

*Voted on at Faculty Senate Meeting, 4/13/2016.  
Passed unanimously, with quorum.*

## **Resolution on the Rensselaer Union**

Whereas, the Rensselaer Union is a unique organization that empowers student leadership at Rensselaer by allowing students to run their own student government and clubs and oversee campus facilities related to student life, which has long been a hallmark of Rensselaer (since 1890);

Whereas, the Faculty of Rensselaer are entrusted with mentoring and educating the Rensselaer students, and while not directly involved in the Rensselaer Union, the Faculty wholly support the Union and see it as an important part of the Rensselaer student learning experience;

Whereas, the *Rensselaer Union Constitution*, approved most recently by the Board of Trustees in April 2013 and as amended in April 2015, defines the position of the Director of the Union and states that “The Vice President for Student Life shall act as advisor to the Director and shall inform him or her of Trustee policy”<sup>1</sup>;

Whereas, the recently advertised position of “Executive Director of Student Activities” is inconsistent with the *Rensselaer Union Constitution* in that the position overlaps with the Director of the Union, e.g. “... will provide leadership to a broad portfolio of co-curricular programs including the Student Union,” but has a different reporting structure, specifically “Reporting to the Assistant Vice President/Dean of Students”;

Whereas, the plan to restructure Student Life and specifically, the creation of the new Executive Director of Student Activities position, which will have a major impact on the Rensselaer Union and the students, proceeded without engagement of the students;

Whereas, the Board of Trustees have been asked by the President of Rensselaer to review the *Rensselaer Union Constitution* to determine whether any changes are warranted<sup>2</sup>;

Whereas, changes to the *Rensselaer Union Constitution* must be passed by a 2/3 vote of the Student Senate followed by a majority vote of the student body per the current Constitution<sup>1</sup>;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Faculty Senate strongly urges the Rensselaer administration and Board of Trustees to uphold the *Rensselaer Union Constitution* in its current form; to not move forward with the creation and hiring of an “Executive Director of Student Activities”, but rather to actively engage the student leaders to be involved in the process with the Vice President of Student Life to restructure Student Life in a way that is aligned with the structure and vision of the Rensselaer Union; and to observe the process currently described in the *Rensselaer Union Constitution* if changes are proposed to the Constitution.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.studentsenate.rpi.edu/documents/163/download>

<sup>2</sup> <http://news.rpi.edu/content/2016/03/31/statement-rensselaer-polytechnic-institute-president-shirley-ann-jackson-phd>