

UNIVERSITY SENATE
Executive Committee
AGENDA

March 3, 2023 – 12:00 noon

<https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/99068164783?pwd=VHV1YUphLzJmWVgrUDM0VGcyUE01Zz09>

Chair's Report– Adrienne Simonds, Senate Chair

Secretary's Report– Vicki Hewitt, Senate Executive Secretary

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of the [Feb. 3, 2023 Senate Executive Committee Minutes](#)
- Communications
 - Call for Nominations for Senate Leadership Positions – Fri. April 21

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

Discussion – Antonio Tillis, Camden Chancellor

[Review Committee Charges and Deadlines](#)

[2023-2024 Senate Calendar Approval](#)

April 7 EC Meeting – Reschedule?

Student Chats

Administrative Requests for Follow-Up

Standing Committees/Panels

Committee Report and Recommendations:

Information Technology Committee – Katie Anderson and Adrienne Esposito, Co-Chairs

[Report on S-2201: Approved Electronic Notebooks](#)

The ITC was charged as follows:

Investigate the use of electronic lab notebooks. Review the current policies and practice of notebook creation and cloud storage. Recommend the best practices for maintaining the security, integrity, and accessibility of these notebooks.

Proposed Charge:

Increased Representation of Graduate Students in the University Senate – Senator Sonal Gahlawat, School of Graduate Studies, Student

Charge: *Evaluate the current criteria, bylaws, and policies that decide graduate student representatives in the Senate. Make appropriate changes to increased graduate student representations in the EC, BOG, BOT, and Senate committees.*

Rationale: Graduate students are an integral part of Rutgers University, which performs cutting-edge research, secures funding, and teach/grade undergraduate students. With almost 20,000 graduate students as of Fall 2022, graduate student representation in the Senate does not reflect the diversity of graduate students within different schools and departments. The increased number of graduate student representatives will enhance the Senate's ability to serve the graduate student community, which has been neglected for a long time, and whose issues differ significantly from the undergraduate community.

Proposed Charge:

Assuring Students Continued Access to Student Academic Records – Senator Michael Van Stine, Graduate School-Camden, Student

Charge: *The Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee, in consultation with the Student Affairs Committee and the Information Technology Committee, should investigate the manner in which students' records are stored and make recommendations to assure compliance with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Specific assurances and recommendations are needed as it relates to continued access by students to their academic records as they are stored on the various instructional platforms by various professors in individual classes.*

Rationale: Many student records are kept as paper files in various storage locations. In recent years, many courses have utilized changing online platforms, on which all matter of student academic records are kept. These range from academic course materials and resources, syllabi, research, and work assignments both given and submitted for grading including student tests and papers and other forms of course documents and records. In electronic locations, these classes have been organized in the past both on Sakai and Blackboard platforms which have undergone university-wide consolidation into Canvas. In many if not most cases, students have assured continued access to these records after class completion. This is not always the case. And it is unclear what are prevailing access protocols for students after they graduate. There needs to be a uniform policy that assures continued access to these records in accordance with good academic policy and compliance with applicable laws, including and especially the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is the federal law that governs the rights of students and institutional responsibilities with respect to student records. The University keeps a policy iteration on this law at: <https://scarlethub.rutgers.edu/registrar/ferpa->

[information/confidentiality-security/](#) Among other things, the law provides students with the right of access to their education records (even after graduation), the right to inspect, review, and obtain copies of records, and the right to know what records are kept, under whose jurisdiction, and for what period of time. Some preliminary research indicated that this policy would extend to all student records kept both in paper form stored in various locations as well as on academic online platforms. The only exclusion seems to be confidential personal notes that might be made and kept by professors that otherwise would not be in any accessible files. All else should be maintained as ongoing accessible.

Proposed Charge:

Equitable and Transparent Policies for Academic Performance Grading and Appeals – Senator Michael Van Stine, Graduate School-Camden, Student

Charge: *The Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee, in conjunction with the Student Affairs Committee, should investigate the state of academic performance grading and appeals, looking at various policies across campuses and schools to determine better possibilities for standardization as well as a more uniform and fair approach to grade appeals.*

Rationale: Rutgers does not have one comprehensive grading policy. It has one that designates grading concepts and symbols by the academic unit and allows for substantial diversity between undergraduate and graduate applications as well as unique characteristics among classifications and units. While grading characteristics may logically need to differentiate as they do, it is troubling that prevailing policies may not be in relative conformity with peer institutions. Whatever may be the grading policy, there needs to be a reasonable appeal policy in all applications to insure fairness and transparency in grading decisions. Undergraduate and graduate policies by varied academic units need to be compared to peer equivalents and recommendations need to be made where policy updates are warranted. It should be assured that in all cases there is a reasonable mechanism for fair objective grade appeal submission and review.

Proposed Charge:

Allowing Extensions Beyond Nominal Cutoff Dates for Student Tuition Refunds in the Case of Severe Emergencies – Senator Michael Van Stine, Graduate School-Camden, Student

Charge: *The Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee, in conjunction with the Student Affairs Committee, should investigate a policy variance beyond the current last date in a semester when a student can qualify for a partial refund of tuition when a legitimate emergency occurs that could not reasonably be anticipated before a cutoff date and a professor does not allow a fair opportunity for a course incomplete.*

Rationale: Rutgers allows for tuition refunds on a declining scale down to zero after approximately the halfway point in each semester. Usually, any emergency that might occur

based on a family crisis or illness which cannot permit a continuation of classwork can be met by a course incomplete negotiated between a professor and student. However, where such an emergency is not foreseen before a final cutoff date and where a professor is either unwilling to offer an incomplete grade to be made up after the end of a semester or offers such an opportunity with a substantial penalty, the student should be able to access a procedure exception, with the approval of wither a department chair or academic dean or both to be able to receive a latent refund of tuition. Such a policy should be afforded to all students be they undergraduate or graduate with equity application.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Potential charges on certificates and busing.

University Senate March 24, 2023 Agenda

- Regular Senate Meeting on Zoom
- Newark Chancellor Report – Nancy Cantor, Chancellor, Rutgers-Newark

Adjournment