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Transforming Undergraduate Education: Rutgers Board of Governors Enthusiastically Adopts President McCormick's Bold Vision to Enhance Undergraduate Education in New Brunswick/Piscataway; McCormick Encourages Broad Participation in the Implementation Process

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Update:

[Transforming Undergraduate Education](#)

NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY, N.J. - The Rutgers Board of Governors today overwhelmingly approved President Richard L. McCormick's bold plan to enhance the quality of undergraduate education throughout the university's largest campus.

The sweeping changes, which follow nearly two years of unprecedented discussion among Rutgers students, faculty, staff and alumni, will improve virtually every aspect of undergraduate learning and life across the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus - from admissions and curriculum to campus facilities and the student experience.

"President McCormick, faculty, students and countless others throughout the Rutgers community deserve tremendous credit for confronting the many challenges that face undergraduates and creating this visionary plan," said board of governors Chairman Albert R. Gamper Jr. "When these changes are fully implemented, undergraduates will enjoy full access to the wide range of educational opportunities offered by this outstanding university."

Most of the changes outlined in McCormick's plan will apply to the undergraduate class that enters the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus in fall 2007.

The implementation process will begin immediately, McCormick said. He encouraged broad participation. "Working together, we will complete this historic undertaking and transform our campus," McCormick said. "We will empower Rutgers undergraduates to take advantage of the distinctive educational experiences that characterize a great research university."

President McCormick's plan to transform undergraduate education in New Brunswick/Piscataway includes:

- Establishment of the School of Arts and Sciences, which will bring together all arts and sciences faculty and students. All arts and sciences students in New Brunswick/Piscataway will receive their degrees from this school.
- Unified admissions standards, general education criteria and graduation requirements for all arts and sciences students in New Brunswick/Piscataway. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences will have the authority to establish these standards.
- More participation by arts and sciences faculty in undergraduate education, consistent with the role of faculty at peer research universities. Faculty will have greater opportunities to focus time and energy on undergraduates.
- A campuswide undergraduate honors program. This will serve as a magnet for high-achieving students.
- A core curriculum for undergraduates, developed by the faculty. This will encourage students to take full advantage of the wide range of academic opportunities offered at Rutgers.
- A first-year seminar program open to all first-year students in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Highly

regarded senior faculty will teach these one-credit courses, which will immediately connect first-year students to the university's rich academic and research opportunities.

- Encouraging Rutgers students to end their undergraduate careers with a "capstone experience" - such as a senior thesis, a research project or a service learning experience.
- Establishment of a residential college with a well-defined mission. The Douglass Residential College, to be located on the Douglass campus, will provide special academic and co-curricular programs for women students who live in the residential college. Its programs will be open to students across the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus, regardless of where they choose to live.
- Acceleration of plans to expand the student center on the Livingston campus - a top priority of Livingston students. McCormick has announced a 2007 groundbreaking for the project.
- Appointment of distinguished scientist Joan W. Bennett to join the Rutgers faculty and serve as an associate vice president in academic affairs responsible for advancing the entry of women students in the science, technology, engineering and math professions; mentoring and helping advance women students and faculty in these areas; and developing new programs for attracting and retaining women in these professions. Bennett, a member of the National Academy of Sciences and former president of the American Society for Microbiology, is known internationally for her work promoting women entering these fields.
- Equal access to academic programs and services for undergraduates no matter where they live.
- Improved student services throughout New Brunswick/Piscataway. Deans, staff, facilities and other resources at each residential campus will maximize quality and convenience.

To accomplish the transformation of undergraduate education, the university will marshal existing resources and will make many of these changes a priority in the university's next capital campaign, McCormick said.

McCormick and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Philip Furmanski created the Task Force on Undergraduate Education in April 2004 to review learning and academic life in New Brunswick/Piscataway. After the task force released its 178-page report in July 2005, students, faculty, staff and alumni discussed its recommendations in depth at nearly 40 hearings, forums and meetings organized by university groups. McCormick, Furmanski and members of the board of governors attended these meetings.

Established in 1766, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is America's eighth oldest institution of higher learning and one of the nation's premier public research universities. Serving more than 50,000 students on campuses in Camden, Newark and New Brunswick/Piscataway, Rutgers offers more than 280 bachelor's, master's, doctoral and professional degree programs.

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