Spring 2017 General Faculty Meeting
Conversation with the Senate

Antoinette M. Maniatty, Chair of the Faculty Senate
John Tichy, Faculty Senate President
Alhussein Abouzeid, Faculty Senate Vice President

April 12, 2017
Honoring Faculty Retirees

Academic Year 2016-2017 Retirees

- Michael Zuker, Professor, Mathematical Sciences
- Douglas Whittet, Professor, Physics, Applied Physics, & Astronomy
- John Woods, Professor, Electrical, Computer, & Systems Engineering
- Sastry Sreepada, Professor of Practice, Mechanical, Aerospace, & Nuclear Engineering
Remembering Faculty Who Have Passed

- Angelo Frascarelli, Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences
- Robert MacCrone, Materials Science & Engineering
- Heinrich Medicus, Physics, Applied Physics & Astronomy
- Alan Meltzer, Physics, Applied Physics & Astronomy
- Gerald Moss, Biomedical Engineering
- J. Randy Norsworthy, Lally School of Management
- Pauline Oliveros, Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences
- Tawfik Raby, Mechanical, Aerospace & Nuclear Engineering
- Robert Sands, Lally School of Management
- Rudolph Scavuzzo, Jr., Mechanical, Aerospace & Nuclear Engineering
- Paul Yergins, Physics, Applied Physics & Astronomy
- Houman Younessi '83, '09G, Computer Science
Shared Governance

Importance of governance

The Faculty Senate shall represent the views of the faculty on issues affecting the common purposes of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.
– Rensselaer Faculty Senate Constitution (2011)

Figure: Characteristics of a World Class University (WCU). Recreated based on Salmi, 2009.
Faculty Senate and Committee Membership

The Senate

- Alhussein Abouzeid, Vice-President
- John Tichy, President
- Antoinette Maniatty, Chair of the Faculty
- Jeff Durgee, Recording Secretary
- Amir Hirsa, Secretary of the Senate
- Atsushi Akera, Secretary of the Faculty
- Rahmi Ozisik and Daniel Lewis, Engineering
- Joel Giedt and Chulsung Bae, Science
- Tamar Gordon and Ekaterina Haskins, HASS
- Murali Chari, Management
- Gustavo Crembril, Architecture
- Frank Wright and Ernesto Gutierrez-Miravete, Lecturers and Professors of Practice
- Deborah Kaminski, Retirees
- Jen Monger, Librarians
Faculty Senate and Committee Membership

Curriculum Committee

- Wayne Bequette, Engineering
- June Deery, At Large
- Bruce Piper, Science
- Brett Fajan, HASS
- Chris Perry, Architecture
- Aparna Gupta, Management
- Wayne Roberge, At Large

Associate Deans

- Kurt Anderson, Engineering
- David Spooner, Science
- Mike Kalsher, HASS
- Gina O’Connor, Management
- David Bell, Architecture

Ex Officio

- Stan Dunn, Vice-Provost
- Mike Hanna, Provost Designee
- Sharon Kunkel, Registrar
Promotion & Tenure Committee

- Mark Shephard, Engineering
- **Peter Kramer**, Science
- Caren Canier, HASS
- Anna Dyson, Architecture
- Chanaka Edirisinghe, Management
- Linda McGown, At Large
- **Thierry Blanchet**, At Large
- Langdon Winner, Student Elected Representative
Planning & Resources Committee
- Gregor Kovacic, Science
- Paul Schoch, Engineering
- Ken Simons, HASS
- Dorit Nevo, Management
- Russ Leslie, Architecture

Honors Committee
- Ning Xiang, Architecture
- John Schroeder, Science
- Nikhil Koratkar, Engineering
- Sergei Nirenburg, HASS
- M. V. Shyam Kumar, Management
Election 2017

Senate Positions
- Vice President (Executive Committee)
- Recording Secretary (Executive Committee)
- Senators - Engineering, Science, HASS, Lally
- Senators (non-voting) - Lecturer/Professor of Practice Troy and Hartford, Retiree

Committee Positions
- Curriculum Committee - Science, HASS
- Promotion and Tenure - Science, At Large
- Planning and Resources - Engineering, HASS, Lally
- Honors - Architecture, Lally (appointed by Senate)

Chair of elections committee - Hussein Abouzeid
Initiatives

Long Range Goal (∼ five-year time scale)

- Restore Meaningful Faculty Governance
  - to levels commensurate with its former stature at Rensselaer
  - to levels commensurate with faculty governance at similar institutions

