

# TRANSFORMING UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

## Report of the Task Force on Undergraduate Education

Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway

July 18, 2005

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THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY  
**RUTGERS**

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This report and supplemental materials are available  
on the Task Force web site:

*<http://ur.rutgers.edu/ugtaskforce>*

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## NOTE TO THE RUTGERS COMMUNITY

### OPPORTUNITIES AND OBSTACLES

The Task Force on Undergraduate Education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway believes that the essence of undergraduate education at a public research university is access to opportunity—the opportunity to study with a research faculty with expertise in areas that range from art history to microbiology, from urban planning to food science, from dance to anthropology, from pharmacy to engineering to business; the opportunity to live, study, and work with a richly diverse student body; the opportunity to acquire the higher-order skills, the knowledge, and the training necessary to succeed in one’s future ventures, whatever those ventures might be; and the opportunity to imagine other, uncharted futures.

If the essence of undergraduate education at a public research university is access to opportunity, then what specific opportunities await undergraduates when they come to the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus of Rutgers? And what are the obstacles that prevent undergraduates from gaining access to the full range of opportunities currently available on the campus? In one form or another, these two questions have preoccupied the Task Force over the past year as it has set about the work of evaluating the undergraduate experience on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus.

The elements of opportunity are already at hand. We already possess a world-class faculty; we have one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation; and we have a distinct institutional history, one marked by an overriding commitment to public education. What the Task Force has discovered, though, is that there are many obstacles currently in place that make it difficult for the students, the faculty, the staff, and the administration to take advantage of all that Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway has to offer. From the confounding array of competing requirements at the various colleges to the inexplicable disparities in the quality of student services available across the campuses, there is everywhere evidence of a system that is broken. Admissions criteria vary; distribution requirements vary; graduation requirements vary; student centers and student services vary; and judicial affairs procedures vary. These variations are not experienced by the students as productive or beneficial; rather, they are perceived, in the main, as being incomprehensible, arbitrary, and unfair. Or, as one faculty member told the Task Force, the university’s massive, complex, baroque structure appears to newcomers as something “hostile” and seems designed to discourage serious, sustained, programmatic engagement with undergraduate education here.

In the recommendations that follow, the Task Force has sought to reimagine the undergraduate experience at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, identifying and removing the obstacles that currently prevent our students from taking full advantage of all the university has to offer. In formulating its recommendations for reform, the Task Force has endeavored both to build on the rich resources of the university and to propose fundamental changes that will improve the quality of the educational experience for all of the campus’s current and future students.

The Task Force has examined the major components of the undergraduate experience on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus: the curriculum, the student experience, admissions and recruitment, campus planning and facilities, and the structure of undergraduate education. The working groups that focused on each of these areas separately set out to generate proposals that would improve the quality of undergraduate education for all students on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus. Once the working groups began reporting their preliminary results, a pattern emerged: across the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus, the university's fragmented and confusing structure stands in the way of improving the quality of education for all our undergraduates. To remedy this situation, the key structural recommendation of the Task Force is that there be one single liberal arts college, the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences, in place of the four liberal arts colleges currently active on campus. All students admitted to the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences would be held to the same admissions standards; all would have the same core distribution requirements; all would have equal access to the university's residential resources and student services; and all honors students would be admitted to the same General Honors Program and would enjoy access to the enhanced educational opportunities. The newly empowered Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education would oversee these changes, would assist with the process of placing control of the curriculum in the hands of the faculty, and would ensure that the concerns of undergraduates remain at the center of the university's plans regarding future development and future initiatives.

Each one of these changes marks a significant break with past practice. Taken together, these changes are meant to transform the undergraduate experience on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus of Rutgers. It is the Task Force's belief that the recommended single admissions standard will further enhance the diversity and the quality of the student body by eliminating the deleterious effects of the current system, with its disparate admissions standards. The Rutgers core distribution requirements will provide all students with a common introduction to the work of this research university, engendering mastery of the reasoning and communication skills that provide the foundation not only for academic success, but also for being competitive in the global workplace and for full participation in a diverse democracy. The proposed administrative structure will provide the university community with a transparent, coherent system for extending to all undergraduates equal access to cocurricular and extracurricular activities and resources. The proposed changes in campus planning and facilities will ensure that the university's physical plant and its transportation system represent the values of the university itself, providing a safe, well-maintained learning environment. And, finally, the unification of the liberal arts colleges will ensure that the curricular and programmatic successes of the individual colleges are made available to all liberal arts students admitted to the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus.

The opportunity to bring about change is never constant: opportunities come and opportunities go. It is quite clear that the opportunity to bring about meaningful, lasting change is at hand now, perhaps for the first time in nearly two decades at this university. What has been most inspiring about being involved in generating this report has been the clear sign—in all the meetings of the working groups, in all the meetings with focus groups, and in all the engaged and spirited discussions that have been put in motion by the Task Force's interim reports—that the will to provide our undergraduates with the best possible education is alive and well at Rutgers. This report is meant to give voice to this pent-up will to change and to offer a workable plan of action,

one that will allow the students, the faculty, the staff, and the administration to take the next important steps in transforming the future of undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. The ultimate opportunity is for Rutgers to become one of the nation’s preeminent public research universities. Making Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway a great research university *for* undergraduates is a central component of this goal.





