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## Minutes, Arts & Sciences Executive Committee Meeting, Thursday, January 16, 2014

Arts & Sciences Executive Committee

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**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**JANUARY 16, 2014**  
**Agenda**

- I Call to order**
- II Approval of minutes from 11/7/13**
- III Reports**
- V New Business**  
Holt School Initiatives (Dave Richard)



**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**JANUARY 16, 2014 Minutes**

**Approved**

**PRESENT**

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Carol Lauer; Thomas Ouellette; Claire Strom; Julian Chambliss; Hoyt Edge; Yusheng Yao; Carol Bresnahan; Robert Salmeron; Bob Smither; Dave Richard

**KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS**

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A&S	Arts and Sciences	GPA	Grade Point Average
AAC	Academic Affairs Committee	PSC	Professional Standards Committee
BOT	Board of Trustees	RITA	Rollins Institute for Technology and the Arts
EC	Executive Committee	SGA	Student Government Association
CIE	Course Instructor Evaluation	SLC	Student Life Committee
F&S	Finance & Service Committee		

**CALL TO ORDER**

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12:31PM; by Carol Lauer

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 11/07/13**

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Unanimously approved

**REPORTS**

**PRESIDENT OF A&S**

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Carol Lauer reminded the committee chairs to submit to Helen Byrd up-to-date information regarding names of all standing committee members so that Byrd can update the College website to reflect current membership.

Lauer reported that she met with Lewis Duncan last week, during Intersession. The President asked her to investigate “wacko [Rollins College] policies” that seem outdated or wrong-headed. An example: the President heard via a parent that the current Rollins policy regarding re-taking failed courses is that the initial “F” remains on students’ transcripts, alongside the grade received the second time the course is taken—and that *both* grades are factored into students’ overall GPA. Lauer pointed out that this practice is not in line with policies at other institutions. Claire Strom, Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) Chair indicated that she would address this in her report, later in the meeting.

Lauer asked Student Government Association (SGA) President Robert Salmeron “to convene a [student] focus group or to poll the SGA” members and to compile a list of “student hassles,” so that faculty and administration can refine, simplify, or remove policies that create problems for students. Salmeron expressed interest and said he would work on generating a list.

Lauer said that she anticipated “not a lot” of agenda items for the next A&S faculty meeting on Thursday, January 23. She said she would determine if anything pressing arose from today’s reports from the chairs of the standing committees, and that she was inclined to use the next week’s meeting time to convene a colloquium/committee of the whole to gather input from and garner suggestions to address next year’s projected budget shortfall. Lauer asked Carol Bresnahan for advice regarding Lauer’s idea to send a copy of the draft budget to the full faculty before next week’s meeting. Bresnahan suggested seeking Jeff Eisenbach’s buy-in before doing that; Bresnahan said that particularly if the request to Eisenbach was framed as an attempt at transparency, designed to solicit as many good ideas as possible, that “[she] imagine[d]” Eisenbach would support sending out the draft at this time.

**PSC**

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Julian Chambliss reported that the Professional Standards Committee (PSC) was working through “the onslaught of grant[s]” proposals it has received from faculty. Chambliss said that the PSC convened its first meeting of the S’14 semester this week to “digest” the data collected last semester via student focus groups regarding the efficacy of the Course Instructor Evaluations (CIEs). Chambliss said that the most common student reactions are that the CIEs are “too long and redundant;” and a common student question is, “Why can’t we just do it [complete the CIEs] in class [rather than online]?” Chambliss said that he expected faculty feedback to echo students’ and that the PSC plans to invite randomly selected faculty, from a range of disciplines and academic ranks, to form a focus group to collect reactions to and suggestions for revisions to the CIEs. The intent of the focus groups, Chambliss said, is to advance the dialogue about the CIEs, with an eye toward identifying “changes that are doable.”

**F&S**

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Hoyt Edge reported that he was out of the country and missed the last Finance & Service Committee (F&S) meeting. At that meeting, Edge reported, the committee met with Director of International Programs Giselda Beaudin and Edge described Beaudin’s input as “helpful” to F&S. Edge also said that the PSC “passed the idling policy” it considered last semester and submitted it to Eisenbarth. Edge said that “he hasn’t heard back from Jeff” and would follow-up.

