

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
April 7, 2023**

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

ALSO ATTENDING: *S. Abdelwahab (BOG Student Representative), F. Amjad (BOT Undergraduate Student Representative), V. Hewitt (University Senate Executive Secretary), 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, April 7, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. remotely via Zoom.

Chair's Report– Adrienne Simonds, Senate Chair

Chair Simonds called the April 7, 2023 Senate Executive Committee meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. She reminded committee members that a special meeting of the full Senate will be held at 1:00 p.m., following the Executive Committee meeting.

Secretary's Report– Vicki Hewitt, Senate Executive Secretary

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of the [March 3, 2023 Senate Executive Committee Minutes](#)
- Policy Update
 - [University Policy 20.1.22 Tobacco Free Policy](#)
 - [University Policy 10.1.15 Digital Credentials](#)
 - [University Policy 100.2.2 Excluded Individuals and Entities](#)
 - [University Policy 100.2.8 Fraud, Waste and Abuse Protection and the Federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005](#)
- Communications
 - Call for Nominations for Senate Leadership Positions – due Fri. April 21

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

Dr. Moghe could not attend the meeting.

Administrative Requests for Follow-Up

As a result of the Senate's report on charge S-1909-1: Searches for University Leadership, the Senate Chair was invited to participate in the dean search process for the Rutgers Law School and the School of Health Professions.

Standing Committees/Panels

Committee Report and Recommendations:

Ad Hoc Committee on Review Proposal for Merger of the Medical Schools – Adrienne Esposito, Lucille Foster, and Geza Kiss, Co-Chairs

[Report on S-2303 Review Proposal for Merger of the Medical Schools](#)

The ad hoc committee was charged as follows:

Constitute an ad hoc committee in anticipation of a proposal to the Senate for a merged medical school at Rutgers.

Outcome: The Executive Committee docketed this report for the April 28 Senate agenda.

Proposed Charge:

Professional Development Opportunities – Senator Cynthia Saltzman, Part-Time Lecturer-Camden, Faculty

Charge: Review the university's policies regarding professional development opportunities to attend conferences and meetings. Investigate and, when appropriate, make recommendations regarding campus and unit rules on (i) How long a faculty member may be absent for professional development opportunities? (ii) What are the policies for making alternative arrangements if a faculty member is absent? (iii) Who covers costs if a guest lecturer is hired? (iv) Can all faculty members, including PTLs, teach occasional classes online if necessary due to justified absences? (v) How do policies about professional development opportunities differ among schools and Chancellor-led units?

Rationale: Members of the University Senate Faculty and Personnel Committee were unaware of the rules in the Rutgers-Camden faculty handbook regarding professional development opportunities for FASC PTL and full-time faculty and wanted to review the fairness of the rules, the uniformity of the rules throughout the university and their implementation. The Camden PTL faculty handbook reads the following: "Ordinarily faculty members should not miss more than one half of one week's classes in the course of a semester. However, when extraordinary professional development opportunities are available, a faculty member may discuss with the department chairperson the possibility of making alternative arrangements for longer absences from class. If the chairperson judges both that the professional development opportunity is extraordinary and that the alternative arrangements provide for high quality education for students, the chairperson may approve a faculty member's request to be absent from classes for longer periods. All costs associated with the alternative arrangements (e.g., hiring a guest lecturer) are to be borne by the faculty member" (FASC PTL handbook, p9). The language in the FASC handbook for full-time faculty is similar, with this addition: "While moving a class session

online may be appropriate on an occasional basis, this should not be considered an acceptable strategy for covering multiple instructor absences (for a class that is scheduled to meet face-to-face).”

Outcome: The Executive Committee voted against issuing this charge.

Proposed Charge:

Investigate Spending on Governing Boards of the University – Savannah Porcelli, Non-Senator

Charge: Investigate the excessive and inappropriate spending of University funds on customized gifts, hand-painted portraits, china service for gourmet meals, and lavish events for members of the Board of Governors and Board of Trustees. Report back to the Senate on findings. Make any appropriate recommendations for reducing spending on members of the Governing Boards.