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## REPORT SUMMARY

### *Fundamental Principle*

The primary benefits to undergraduates attending a public research university are the opportunity to learn from a faculty whose teaching is informed by ongoing research and the opportunity to live, study, and work in a large, diverse, and open community. Undergraduate education at Rutgers should be organized around academic inquiry grounded in active research in the humanities, sciences, social sciences, and the professions; and should take place in an intellectual atmosphere that connects academic inquiry to concerns that reach beyond the university community.

### *Overall Goals*

- Reconnect the Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway faculty to the work of undergraduate education and provide opportunities for faculty to focus energy and time on undergraduates.
- Engage students in the exciting intellectual work that characterizes our campuses, from the time of admission to the time of graduation and beyond.
- Offer all undergraduates equal access to Rutgers’ high-quality academic programs and to the distinctive educational experiences that characterize a research university.
- Provide undergraduates on all New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses ready access to learning communities of students with similar interests, as well as to facilities, services, and programs that meet their diverse needs.
- Recruit and admit to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway high-quality students who contribute to the rich diversity of the campuses and who seek the challenges and opportunities of a major research university.
- Improve the attractiveness, clarity, organization, and accessibility of undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

*Specific Goals* informing all the recommendations that follow:

- There should be an admissions policy based upon one set of standards for all arts and sciences applicants.
- There should be a single core curriculum built around a single set of expectations, and it should offer a distinctive vision of how undergraduate education is connected to the work of a major public research university.
- There should be one honors program serving all New Brunswick/Piscataway undergraduates.
- There should be an administrative structure at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway that treats all students equally and gives all students equal access to the university’s resources, no matter on which campus they choose to live.

- Support for students’ personal and academic success—through advisement, career counseling, learning support, and counseling services—should be equitably available on all campuses.
- The planning and maintenance of all of the university’s spaces—its classrooms, residence halls, student centers, and bus stops—should proceed in ways that ensure the equitable distribution of resources to all campuses, and these resources should be used to enrich the living and learning environments for all undergraduates.

## **1 | THE CURRICULUM AND RUTGERS UNDERGRADUATES**

### **PART I: *RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RUTGERS CORE***

- There should be a single set of core distribution requirements shared by all undergraduates, regardless of school or college.
- The core should have a foundational, “horizontal” component concentrated in the first and second years, and a “vertical” component extending into the third and fourth years.
- Students should be permitted to fulfill significant portions of the core requirements, but not the entire set of requirements, with courses from their own major—as long as those courses meet the specific goals of the core.
- All undergraduates, except those in the professional schools, should be required to have both a major and a minor area of concentration.
- During the implementation phase, the means should be established for electing faculty members to serve on the vice president for undergraduate education’s Curriculum Committee. This standing committee should be charged with certifying which courses meet the core distribution requirements; this standing committee should also provide ongoing oversight of the Rutgers Core.

### **PART II: *RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS***

- There should be a single general honors program for all qualified undergraduate students, regardless of school or college.
- To better serve our Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) students, a New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide EOF Faculty Support Committee should be established to work with the Office of the University Director of Student Academic Support and Achievement in developing and improving the course offerings for EOF students and other students with similar academic support needs.
- In order to maintain and enhance the programs we offer for nontraditional-age students, a task force on educating nontraditional-age students should be established to provide a comprehensive report on the structures and organization of services that best support these students.
- All matriculating colleges and schools should enroll both full-time and part-time students.
- All matriculating colleges and schools should improve the orientation, academic support, advising, and course offerings available for transfer students.

## 2 | UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND CAMPUS LIFE

- The administration should initiate, plan, and develop the capacity, incentives, and support systems (and provide the necessary resources) to create and sustain effective learning communities.
- Different communities should be created to meet the particular needs of first-, second-, third-, and fourth-year students, and, in addition, to provide them with appropriate challenges and opportunities at each stage of their college career.
- Recognition of current student living patterns in New Brunswick/Piscataway suggests that learning communities ought to be mainly nonresidential, with options for residential components.
- Incentive and reward systems should be created to encourage sustained participation by faculty and staff in these learning communities.

## 3 | THE UNDERGRADUATE'S EXPERIENCE

### *Advisement*

- The university should establish a central advising office on each campus. This office should include personnel from Career Services.
- Standards for the provision of information on college web pages should be developed and implemented so that consistent information is made available to students.
- The university should develop an orientation program for all new and transfer students.

### *Academic Support*

- The university should institute a Coordinating Council on Academic Support, reporting to the vice president for undergraduate education, to improve coordination between and among various academic support units and to oversee the collection of outcomes data.

