

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 4, 2022**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bachmann, Boikess, Cooper, Den Bleyker, Foster, Giraud, Oliver, Olivera, Ortiz, Roth, Schwartz, Simonds (Chair), Struble, Szatrowski, Thompson

ALSO ATTENDING: *F. Amjad (BOT Undergraduate Student Representative), P. Dane (BOT Faculty Representative), V. Hewitt (University Senate Executive Secretary), P. Moghe (Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs), K. O'Halloran (Vice President for Academic Planning & Administration, EVPAA), T. Ozel (BOT Faculty Representative), T. Pistell (BOT Graduate Student Representative), S. Rabinowitz (BOG Faculty Representative), M. Smith (University Senate Administrative Assistant)*

The regular meeting of the University Senate Executive Committee was held on Friday, November 4, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. remotely via Zoom.

Chair's Report— Adrienne Simonds, Senate Chair

Chair Simonds called the November 4, 2022 Senate Executive Committee meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. She encouraged everyone to get their flu shots. She thanked members for their hard work and asked them to review their committee charges to see if any could be ready for the January or February full Senate meeting. The draft survey on academic freedom is nearing completion and should be distributed early Spring 2023. There is a schedule for university-wide distribution of surveys, so committees interested in developing surveys are asked to speak to Senate leadership about how to proceed. Senate leadership can also help facilitate scheduling administrators to attend committee meetings to provide information on committee charges under discussion.

Secretary's Report— Vicki Hewitt, Senate Executive Secretary

- The November 4, 2022 Executive Committee Agenda was approved with one addition under New Business.
- The October 7, 2022 Senate Executive Committee Minutes were approved.
- Policy Updates
 - [University Policy 10.1.14 Endowed Faculty Positions](#)
 - [University Policy 80.1.3 Purchase of External Advertising](#)
 - [University Policy 80.1.7 Rutgers University Website Policy](#)

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

Dr. Moghe provided the Administrative Report consisting of the following topics:

- Student award recipients
- Distribution of and communication about university-wide surveys, including the recently distributed Academic and Workplace Behavior survey
- Extension of the open enrollment deadline for health benefits to Fri. Nov. 4 and significant increases to the state health insurance plan premiums
- Encouraging students to vote in the upcoming elections

- International student enrollments

Dr. Moghe then answered questions on the following topics:

- Priority of in-state students for admission
- Inclusion of PTL faculty in notifications on surveys and health care; follow up on the response to S-2113: PTL Pay and Recognition
- Lower enrollments at Camden and Newark
- Increases to the state health insurance plan premiums
- Recent change prohibiting faculty buying books online with research funds from having the books delivered to their home address
- Rutgers University's rankings by fields of study
- Communicating the final exam schedule earlier in the semester

Discussion – Dr. Francine Conway, New Brunswick Chancellor-Provost

Due to a last-minute schedule change, Dr. Conway was unable to attend.

Administrative Requests for Follow-Up

- [S-2105: Exam Conflict Policies](#)

Chair Simonds will follow up with Dr. Moghe.

- [S-1909-1: Searches for University Leadership](#)
 - [FPAC Proposed Request for Clarification](#)

A motion was made to send the FPAC Proposed Request for Clarification to President Holloway from the Executive Committee. The motion carried.

- [S-2113: PTL Pay and Recognition](#)
 - [FPAC Proposed Response](#)

A motion was made to make four minor edits to the FPAC Proposed Response and provisionally docket it for the November 18 Senate meeting. The revisions will be communicated to FPAC.

Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee Co-Chair

The Executive Committee postponed voting on a new FPAC co-chair to the December EC meeting. Chair Simonds and Vice Chair Foster will meet with FPAC co-chair Farid Alizadeh to discuss.