Rationale: In June 2020, Rutgers administration declared a fiscal emergency, which has been used to justify various fiscal actions taken since. In light of this fiscal emergency, excessive spending on the Governing Boards does not adhere to University financial policy to incur "only necessary, appropriate, and reasonable expenditures for university’s mission."

Outcome: The Executive Committee voted against issuing this charge.

Proposed Charge:

Researching the Implementation of a Fall Break at Rutgers University – Senator Fauzan Amjad, School of Arts and Sciences-NB, Student

Charge: The Senate shall research the potential implementation of a fall break at Rutgers University. The committee will investigate the feasibility of creating a fall break, including the impact on academic scheduling, student wellness, and overall campus life. The committee shall also consider best practices from other universities in implementing a fall break, including the duration and timing of the break.

Rationale: The creation of a fall break has the potential to significantly benefit Rutgers students. A fall break can provide students with an opportunity to rest, recharge, and catch up on academic work before the final push towards the end of the semester. It can also reduce stress and burnout, which are known to impact academic performance and mental health. Additionally, many other universities have implemented fall breaks with success, demonstrating that it is a feasible option. Therefore, it is in the best interest of Rutgers students to investigate the possibility of creating a fall break, and the Senate is the appropriate body to take on this task.

Outcome: This charge was withdrawn with unanimous consent.

Proposed Charge:

Transcripts for Rutgers Alumni and current Rutgers Staff employee should be free of charge –
Jennifer Reyes, Non-Senator

Charge: The \$10 fee per transcript should not be applicable if you are working for the University.

Rationale: A benefit of free academic records to existing Rutgers alumni and employees is well needed.

Outcome: The Executive Committee declined to issue this charge.

Open Charge Request:

S-2306: Investigate Admissions Policies Across Campuses and Review Proposed Changes

ASRAC was charged as follows: Review how undergraduate admissions policies across all Rutgers campuses affect each other and investigate current admissions policies related to enrollment trends. Study the proposed Spring 2023 admission plan for New Brunswick and report on possible consequences for Camden and Newark campuses. Report on the rationale for proposed changes and offer possible recommendations concerning any changes to admissions policy.

ASRAC would like to discuss this charge further with the Executive Committee as important issues have arisen.

Outcome: The Executive Committee discharged this charge.

Open Charge Request:

S-2209-1 Implementing Democratic Standards for University Senate Committee Governance

USGC was charged as follows: 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 USGC endorsed a proposal that committees should elect their own co-chairs to staggered two-year terms, with committees entitled to remove a co-chair by a 2/3rd vote. Since the process for determining committee chairs will need to be incorporated into the Senate Bylaws, the USGC communicated its recommendations to the Ad Hoc Committee on University Senate Bylaws. USGC requests to be discharged from this charge, as the committee's recommendations will move forward as part of the larger discussion on Senate Bylaws.

Outcome: The Executive Committee discharged this charge.

Open Charge Request:

S-2307 RCM Detailed Recommendations

BFC and FPAC were charged as follows: *Examine and propose detailed recommendations for implementing two central elements of the 1/20/2023 Senate-approved resolution on S2010-1: “transparency” and “shared governance” in University budget preparation and reporting.*

FPAC responded as follows: “We are in receipt of charge S-2307 regarding shared governance in the Rutgers University budgeting processes. We appreciate the chance to weigh in on this critical issue, and we have discussed the charge with the full Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee. We believe that shared governance in a university, in the most general sense, is collaborative decision-making on important topics among faculty, administrators, and staff, and at times students as well. Shared governance over university budgetary activity should include, at a minimum, representation from faculty and staff (with representation chosen by stakeholders) and informational transparency at all levels of budget-setting and -implementation. We believe that the Senate Budget and Finance Committee is the appropriate group for further execution of this charge.”

Outcome: The Executive Committee discharged FPAC from this charge.

Old Business

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.

It is not fair to students to not be offered a level surface for an incomplete of coursework in cases of justified emergencies. There are in many cases graded coursework, such as class participation, that cannot be reproduced precisely in making up an incomplete. When this happens, faculty need to engage with students for creative alternatives that will not produce undue grade penalties in making up work.

Outcome: The Executive Committee voted against issuing this charge.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

The Executive Committee adjourned at 12:26 p.m.

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