

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
March 3, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bachmann, Boikess, Cooper, Foster, Gahlawat, Giraud, Oliver, Ortiz, Roth, Schwartz, Simonds (Chair), Struble, Szatrowski, Thompson, Van Stine

**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), M. Sepanic (Chief of Staff and Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs, Rutgers University-Camden), M. Smith (University Senate Administrative Assistant), A. Tillis (Chancellor, Rutgers University-Camden)*

The regular meeting of the University Senate Executive Committee was held on Friday, March 3, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. remotely via Zoom.

**Chair's Report**– Adrienne Simonds, Senate Chair

Chair Simonds called the March 3, 2023 Senate Executive Committee meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. She reviewed the status of the Senate's ad hoc committees. She announced plans for a Senate recognition social event on Thu. May 18 and encouraged Executive Committee members to attend.

**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 – due Fri. April 21

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

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

- Student awards
- Supporting international students and scholars from areas affected by political upheaval or natural disasters
- Faculty accomplishments
- Accreditation by the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs
- Faculty research awards
- 80<sup>th</sup> year of Rutgers Research Council Awards
- Faculty Year-End Excellence Awards
- New undergraduate fellowship program in the Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice
- Rutgers University Press' new partnership with the Templeton Foundation

Dr. Moghe then answered questions on the following topics:

- Collective bargaining negotiations
- Dean appointment in the School of Engineering
- Getting undergraduate students involved in research
- Equal pay for equal work

#### **Discussion with Antonio Tillis, Camden Chancellor**

#### **[Review Committee Charges and Deadlines](#)**

The Executive Committee reviewed and updated all outstanding committee charges where the deadlines have passed:

- S-2002-1 Challenges Related to Parking and Transportation. This charge was reissued as S-2002-2, with a new deadline of Dec. 2023.
- S-2006-1: Senate Attendance. This charge was discharged.
- S-2013-1: Preparing Graduate and Professional Students to Teach in the 21st Century. Based on feedback that the wording of this charge made it difficult for the committee to pursue, this charge was discharged. The committee may submit a revised charge proposal to better define the charge.
- S-2020: Investigation of Changes to the Rutgers University Patent Policy. This charge was reissued as S-2020-1, with a new deadline of Dec. 2023.
- S-2103: Review of the Current Procedures for the Periodic Evaluation of Deans. This charge was reissued as S-2103-1, with a new deadline of Dec. 2023.
- S-2111 Late Course Add/Drop Policies. This charge was reissued as S-2111-1, to both ASRAC and SAC, with a new deadline of Sept. 2023.
- S-2115: Academic Freedom. This charge was reissued as S-2115-1, with a new deadline of March 2024.
- S-2116: SIRS. This charge was reissued as S-2116-1, with a new deadline of Dec. 2023.
- S-2117: Hiring Transparency and Equality. This charge was reissued as S-2117-1, with a new deadline of Dec. 2023.
- S-2201: Approved Electronic Notebooks. This charge was reissued as S-2201-1, with a new deadline of Sept. 2023.
- S-2202: Honors College Student Senators. This charge was reissued as S-2202-1, with a new deadline of Dec. 2023.
- S-2204: Impact of CourseAtlas. This charge was reissued as S-2204-1, with a new deadline of Dec. 2023.
- S-2205: Review of the University Senate's Governance Documents and Formulation of University Senate Bylaws. This charge was reissued as S-2205-1, with a new deadline of Dec. 2023.
- S-2209: Implementing Democratic Standards for University Senate Committee Governance. This charge was reissued as S-2209-1, with a new deadline of Nov. 2023.

The **[2023-2024 Senate Calendar](#)** was approved.

**The April 7, 2023 Executive Committee Meeting will start at 11:00 a.m., in recognition of Good Friday.**

## **Student Chats**

After discussion, the Executive Committee decided not to move forward with a charge on this issue.

## **Administrative Requests for Follow-Up**

Chair Simonds will follow up with Chancellor Strom to ask for more information on the proposed merger of the medical schools.

## **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.*

**Outcome:** The Executive Committee asks the ITC to revise the report to highlight the recommendations the Senate would be voting on.

### **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.

**Outcome:** The Executive Committee amended this charge to include PTL faculty, in addition to graduate students. The University Structure and Governance Committee was issued this charge with a deadline of January 2024.

**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.

**Outcome:** The Executive Committee voted against issuing this charge.

**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.

**Outcome:** The Executive Committee amended this charge to focus just on grading appeals. The Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee and the Student Affairs Committee were issued this charge with a deadline of March 2024.

**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 either 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.

**Outcome:** The proposed charge was postponed to the April Executive Committee meeting.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business**

Potential charges on certificates and busing were discussed at the February Executive Committee meeting. The Executive Committee decided not to move forward on these issues at this time.

### **Adjournment**

The Executive Committee adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

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