

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
December 1, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Boxer, Esposito, Foster, Giraud, Godoy, Kiss, Olivera, Parsa, Schroth, Simonds (Chair), Thompson, Winters

**ALSO ATTENDING:** *T. Ayorinde (BOT Graduate Student Representative), R. Boikess (BOT Faculty Representative), F. Conway (New Brunswick Chancellor), V. Hewitt (University Senate Executive Secretary), P. Moghe (Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs), K. O'Halloran (Vice President for Academic Planning & Administration, EVPAA), H. Pierce (BOG Faculty Representative), R. Schwartz (BOT Faculty Representative), S. Searcy (BOG Student Representative), M. Smith (University Senate Administrative Assistant)*

The regular meeting of the University Senate Executive Committee was held on Friday, Dec. 1, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. remotely via Zoom.

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

Chair Simonds called the Dec. 1, 2023 Senate Executive Committee meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. As the Senate requested at its Nov. 17 meeting, she asked the President's office about using the University-wide email distribution list to communicate on recent Senate actions. The response was that this is not possible because the email distribution list is reserved for official University business coming from the President's office. Chair Simonds suggested a formal charge be submitted to investigate the practices of other merged Big 10 University Senates.

**Secretary's Report**– Vicki Hewitt, Senate Executive Secretary

- The December 1, 2023 Executive Committee Agenda was approved.
- The [November 3, 2023 Senate Executive Committee Minutes](#) were approved.
- Administrative Response
  - Response to [S-2019: Review the Senate's Relationship with the Rutgers Governing Boards](#)

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

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

- Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey initiative
- P.I. Checkbook – new application that allows P.I.s to see real-time financial status of grants
- Positive trend in IRB turnaround times
- Teaching awards
- Rutgers-Camden awarded a 2.5 million dollar grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to improve STEM student retention and graduation rates
- Rutgers-Newark leaders and students met with visiting dignitaries from Cuba to discuss expanding opportunities for cultural and intellectual exchange through travel
- Student scholarships and honors

- New Brunswick survey of first-year students
- Creation of the Guiseppina Raviola M.D./Ph.D. Endowment to support students and post-docs at New Jersey Medical School who balance school and families
- Committee to Advance Our Common Purposes Awards Ceremony
- Rutgers Makerspace pilot program for adults with autism
- 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rutgers Future Scholars Program
- Ninth Annual Rutgers Brain Health Institute symposium held on Nov. 30
- Responses to Senate reports

Dr. Moghe then answered questions on the following topics:

- Response to S-2203: Examining the Efficacy of the GRE
- Guidance on handling the budget crisis and non-replacement of staff
- Specific concern about a lecturer who was suddenly let go from his position
- Faculty input in budget decisions
- Layoffs of lecturer positions

**Discussion** – Francine Conway, New Brunswick Chancellor

### **EC Agenda Items Submission Process**

Senator Esposito shared a draft electronic process for the University community to submit agenda items that are not charges or committee reports to the Executive Committee to consider adding to the Senate agenda. This process will be piloted internally by the Executive Committee for the January and February agendas. After the initial pilot, a link will be added to the Senate website for the University community to use.

Senators Boxer, Esposito, Pierce, and Simonds will also meet with Senate office staff to discuss possible methods for electronic communication among senators between Senate meetings.

### **[Proposed Changes to the Senate Handbook to Add the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee](#)**

The Executive Committee docketed these proposed changes for the December 8 Senate agenda.

### **50.1.13 Policy on Policies**

Chair Simonds will follow up on concerns from the BOG Student Representatives on revising the Policy on Policies to include students as a stakeholder group.

### **Standing Committees/Panels**

#### **Committee Report and Recommendations:**

**Research and Graduate and Professional Education Committee – Detlev Boison and Monica Mazurek, Co-Chairs**

Report on [S-2201-1: Approved Electronic Notebook Programs](#)

The RGPEC 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 docketed this report for the December 8 Senate agenda.

## Old Business

None.

## New Business

**Proposed Charge on Senate Officer Elections - Candidate Eligibility** – Submitted by Senator Heather Pierce

**Charge:** To maximize democratic choice when the Senate selects its chair and vice chair, the existing barriers to candidacy\*\*\* for these positions should be investigated and potentially dropped. Ideally, any voting Senator should be eligible to stand for office because the Senate should have the right to choose democratically who it wants to serve in these important leadership roles.

\*\*\*Article 5, Section E (Draft Bylaws): "Candidates for chair and vice chair shall be elected Senators with two or more years of experience (not necessarily consecutive) on the Senate and at least one year as either a member of the Executive Committee or as a committee chair or co-chair."

**Rationale:** In its most basic (minimalist) form, electoral democracy has two fundamental dimensions: (a) participation and (b) contestation (Dahl 1971)—the latter, because voter participation means nothing if the electorate is never offered a choice between multiple alternatives. Barriers to candidacy, like the current eligibility requirements to run for chair and vice chair of the Senate, reduce the potential for democratic competition. Furthermore, absent any empirical evidence that those particular prerequisites are good indicators of one's capacity to serve effectively in the chair/vc roles, we should not assume such, especially given that they severely limit the possible number of Senators qualified to stand for elected office. The Senate should have the right to choose its own leaders and we should not unnecessarily obstruct the democratic rights of this body's voting membership to make that choice.

[1] Dahl, Robert. 1971. Polyarchy. New Haven: Yale University Press.

**Outcome:** The University Structure and Governance Committee was issued this charge with a deadline of April 2024.

### **Senate Meeting Agendas and Timing**

The Executive Committee decided to extend the time limit on individuals asking questions to 2 minutes for the December Senate meeting. The Executive Committee decided against reordering the agenda for the December Senate meeting.

### **Adjournment**

The Executive Committee adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

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