

Faculty Assembly Meeting Minutes

December 17, 2014

H-129: 145-245 PM

Secretary: Dean Chen

1. FA President Rainforth's introduction
 - a. The TFAEE report will be ready in Spring 2015.
 - b. The current schedule change proposed here today is an interim modification for 2015-2016 only. It does not preempt the work of the TFAEE.
 - c. The interim schedule change has been presented (for comment) to FAEC, AFT, and TFAEE.

2. Interim Schedule Modifications for 2015-2016, presented by Provost Beth Barnett
 - a. Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) requires rigor, which is defined by the federal government as such: (1) expectation of 50 minutes "in seat" time per week for each credit-hour, and (2) expectation of 2-hours per week of "outside-of-class" preparation by student per credit hour.
 - b. The CECs that the current schedule contains are found not to have met the standard of being "designed, delivered, and evaluated to foster a coherent student learning experience." That information had been furnished to the TFAEE, and is reflected in the interim schedule modification for 2015-2016 proposed here today.
 - c. The interim solution for 2015-16 addresses the concerns by the MSCHE; the modifications will be reported to MSCHE in the Periodic Review Report due on June 1, 2015. Essentially, as of Fall 2015 (for one year), RCNJ will match the workload credit hours to student credit hours (at least 200 minutes per week per 4-credits course).
 - d. Additionally, the 2015-2016 schedule reflects a one-year modification of the CEP with respect to CEC and Flex. Individual faculty members can continue to integrate required experiential learning activity in their courses; those learning activities will be linked to course learning objectives and outcomes will be assessed.
 - e. Individual faculty will continue to be on campus 3 days per week; there will be extended time for governance meetings and for student meetings (greater than 4 hours) built into the 2015-2016 schedule.
 - f. This schedule entails increasing costs, as adjuncts and overload will be paid at 4 credits (instead of 3.6 credits).
 - g. The modified schedule meets the objective of having neutral impact on classroom utilization across the week; so there will be no under-subscribed class meeting times (as with current Wednesday morning).
 - h. Students' drinking on Tuesdays (comparing to national average) is identified as especially problematic and having classes on Wednesday mornings may help mitigate this issue.
 - i. Proposed change of class schedule: The schedule provides flexibility to accommodate various programmatic needs.
 - i. MWR: 3 times per week classes (morning, evening), 2 times per week

(afternoon and evening), meetings on Wednesday (for both faculty and students).

- ii. TF: 2 times per week, plus meetings on Wednesday.
 - iii. Wednesday afternoon opened for governance meetings.
 - iv. 1 time per week classes and labs also in the schedule.
 - j. Schedule starting time will be moved to 830 AM (which aligns with office opening time and allows for additional commute time). Classes will be scheduled more evenly across the week, and no daily (MTRF) common hour will be needed for meetings.
 - k. What to expect next: the College will finalize time blocks/schedule and post it online on Dec 22, 2014; faculty will submit their proposed teaching schedule by January 21, 2015; the Registrar will publish college-wide class schedule on March 9, 2015; and Registration for Fall 2015 will begin on March 30, 2015.
 - l. This is an interim modification for 2015-2016. Scheduling for future years will be decided pending discussion of the findings and recommendations in the report to be produced by the TFAEE in Spring 2015.
3. President Rainforth's follow-up:
- a. There are compelling reasons to follow the MSCHE requirements and mandates
 - b. Convening groups will need to meet the various deadline of scheduling (in Spring 2015) for the change to become effective in Fall 2015.
4. Professor Eric Karlin (Chair of the TFAEE):
- a. TFAEE has not yet come to a final recommendation but, at this point, the 4-credits hour schedule is the relatively better solution to satisfy the Middle States mandates and advance the academic objectives of the College's Strategic Plan
 - b. Faculty can continue delivering experiential learning assignments, which are also a College-wide objective, post-CEC; but that activity will now be paid, more clearly linked to course learning objectives, and outcomes assessed more clearly. Faculty members will need to consult with their convening groups if they desire to deliver such activity in a way that impacts scheduled class meeting time of 200 minutes per week (and 8 hours out-of-class student preparation per week) for a 4-credit course.
5. Professor Martha Ecker (AFT): an interim modification of schedule does not require union collective-bargaining, but it will require a one-year modification of MOU and MOA on CEP between the AFT Local and Ramapo College. Meetings to discuss that modification have been scheduled.
6. Questions and issues raised by the faculty:
- a. A faculty member who had negotiated the current CEP schedule, which the Interim Schedule modifies, affirmed the Interim Schedule being presented and said that it is what had been recommended to (but not accepted by) the

Administration at the time the transition to CEP occurred.

- b. Wednesday meetings have left classrooms underutilized, and faculty members emphasized that this was due to the administration not wanting f/t faculty to teach on Wednesdays.
- c. Teaching three-days a week: faculty discussed the pedagogical implications of teaching three times a week. Moreover, while there may be pedagogical reasons to teach three-times a week, especially perhaps for lower-division (freshmen) courses, there are also difficulties for some faculty, students, and adjuncts to come to campus three times a week.
- d. A one-time evening class (from 645 to 1035) could be impractical on Fridays, and students may be too tired going beyond 10 PM. Earlier start time, allowing earlier end time, could occur by eliminating the excessive breaks built into the proposed schedule. Break time need not be built into classes meeting 3x per week or 2x per week.
- e. The loss of common hours (i.e. 1-2 MTRF) could impact students' participation and engagement in on-campus events, clubs, and cultural activities, and in their usage of student support services.
- f. We will need to coordinate the Shortline Bus schedule with the new class schedule. Many adjuncts come to RCNJ from New York and the bus schedule should be coordinated in order to ensure that they may arrive on campus on time for their classes.
- g. Faculty queried whether the loss of Flex could impact individual faculty research and scholarly activities
- h. Many students in RCNJ work and study, including those who are fulfilling the College's objective to complete an internship/coop. Hence, in the long-run, faculty suggested that we should take into considerations how the change may affect students' work schedule. The Provost suggested that we need to envision what type of higher-education institution RCNJ will become. While taking into consideration that students work, RCNJ also wants to improve the quality of education for our students.
- i. Faculty acknowledged and made affirming comments toward the 4-credit basis of the Interim Schedule.