

Faculty Assembly (FA) Minutes of the Meeting
February 1, 2017
12:00pm – 1:00pm
Pavilion Rooms 2 & 3
Number of Faculty Attendees: (approximately) 91

1) Approval of December 7, 2016 Minutes of the Meeting.

- a) The minutes were approved without objections.

2) President Peter Mercer's Report.

- a) Library Renovations Project.
 - i) A task force, consisting of faculty and administrators, is overseeing the library renovations project. The College is finalizing plans with the architects. Funding for this \$40 million dollar project includes \$15 million from the State and \$10 million from the College's budget. Our intention is to fundraise the balance (approximately \$6 million has been raised so far).
- b) Executive Order 13769.
 - i) President Mercer's January 30th email to the Ramapo community, expressing his concerns with President Trump's signing of the "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States" executive order, was generally well received. The email was not meant to be partisan, and he will address this issue again in next week's State of the College address. At present, Ramapo College does not have international students from any of the banned countries.
- c) Discussion.
 - i) Members of the FA asked President Mercer about his thoughts on various federal cabinet nominees and policies that may affect institution of higher education.
 - ii) Some members suggested the need for a session where faculty can come together to deal with the political climate and stress that many are experiencing.
 - iii) Several faculty members indicated their willingness to support President Mercer should he decide to take additional actions to resist/protest any change in federal law or policy that conflicts with Ramapo's mission.
 - iv) A suggestion was made for a formal statement from the College indicating our support for immigration and how it values our campus.

d) Voting Item: FA Endorsement of the Student Government Association (SGA)'s "Ramapledge".

- i) "The Ramapo College Student Government Association and the Faculty Assembly recognizes the need for our country to be secure from threats at home and abroad while also realizing the need for appreciation of all people and cultures regardless of race, religion, gender, orientation, or social status. Our Ramapledge encourages all members of the Ramapo Community, "to respect the rights of all individuals... to encourage and help foster a safe and inclusive campus environment." We are reiterating the importance of this segment in the Pledge.

President Trump's Executive Order on January 27th concerns members of the College community; however, the mission of the Ramapledge stands strong and true. As New Jersey's Public Liberal Arts College, diversity at Ramapo College is something that should be welcomed and embraced not only because it is right, but because it also allows us to practice two of our four academic pillars: Intercultural and International education."

- ii) The vote was conducted by electronic device.
(1) Total votes—91.
(2) Yes – 97%
(3) No – 3%
(4) Abstain – 0%
- iii) The motion to endorse the SGA's "Ramapledge" was approved.

3) Sanctuary Campus.

- a) Karlito Almeida, a 4th year history student, delivered a brief speech to the FA. He believes that Ramapo must plan for potential changes to immigration policy that may affect students (e.g., potential changes to DACA). He also expressed his desire to make Ramapo a "Safe Zone" (i.e., sanctuary campus).
- b) At our next FA meeting, we may vote on making Ramapo a sanctuary campus (or encouraging the administration to declare RCNJ a sanctuary campus -- as Rutgers already has).
- i) The College will need to have specific support systems and infrastructure in place before becoming a sanctuary campus (comment from the audience).

4) Provost Beth Barnett's Report.

- a) The administration is exploring the use of co-curricular student transcripts.
i) Some members of the audience questioned the need for such a transcript change.
- b) During the winter break, consultants were brought in to discuss/research majors and degree programs that are "in demand" and might attract students (based on a database of schools across the country). We need to ensure that we are offering programs that will increase our enrollment.
- c) We will be having more discussions on campus about the meaning and

implementation of shared governance.