



School of Engineering - Faculty Meeting Minutes

April 11th, 2025

Richard Weeks Hall of Engineering, room 105

Present: I P Androulakis, P Bagchi, W Bajwa, P Balaguru, K Barillas, M Baykal-Gursoy, H Buettner, D Burbano, J Cadena, K Cameron, F Celik, Y Cohen, K Cook-Chennault, N Corrente, A Cuitiño, E DeMauro, V Demetracopoulou, F J Diez, Z Gajic, X Gu, N Gucunski, A Guo, D Hildebrandt, M Jafari, Y Jaluria, S Kilduff, B Kim, D Knight, N Langrana, Y Li, H Lin, H Liu, N Mandayam, A Mont, H Najm, T Oathes, T Özel, D Ozolina, A Pelegri, M Pierce, D Reed, D Rider, A Rodriguez, C Roth, A Ruiz, J Shan, P Song, M Striki, G Tsilomelekis, W Trappe, V Tutwiler, R Wang, B Warren, E Wicks, G Yang, J Zahn.

Dean Alberto Cuitiño called the meeting to order at 2:43 pm. The minutes from the previous faculty meeting on 2/14/25 were approved.

- **Presentation:**
 - Diane Reed, SoE Director of Communications and Marketing introduced Bill Warren, recently appointed as Vice Chancellor for Communications & Marketing for Rutgers University – New Brunswick.
 - Mr. Warren introduced himself and described his role in providing assistance with external communications and media. Mr. Warren advised faculty and staff to exercise caution in expressing personal opinions in digital formats including email and text communications.
- **Dean's Report:**
 - Higher education is facing multiple challenges that directly impact research funding, domestic and international student enrollment, DEI policies and initiatives, and student aid / funding. The university and SoE continue to develop plans to address these challenges.
 - The School of Engineering is the most research-intensive unit at Rutgers – New Brunswick. However, this status is at risk due to uncertainties in the funding environment and in ongoing federal funding. A planned cut in the indirect cost rate to 15% is currently paused.
 - The SoE will continue to work on no-harm policies and efforts, aiming to improve the campus. The school will maintain focus on its core mission.



- Should SoE faculty or staff have any concerns about ICE presence on campus, they should call RUPD at (732) 932-7211.
- Wade Trappe (Research):
 - Based on our data, SoE is submitting grants with 30% higher budget requests than at the same time last year. Awarded grants have 32% higher budgets than this time last year.
 - The university is aware that some federal grants are being cut or cancelled. If SoE faculty receive any such notice from a federal agency, please inform the Office for Research.
 - There is potential for summer 2025 bridge funding through the university for faculty whose grants are terminated during spring 2025. Details will be provided as they are made available.
- Hao Lin (International Programs):
 - A review of the school's undergraduate admissions data for international students shows 88+ students in the *admit-coming* category for 2025. Almost all are from India and China.
 - The SoE is developing events and partnerships with institutions in China and India. The aim is to move forward with partnerships with selected schools, building at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
 - Advice for supporting international students with visa and/or immigration issues can be found at RU Global: <https://global.rutgers.edu/>.
- Kimberly Cook-Chennault (Innovation in Engineering Education):
 - The school is launching the *Strategic Program for Advancing AI Driven Research and Knowledge* (SPARK)
 - Part of this program is an engineering education initiative aimed at teaching students how to use AI tools and prepare them for future engineering practice.
 - The program will comprise four courses that can be taken together or individually: Intro to AI in Engineering, AI Applications Seminar, AI Ethics and Risks, plus an AI-infused departmental course.
 - The program aims to launch its first two courses in fall 2025 with additional courses to be added in 2026. The SPARK team will be reaching out to engineering faculty for input.

- Peng Song (Undergraduate Programs):
 - Four Rutgers University students have earned prestigious Goldwater Fellowships, including two engineers, Adrian Jackson (ECE), and Iris You (MSE).
 - Admitted students open house was coordinated by Aaron Rodriguez and received approximately 1,400 visitors. Thank you to faculty, staff, students for hosting visitors.
 - The fall 2025 admissions data currently shows 17,314 applicants with 483 currently accepted. These figures place the school on target for between 1,100-1,200 students matriculating in the fall.
 - The school is expanding the new freshman year ID3EA course for the class of 28 and for incoming transfer students.
 - Freshmen will shortly be required to declare their major field of study. Current figures show 95% retention within SoE, with only 13 undeclared. The engineering freshman average GPA after the fall 2024 semester was 3.124.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark C. Pierce

Secretary, Engineering Faculty