Standing Committees/Panels

Proposed Charge:

Divestment of Retirement Funds from Fossil Fuels – Submitted by David M. Hughes, Professor of Anthropology, School of Arts and Sciences-New Brunswick (revised and resubmitted)

Charge: *The Faculty Affairs and Personnel Committee should investigate the desirability and the means of communicating to TIAA and other investment carriers that they should divest our retirement funds from coal, oil, and gas firms – and possibly reinvest the same funds in more socially responsible sectors.*

Rationale: Institutions are increasingly divesting their assets from coal, oil, gas corporations (as well as from banks and other corporations that provide ancillary services to the fossil fuel sector). This activism rests on three principles: 1) one should not support planetary-scale environmental and social destruction; 2) divestment will undercut these firms social license to operate and ability to influence Congress; and 3) in the fiduciary sense, the expected transition away from fossil fuels is already eroding the value of these holdings. In making these judgments, In making these judgements, universities have played out-sized role: we have generated the science undergirding divestment, and we act upon a robust mission and conscience.

In 2021, Rutgers University announced that it would divest its endowment (the Rutgers University Foundation) and its reserves from fossil fuels. In July 2022, the American Federation of Teachers – which represents the plurality of Rutgers employees – will vote on a resolution encouraging the divestment of all its members retirement funds from fossil fuels.

In virtually all cases, entities have considered other strategies besides divestment, chiefly stockholder resolutions. They have found that those mechanisms – especially when attempting to change the core product of a firm – do not work. In the course of divesting from fossil fuels, entities have also considered whether and how to reinvest in renewable energy, in low- and moderate-income communities, and/or in employment creation for workers displaced from fossil fuels firms.

Currently, Rutgers faculty, administrators, and many staff invest their retirement funds in the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America-College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA, formerly TIAA-CREF). That not-for-profit firm provides financial services in academic and governmental fields and manages \$1.4 trillion dollars in total assets. Although TIAA has taken steps towards socially responsible investment, it has not publicly addressed or explained its investments in the fossil fuel sector. Rutgers employees who invest in TIAA, therefore, have no choice but to contribute financially to coal, oil, and gas.

Outcome: The Executive Committee amended the charge to: “Investigate whether the investment companies utilized by Rutgers for university employees should divest from fossil fuel companies within their retirement portfolios that are known to contribute to climate change. Report back to the Senate Executive Committee.” The Budget and Finance Committee was issued this charge.

Proposed Charge:

Implementing Democratic Standards for University Senate Committee Governance –

Submitted by Paul Boxer, Senator (School of Arts and Sciences - Newark, Faculty)

Charge: *At present the guidelines per the Senate Handbook for determining the leadership (chairship) of Senate committees are extremely vague and limited and require only that the Executive Council appoint chairs each June. I would like the committee to consider recommending a more democratic process that reflects the spirit of shared governance that the University Senate as a whole reflects.*

Rationale: The University Senate reflects some of the best qualities of shared governance in academia, with numerous stakeholder groups all taking part in formulating, discussing, deliberating, and recommending policy across a wide range of topics and administrative issues. Each year the Senate devotes a large segment of time to electing leadership for multiple Senate governing positions. Yet the leadership of the multiple standing committees of the Senate is not chosen in this manner. Rather, committee chairs are simply appointed in June as a matter of course by the Executive Committee. There are no known guidelines for how chairs are selected, whether committees have any recourse to select their own chairs, or how long the chair term should last. I am requesting that we develop democratic procedures for nominating and electing committee chairs on a yearly basis.

Outcome: The Executive Committee amended the charge to: “Investigate whether the University Senate should modify its processes for appointing committee chairs. Make recommendations whether an appointment or election for committee chairs should be held when new co-chairs are required. Report back to the Senate Executive Committee.” The University Structure and Governance Committee was issued this charge.

Committee Report and Recommendations:

Ad Hoc Committee on Examining the Efficacy of the GRE – Richard Dool (New Brunswick SC&I-Faculty), Adam Kustka (Senator, School of Arts and Sciences-Newark Faculty), Suja Patel (Senator, Newark Staff), Lucille Foster, (Vice Chair and Senator, Newark Staff), Co-Chairs

[Report on S-2203: Examining the Efficacy of the GRE](#)

The Ad Hoc committee was charged as follows:

Examine the effectiveness of the Graduate Records Examination (GRE) and its impact on Rutgers University's graduate programs. Investigate other peer aspirants.

Outcome: The Executive Committee amended Recommendation #4 to “the University should consider providing financial support.” With that amendment, the Executive Committee docketed the report for the Nov. 18 Senate agenda.