Short Range Goals

- Take Incremental Steps - projects with impact but attainable objectives
  - Overcome high levels of skepticism and apathy
  - We ask your help by participation

- To this end, we are working on the following initiatives
  - Performing Summer Arch oversight through a special committee
  - Establishment of an Ombuds Office
  - Evaluate Administrative Offices whose work impacts faculty
  - Work with and support the Student Senate
  - Development of faculty role in addressing fiscal challenges
  - Development of faculty role in defining and implementing new initiatives
Communications

- Monthly meetings with Provost
- Discussions with President and cabinet on institute financial challenges
- Invited to Board of Trustees Student Life Committee meetings
- Student senate - faculty senate interactions

Faculty Handbook

- Approved by Board of Trustees August 2016
Activities

Major Committee Activities

- Ad Hoc Committee on Establishing an Ombuds Office
  - Mike Fortun, Jonas Braasch, and Deborah Kaminski
  - Examined best practices
  - Report recommending we establish an ombuds office with a cost estimate
  - Working with Provost to establish ombuds office

- Core Curriculum Implementation Committee (FSCC)
  - Mark Mistur, Lee Lignon, Kim Fortun, Mike Kalsher, Peter Persans, Margaret McDermott, Gary Saulnier, Diana Borca-Tasciuc, Louis Trzepacz, Linda Schadler, Kim Ellenwood
  - Draft plan to implement recommendations from Core Curriculum Report circulated Fall 2016
  - Open faculty forum Nov. 14, 2016
  - Final report under discussion in Curriculum Committee
Activities

Major Committee Activities

- **Ad Hoc Committee to Review Summer Arch**
  - Chris Bystroff, Audrey Bennett, Lois Peters, Ken Connor, Nancy Diniz
  - Surveyed faculty
  - Held an open forum
  - Collected faculty feedback
  - Final report submitted April 2016
  - Created assessment plan
  - Recommended committee to oversee assessment

- **Established Ad Hoc Committee to Assess Summer Arch**
  - Bram Van Heuveln, Barbara Cutler, David Corr, Lonn Combs, Lois Peters
  - Charged with evaluating effectiveness of pilot programs (2017, 2018) and providing feedback
  - Considering: participating rate, learning outcome metrics compared to AY courses, faculty coverage of courses, experiential component
  - Evaluate away semester experience: Opportunities for students, quality of experience
Activities

Major Committee Activities

- **Planning and Resources Committee**
  - Seeking input from faculty to address Rensselaer’s fiscal challenges
  - Serves as direct conduit between faculty and Provost for ideas
  - Website established for faculty to communicate ideas to committee

- **Honors Committee**
  - Recommend honorary degree recipients
  - Review nominations for institute awards

- **Ad Hoc Committee on Travel Restrictions, Immigration Policy, and Academic Environment**
  - Collecting positive examples of efforts by faculty to create a space for open dialogue and support our international students
  - Assemble list of best practices
State of the Institute - Faculty Perspective

Strengths

- Excellent faculty, our junior faculty are our future
- Excellent program offerings, we offer exceptional value
- Efficient
- Recent improvements in Faculty-Administration relations
- Dialog can work to make change

Challenges

- Fiscal challenges
- Navigating changing landscape in higher education – technology, public policy
- Some institute policies are counter-productive; need dialog to adopt better policies
“We are focusing on accelerating the pay down of our long term debt, to achieve a crossover over the next 2-3 years, so that our endowment exceeds that debt. We will accomplish this while continuing to make strategic investments, and to meet the requirements of the deferred benefit pension plans.”

“We face an uncertain environment for federal research funding, which has already declined in recent years in inflation-adjusted terms, and which appears likely to decline further under the current administration’s proposed budget.”

“Rensselaer intends to be transformative, as well, in the radically innovative methods we use to teach future leaders.”

– Shirley Ann Jackson, President, Spring 2017 Town Hall
“What needs to be more fully recognized is that faculty expertise cuts across all fields necessary to manage institutions and to meet challenges well, and that faculty cooperation and collaboration is essential for optimal organization efficiency and effectiveness.” – J. Berberet, Toward the Professoriate of the Future, 2008.

Discussion topics

- Designing Rensselaer’s future: fiscal challenges, faculty and student composition
- Research growth in the current political and fiscal environment
- Curriculum reform: Summer Arch and Core Curriculum