**AAC**

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Strom said that the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) had devised a revision to the pre-registration/registration process in response to faculty and especially student frustrations with the current model. She distributed hard copies of the proposed changes (see below), asked for comments, and asked the EC if members felt the proposed changes should be presented to the full faculty at the next A&S meeting.

March 24 – 30	Graduating Seniors – Fall and Spring
March 25 – 30	Seniors
March 26 – 30	Honors Degree Students
March 27 – 30	Accelerated Management Program (AMP) Students Dual Degree Program (DDP) Students Juniors
March 31 – April 6	Freshmen/Sophomores

Strom said that the new pre-registration/registration procedure would move to a six-day model and modify when and in what order certain student constituencies (honors programs students; graduating seniors; accelerated degree students, etc.) would register for classes. About the

proposed change, Strom said, “We would like to try this and obviously we can take it back if it doesn’t work.” Strom said that an added benefit may be “less crashing” of the online system, a problem in recent semesters. Edge asked what how we would gauge improvement if we revised the current procedure. “Fewer complaints,” Strom said. Bob Smither said that he supported the new model and would like to see it piloted. The consensus of the EC was that there was no precedent for seeking full faculty approval of a change in course registration processes and that it was not necessary to raise this at the next A&S meeting.

Finally, Strom returned to Lauer’s earlier mention of Duncan’s’s inquiry about the policy for re-taking a failed course, with the “F” remaining on students’ transcripts and affecting the GPA. Strom described Duncan’s characterization as “not the whole story;” she said that the AAC had identified some justifications for the current policy but will revisit it. She concluded by saying that the AAC wants to examine the policy “more holistically” and would do so this semester.

### **SLC**

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Yusheng Yao reported that the Student Life Committee (SLC) was looking at student complaints about Campus Safety officers’ “attitude problems.” Yao said that they asked for a representative other than Director of Campus Safety Ken Miller to attend the last PSC meeting, that Miller appeared anyhow, but that the give-and-take between Miller and students was helpful.

Yao reported that Duncan had “donated ten thousand [dollars]” to support the Scholarship for High-Impact Practices (SHIP) grant program. Bresnahan added that her office had made five thousand dollars available for the SHIP program. Yao said that the SLC was looking at raising the per student cap from \$250 to \$500.

### **SGA**

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Robert Salmeron said that the first meeting of the S’14 semester of the Student Government Association (SGA) was slated for Wednesday, January 22.

At the conclusion of the reports, Lauer said that since no new pressing issues were raised; that she would move forward with her plan to convene a colloquium on the budget in lieu of the next A&S meeting. The EC discussed asking for a “brief presentation” by Eisenbach or Bill Short at the colloquium to frame the discussion and to take questions. Lauer said that she would extend the invitation.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Holt School Initiatives**

Dave Richard

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Dave Richard thanked the EC for inviting him to follow up on his report to the Deans, Provost, and President regarding his proposal for “creating a sustainable business model for Rollins College.” Richard outlined an independent, new school called Rollins Institute for Technology and the Arts (RITA). Richard explained that RITA would be geared toward adult learners and housed at the Lake Nona Medical City; he described RITA as rooted in “a transactional relationship:” RITA would get the Rollins name, Rollins would get the revenue generated by its programs. Richard indicated that market research suggests that, at least initially, most demand exists for certificate/not-for-credit programs for graphic designers and paralegals.

The Holt School has already begun seeking students for these programs, with these projected start dates: February for the graphic design and May for the paralegal program. Richard conceded that an initial attempt to populate a paralegal class didn't "make," but that Holt had identified and resolved issues regarding identifying and reaching out to potential students. Richard expressed confidence that a subsequent effort would be successful. Richard said that other institutions had successfully initiated programs similar to RITA by enlisting the help of consultants, and that he has spoken to a firm called JMH Consulting, based in Atlanta. Richard said that the model would allow Rollins and JMH to share revenue generated by the graphic design and paralegal programs for three years. After three years, the program would be "wholly owned" by Rollins, Richard said. Richard said that current "thinking on price [per student, program]" is about \$5000.

