

# BENJAMIN RIFKIN



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## Leader in Higher Education

Warm, collaborative, compassionate, and innovative leader with a wealth of experience working in a variety of institutions in higher education, both public and private, urban and suburban, with enrollments from 6,000 to 40,000 students, with and without faculty unions, fostering change through shared governance and broad stakeholder consultation. Evidence-based and transparent decision-maker. Dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion with track record of accomplishment in policy, procedure, programs, and practices. Strong interpersonal skills with excellent record of fundraising and the development of new revenue generating programs, strategic planning, assessing learning outcomes, supporting re-accreditation, and managing crises. Substantial experience in team building, supervision, and mentoring faculty and staff to achieve high performance outcomes and job satisfaction. Outstanding listening skills and follow-through.

Student-Centeredness | Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Budget Management and Fundraising | Transparent Evidence-Based Decision Making  
Enrollment Management and Student Success  
Curricular Innovation | Program Evaluation and Prioritization  
Community-Building On and Beyond Campus | Alumni Relations  
Faculty and Staff Mentoring and Personnel Processes | Conflict-Management  
Internationalization | Experiential Learning | High-Impact Practices  
Strategic Planning | Consultative Policy Development | Advocate for Shared Governance  
Technology for Learning-Teaching-Research and Administrative Workflow

**Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Russian & East European Studies, Yale University**  
**Master of Arts and Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literature, University of Michigan**

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## **HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY, Hempstead, NY: 2017-Present**

*Private university with approximately 9,000 students including undergraduate and graduate, with professional schools for Business, Education, Engineering, Health Professions, Law, Medicine, Nursing and Physician's Assistant Studies*

Dean of Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, including School of Education (HCLAS) and the University Library, 2017-2020, and tenured professor of Russian (2017-Present)

Leader of HCLAS, academic home to over 3,000 undergraduate and approximately 1,000 graduate students and approximately 270 full-time faculty in the arts, education, humanities, international affairs, mathematics, public policy, natural sciences, and social sciences, organized

into four schools offering over 90 undergraduate majors and over a dozen graduate degrees with a total annual budget, including gift funds and salaries, of approximately \$71 million. Direct supervision of 7 associate deans, one administrative assistant; collaboration with 23 department chairs and 20 graduate degree and certificate program directors. (2017-2020)

### Key Accomplishments while Dean of HCLAS

- Increased annual philanthropic support by over 70% by restructuring Alumni Advisory Board, identifying and promoting purposes for giving, collecting data on student accomplishments to link to giving, creating opportunities for alumni to bring their expertise to students (on campus or at their place of employment), and establishing alumni newsletter with news of student and faculty achievements
- Reduced college expenses by 6% during pandemic to avoid layoffs, working with department chairs collaboratively and transparently, considering trade-offs, identifying areas that could be supported by gift funds in the short-term, to preserve the mission of teaching and scholarly and creative productivity
- Implemented several initiatives to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the community, including workshops for faculty and staff (led by experts), resulting in a participation rate of about one third of all full-time faculty in at least one workshop in one year's time
- Created transformative learning grant for students without financial means to participate in high-impact experiences such as study abroad, with special focus on first-generation students, with publicity of students supported by this grant bringing in increasing donor support
- Enhanced student success by working with departments to implement new retention strategies, sharing those strategies across departments, developed and launched new distinctive hybrid minor in Leadership Studies, mentored faculty for revision of ESL program to foster greater success of international students, created and launched credit-bearing course on career planning featuring alumni panels in which alumni speak about their (often unexpected) path from a liberal arts major to a career path
- Worked with department chairs, graduate program directors, faculty in the graduate programs, and budget officers to develop parameters for annual data-based review of the financial sustainability of graduate programs in accordance with research on revenue generation from the Educational Advisory Board
- Fostered curricular change to increase enrollment in graduate programs, including 5-year BA/MSEd programs, in Hofstra's School of Education
- Revised and delivered pre-med admissions programming for prospective and admitted students for recruitment and yield

### **ITHACA COLLEGE, Ithaca, NY: 2015-2017**

*Private college with approximately 6,000 students, mostly undergraduate, with professional schools in Business and Health Professions*

