and the transition to Canvas and make any recommendations.*

Senator Esposito spoke about the process her committee went through to create the report and recommendations to this charge. The EC reviewed those recommendations and agreed to docket it for the December 11, 2020 Senate meeting with some wording changes and enhancement of some background information to better support the recommendations.

## **6. University Senate December 11, 2020 Agenda**

Regular Senate meeting via Zoom  
Administrative Report by President Jonathan Holloway  
Chancellor's Report by RBHS Chancellor Brian Strom

## **7. Adjournment**

The Executive Committee adjourned at 4:15pm.

Minutes prepared by:  
Senate Executive Secretary Mary Mickelsen