Chambliss suggested gearing the program to "baby boomers" (adults aged 50-70); Richard said they were "definitely interested in cross-promoting." Lauer said that Chambliss' idea "made sense" and offered that such programs would be attractive to recent retirees interested in part-time employment "to keep some money coming in;" she suggested a programs designed for life coaches. Richard said he was "very interested in expanding the program [beyond graphic design and paralegal certification]" but drew a distinction between general interest in such programs and a willingness to pursue certification and to pay \$5000.

Lauer said that she appreciated the fact that Holt was the appropriate place to house bold, new initiatives and that Holt should not be encumbered by long approval processes that might prevent it from nimbly reacting to the market and from taking risks. Richard concurred, he said that the urgency of the "timing" of the RITA roll-out was key; he went on to say that the independence of this new institution is vital. "[RITA] has to have the latitude to do what it needs to do in order to be successful," Richard said.

Lauer offered that there might be a middle-ground between complete independence and too much oversight. She outlined an idea that she and Chambliss discussed with Duncan: the formation of a committee of faculty to provisionally approve new programs for a period of about three years. Lauer suggested that such an oversight committee might ease some faculty members' reticence and "eliminate some barriers" to innovation for this new arm of Holt, allowing it to be truly experimental; to move quickly through approval processes; and to react quickly in response to new ideas or market shifts.

Lauer suggested initiating some new programs under the Holt umbrella initially, rather than via a brand new school. A "perfect group to experiment with," Lauer said, "is nurses who want to move into management but are also working fulltime."

Richard said he crafted the RITA proposal working under the assumption that current Rollins faculty "are not in favor of online learning," which is characterized as "a big constraint" to the success of the proposed program.

Chambliss countered that faculty pushback "probably" stems from a sense that online students are not mastering material; that resistance may, in fact, not be to online learning but to *not* learning. Strom echoed Chambliss' remarks, calling the contention that Rollins faculty are patently resistant to online learning "unfair." Strom suggested that "scaring us [faculty members]" was not an effective way to advance this proposal.

Richard disagreed, said that he was “telling” not “scaring;” he pointed to resistance to the blending learning initiatives as an example of resistance he had encountered recently.

Edge suggested that the proposal reflected Richard’s values and Richard agreed. Edge called for an “open discussion about the values” espoused in the RITA initiative and said the proposal may not reflect values held by “many Rollins faculty” members. Edge said he was interested in a proposal that reflects the values that Rollins has historically held “dear and important.”

Buy-in from faculty will come from transparency about budget issues, Edge continued; Edge posited that faculty are resistant because they have not been apprised about the scale of the problem that Richard is trying to address via RITA, and, in fact, the faculty have heard contradicting appraisals of the current fiscal health of Rollins. “People aren’t going to change unless they see a need to change,” Edge said, and an appropriate response to perceived faculty resistance is not to pull away, to attempt to circumvent faculty support or involvement. Richard repeated that “timing” was essential, that Rollins needed to move quickly, and wondered aloud if the initial roll-out of this initiative should be to the full faculty or to the Board of Trustees.

Bob Smither suggested separating the discussion of online pedagogy and the online business. Proponents of such programs “always point to homeruns” rather than to failed initiatives, he said. Richard pointed to for-profit institutions “like Phoenix or Strayer” that are not “brand strong,” not affiliated with a strong and prominent “brick and mortar institution”. Chambliss and Stom both expressed concern about maintaining and burnishing “the real Rollins” while potentially damaging the Rollins brand with an online component like RITA.

Richard countered by citing research that the majority of online students report that the link to the physical campus is important; that the vast majority of online students live within 75 miles of the physical institutions.

Richard showed a website that described programs to convey online course material via students’ mobile phones and tablets. He said that Ivy League schools “were already onboard” with similar programs and that Rollins had the opportunity to be the first small, liberal arts school to initiate innovations like these.

Richard concluded by saying that he appreciates that the changes he’s advocating represent “a fundamental change in how higher education is delivered.”