Committee Report and Recommendations:

**Instruction Curricula and Advising Committee (ICAC) – Natalie Borisovets and Taryn Cooper,
Co-Chairs**

[Report on S-2106: Office of Disability Services](#)

The ICAC was charged as follows:

Consider the work of the Office of Disability Services and how it has been affected by the pandemic. Examine the patterns of responsibility and interaction between the office, undergraduate and graduate students, and faculty. Identify any perceived issues that might impact ODS's mission to provide and maintain equal opportunity and access across the University, and potential strategies to support their work.

Outcome: A motion was made to refer this report back to committee, with suggested revisions for the committee to consider. The motion carried.

Open Charge Request:

S-2114: Review of Interim Code of Student Conduct Policy

ASRAC, FPAC, and SAC were charged as follows: Investigate proposed changes to the current code of student conduct policy based on the report from the Cannabis Decriminalization Impact Task Force.

The Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee has reviewed charge S-2114 Review of student Conduct Policy and questions if the charge would be better served if it was assigned to the student Affairs Committee.

We request the Executive Committee review charge S-2114 Review of student Conduct Policy and possibly reassign it to Student Affairs. If the decision is to leave the charge with the FPAC, we request the intent or logic of the assignment.

Outcome: The motion to remove charge S-2114 from the Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee carried.

Open Charge Request:

The Budget and Finance Committee requests an extension to March 2023 for the following charges:

- S-2002-1: Challenges Related to Parking and Transportation
- S-2010-1: Evaluation of the RCM Implementation at Rutgers

The following were charged to the Budget and Finance Committee without a deadline. The Executive Committee is requested to set a deadline for:

- S-2206: Socially Responsible Investment
- S-2207: Office of Climate Action

Outcome: The motion to extend the charge deadline for S-2002-1 and S-2010-1 to March 2023 carried. The motion to set the charge deadline for S-2206 and S-2207 to November 2023 carried.

Old Business

- **Proposed Charge on Masking Policy During Instruction** – Submitted by Viraj Patel, Student, School of Arts and Sciences

Charge: *Recalibrate masking policy to conditions existing in the majority of public places.*

Rationale: Currently, university policy requires facial coverings in all indoor teaching spaces, libraries, and clinical settings. Such a policy does not reflect the reality of covid-19 having endemic status as well as being treatable in the majority of cases. Additionally, the demographic of the university is predominantly made up of young adults(who are vaccinated as well as boosted) who are known to possess, especially relative to older populations, greater ability to combat infections in general and covid-19 specifically; furthermore, the current policy does not take into account the relative effectiveness of various facial coverings(as certain studies suggest that there is great variation in the benefit of different kinds of facial coverings with some being highly effective, others not as effective, and other still being outright counterproductive) ; Add to this the incoherence of the policy when examining masking in the university's transit(busses) which anecdotally is scarce to none; Considering these factors the seemingly only sensible policy, to me, seems to be to allow masking policy to be determined at professorial discretion, since aged instructors would be the most obvious protected group of the current policy, additionally the university could provide more effective countermeasures to immunocompromised individuals specifically.

Outcome: Since the masking policy changed at the end of October, the Executive Committee declined to assign this charge.

- Zoom Settings – Chat

A motion was made to adopt the Zoom chat settings proposed at the October EC meeting: the chat will be open for all participants but will not be monitored by Senate officers. If the chat becomes non-collegial, it will be disabled at the Chair's discretion. Senators are asked to raise a point of order if they have concerns about the content of the chat. The motion carried.

- Student Access to Reproductive Health Care

Chair Simonds reported that student health care fell under each Chancellor-led unit, so there is no university-wide consistency. Chair Simonds and Senator Roth will draft a charge on this issue.

New Business

Senator Roth shared information on the formation of RBHS committees to address the Senate's questions concerning the proposed merger of the medical schools. No committee is focused on budget or finance-related concerns, which comprised of over 40% of Senate questions about the merger. Chair Simonds will follow-up with Chancellor Strom about this mismatch.

Adjournment

The Executive Committee adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Vicki Hewitt, Executive Secretary of the University Senate