Provost and Vice President for Educational Affairs, 2015-2016: chief academic officer and chief student affairs officer, also overseeing Division III athletics, for over 6,500 undergraduate and graduate students, over 500 full-time faculty, 400 part-time faculty, and over 400 full-time staff

in five schools (liberal arts and professional programs), residence life and multicultural affairs programs, and athletics program, with 97 undergraduate majors and 27 graduate degree programs; supervision of eleven direct reports including leaders in student affairs and athletics; responsible for budget of over \$108 million, (including salaries and benefits), representative to Board of Trustee Committee for Academic and Student Affairs, and tenured professor of modern languages (2015-2017)

#### Key Accomplishments while Provost of Ithaca College

- Co-chaired College's highest level budget committee
- Developed and launched several DEI initiatives focusing on students, faculty, and staff, in collaboration with Human Resources and Student Affairs, including workshops, policy changes, and bias incident reporting protocols
- Fostered creation of courses integrating experiential learning, including "Music as Medicine" and "Sustainability"
- Led the creation and implementation of the co-curricular transcript
- Launched task force of faculty and staff to review retention obstacles and recommend strategies for enhancing persistence and completion rates
- Moved Student Access Services office to a location accessible to people who use wheelchairs
- Worked on crisis response team during prolonged period of student demonstrations

#### **THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY, Ewing, NJ: 2009-2015**

*Public college offering liberal arts, business, and engineering, with approximately 7,500 students, mostly undergraduate, with over 50 undergraduate degrees*

Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) and tenured profession of Russian

#### Key Accomplishments while Dean of HSS at TCNJ

- Led inclusive development of School's first strategic plan, with annual reporting process on goals achieved
- Led efforts to implement assessment of discipline-specific and general education learning outcomes for accreditation self-study report
- Implemented changes to increase rates of student participation in high impact practices, with demonstrated results in three years' time: internships from 22% to 47%, study abroad from 15% to 36%, undergraduate research from 14% to 46%, other experiential learning from 13% to 30%, and increased rate of participation in community-engaged learning by 58%.
- Implemented numerous initiatives in the area of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion including events for students with small group follow-up discussions, School-wide Diversity Council, Founding of Circle of Compassion
- Led creation of public speaking requirement and four-year advising syllabus
- Facilitated college-wide review of tenure and promotion standards through shared governance process
- Developed and launched ESL and American Culture Institute, brought in over \$1 million net revenue in peak year of its operation

**TEMPLE UNIVERSITY, Philadelphia, PA: 2005-2009**

*Commonwealth-Affiliated urban highly diverse institution with approximately 40,000 students (including undergraduate and graduate) with professional schools in Business, Education, Law, Medicine, and Nursing, among others, with over 150 undergraduate degree programs and over 230 graduate degree programs*

Vice Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs for College of Liberal Arts (2005-2007 with acting deans) and tenured professor of Russian (2005-2009)

Key Accomplishments while Vice Dean at Temple's College of Liberal Arts

- Fostered development of learning outcomes assessment plans for all departments
- Implemented new recruitment and yield events
- Fostered development of over 40 new general education courses and led development of three of them, involving over one third of all full-time faculty, for the transition to a new general education program

**MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE, Middlebury, VT: 2000-2003 (summers only)**

*Private liberal arts college with summer language immersion schools*

Director, Kathryn Wasserman Davis School of Russian (summer school immersion program with annual enrollment of approximately 150 students in undergraduate and graduate programs)

Key Accomplishments while Director of School of Russian

- Revised undergraduate and graduate curricula to match student interests and increase enrollments
- Established practice of individualized narrative learning outcome reports in addition to course grades, demonstrating language gain in accordance with performance levels of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, leading to increased retention of students from one summer to the next (from 2% to 15%) and increased enrollment of federally sponsored students
- Enhanced integration of curricular and co-curricular programs

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-Madison, Madison, WI: 1990-2005**

*Public flagship institution with 43,000 students and professional schools in Business, Education, Engineering, Law, Medicine, and Nursing, among others, with over 125 undergraduate degree programs and over 160 graduate degree programs*

Assistant Professor – Associate Professor (with tenure) – Professor – Chair of Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures (one of top five graduate programs in the field in the US)  
Director, Federally Funded Title VI Center for the Study of Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia

Key Accomplishments at UW-Madison

- Brought in first major gift to Slavic Department of \$1.15 million dollars and brought in substantial grants for development of technology-mediated instruction
- Led curricular efforts to establish interdisciplinary graduate minor and doctoral program in second language acquisition, both flourishing to this day
- Helped develop and launch UW-System Collaborative Language Program
- Worked with colleagues to revise undergraduate curricula in Russian and Polish, tripling the number of majors

**ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL TRAINING**

- Educational technology for distance learning courses
- Multiple seminars and workshops on interrupting bias, institutional racism, and privilege
- ACE institute for new chief academic officers
- CASE seminar on development for deans
- Bonner Foundation institute on high impact practices
- Council on Undergraduate Research institute on best practices
- Accreditation team member training from Middle States Commission on Higher Education
- Harvard University Higher Ed. Leadership Management Development
- NAFSA Institute on Internationalization of the Curriculum

**SELECTED HONORS AND AWARDS**

Doctorate of Letters, *Honoris Causa*, Middlebury College, 2021

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Wilga Rivers Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, 2020

Phi Beta Kappa, Elected to Honorary Membership, Omega Chapter of New York (Hofstra University) with the endorsement of the Alpha Chapter of Connecticut (Yale University)

American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL) Award for Best Book in Pedagogy, 2019, 2008, 2001

Interfaith Service Award, Islamic Center of Long Island, 2019

Lilian Stroebe Medal for Global Citizenship and Advocacy for the Study of Languages and Cultures, presented by Middlebury College, 2015

Award for Advocacy for Women's Leadership, The College of New Jersey, 2014

American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) Award for Distinguished Service, 2014

AATSEEL Award for Outstanding Service to the Profession, 2008

UW-Madison College of Letters and Science Faculty Advising Award, 2004

UW-Madison Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Teaching, 2000. Citation:

<http://news.wisc.edu/faculty-highlighted-for-teaching-mastery/> (scroll down to Rifkin)

## SCHOLARSHIP

*Google Scholar counts over 1100 citations of my scholarly work, over 300 since 2016 (as of August 2021) with an h-index of 17 and i10-index of 22. This count excludes works published in Russia. ResearchGate assesses research interest score as higher than 94% of other scholars in the area of language education. A detailed list of my scholarly work is available upon request.*

Areas of interest for grants, publications, lectures, presentations, workshops: compassion and global citizenship in the curriculum of higher education; applied linguistics; foreign language education and curricular design; learning outcomes assessment; second language acquisition; foreign language in the context of the liberal arts in higher education; faculty mentoring and professional development; and Russian film and literature

External grants won: Total of \$1,625,000 from US Department of Education, Apple/Rota, Social Science Research Council, Russky Mir Foundation over the course of my career

Publications: 2 single-authored books; 2 co-authored books; 1 edited volume; 2 co-edited volumes; 9 book chapters (one in press for publication in 2022 by the MLA); 1 co-authored book chapter; 5 software projects; 30 articles in refereed journals (including *ADFL Bulletin*, *Foreign Language Annals*, *Language Learning*, *Liberal Education*, *Modern Language Journal*, *Russian Language Journal*, *Slavic and East European Journal*, *Slavic Review*); 5 co-authored articles (including one co-authored with graduate students); 3 Internet-published peer-reviewed instructional activities; 31 non-refereed essays, op-eds, and letters to the editor (including *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, *New York Times*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Trenton Times*, *Newsday*); 23 reviews of scholarly books and works, memoirs, and works of Russian literature and film; and one translation

*Full list of publications or most highly cited publications available upon request.*

Invited Lectures and Presentations (49), around the world, some in Russian, at universities including: Columbia University; Yale University; Duke University; Princeton University; UCLA; among others

Invited Workshops and Webinars (49), in English and Russian, including: University of Michigan-Ann Arbor; Ben Gurion University (Israel); National Middle Eastern Language Resource Center at University of Texas-Austin; Anchorage School District; Central Intelligence Agency Language Institute; African Language Teachers Association (at Indiana University); Defense Language Institute; Johnson Space Center (NASA) Russian Language Program; and University of California-Berkeley, among others.

Refereed Conference Presentations (66) in English or in Russian at the annual conferences of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Association for the Advancement of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, International Congress of Russian Language Researchers, Modern Language Association, National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages, Bi-annual Conference of the Council on International Educational Exchange, and state and regional language associations, among others.