### *Student Activities*

- The vice president for student affairs should oversee the management of the student centers and ensure that there is a common set of policies for room reservations and other administrative activities in all of the centers.
- There should be a single set of policies governing the creation and operation of student clubs and organizations. All students should be eligible to participate in all clubs and organizations (with the possible exception of selected all-female or all-male activities); and intramural events should occur on a New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide basis.
- Club sports and intramurals should be funded by student fees, assessed uniformly.

### ***Residence Halls***

- Residence life programs should be combined into one program reporting to the vice president for student affairs.
- The university should study the feasibility of requiring full-time, first-year students to live in residence halls during the first year of college.

### ***Psychological Counseling***

- The psychological counseling centers should be centralized and report to the vice president for student affairs. The vice president for student affairs should convene a task force composed of mental health professionals to develop common policies and practices for the counseling centers and to develop a closer working relationship between Psychiatric Services and the reorganized counseling centers.

## **4 | UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT**

Several serious problems with recruitment and admissions exist in New Brunswick/Piscataway:

- The substantial difference in admissions standards for applicants to the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy and Rutgers College, on one hand, and to Douglass, Livingston, and Cook Colleges on the other hand.
- The lack of an appropriate faculty role in making admissions decisions and, more importantly, in setting admissions guidelines, policies, standards, and enrollment goals.
- The lack of coherent and consistent standards and policies with regard to the admission of transfer students.
- The failure to communicate effectively to prospective students and their families the advantages of Rutgers as a major research university and the particular characters and strengths of the New Brunswick/Piscataway, Camden, and Newark campuses.

To respond to these issues, we recommend:

- Whatever the collegiate structure ultimately adopted, there should be a single admissions standard for all traditional-age arts and sciences students applying to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, and a comparable standard for applicants to professional programs at Cook College.
- While admissions standards for arts and sciences students should be uniform across colleges, there must be flexibility in applying those standards in order to ensure the access that has made Rutgers a richly diverse campus for all students: traditional-age students; adults entering or returning to higher education; members of all minority, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups; and students with special talents.



- In order to ensure an appropriate faculty role in setting admissions policies and standards, there should be 1) an active faculty admissions committee for the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and for each professional school in New Brunswick/Piscataway; and 2) a New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide primarily faculty admissions committee, reporting to the vice president for undergraduate education.
- Transfer students should be accepted into the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences under a uniform, standardized set of admissions criteria.
- The undergraduate application should indicate Rutgers' expectations for its students: it should ask about special academic work (e.g., honors, advanced placement, etc.); it should ask about extracurricular participation; and it should require a writing sample.
- Undergraduate recruiting publications and the Rutgers universitywide and New Brunswick/Piscataway web sites should be revised so that they 1) more effectively define "public research university" and make clear the connection between the research mission of the university and the undergraduate experience of all students; 2) differentiate among the New Brunswick/Piscataway, Newark, and Camden campuses so that their particular characters and strengths are apparent; and 3) more effectively highlight particularly noteworthy New Brunswick/Piscataway curricular, cocurricular, and student life programs.
- The Admissions Office, working with faculty and staff in New Brunswick/Piscataway, should develop a comprehensive plan for recruiting more out-of-state students.

## **5 | CAMPUS PLANNING AND FACILITIES**

- In order to create a learning environment that is welcoming, organized, and student-oriented, the university should enhance the existing conditions so that students can learn in up-to-date, spacious, clean, well-ventilated classrooms.
- Communal spaces for casual gathering that will foster greater interaction between and among professors and students should be created.
- Clear, organized, and deliberative advisory processes should be established to allow faculty and students a more active role in campus planning and maintenance.

## **6 | THE STRUCTURE OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION**

The following structural problems impede the university's efforts to distribute resources and opportunities equitably at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway:

- Academic and cocurricular paths are closed to many of the students who would take advantage of them.
- Many academic expectations and requirements differ among the colleges and thus are often confusing and inequitable. The New Brunswick/Piscataway campus is divided along lines correctly perceived as inequitable.
- The colleges have differing academic requirements for their incoming students and hence are often viewed by applicants, parents, and the outside world as having a

differing quality of education and programs, when in fact the courses and majors in the colleges are taught by essentially the same faculty.

- Authority in academic policy areas such as premajor advising, honors programs, and graduation requirements has been vested with the college faculty fellows programs, while the budgetary responsibility for the faculty necessary to properly implement many of these policies resides in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the other faculties offering majors to students in the colleges.
- The resources available to students are not shared equitably across the campus because the colleges do not appear to share university resources equally.

To address these structural problems, we have made recommendations that focus 1) on the organization of the individual schools and colleges, and 2) on the responsibilities of a newly empowered Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. In the recommendations that follow, *school* is used to denote degree-granting academic units composed of faculty and students; schools set all academic requirements, from admissions to graduation. *Campus* is used to denote student communities (geographical or virtual) cutting across the schools. The structure itself is not tied to these particular name distinctions, but a coherent and appropriate set of names (these or others) will be essential in light of the strategies identified above for realizing our undergraduate mission.

***Schools (Faculty and Students): Locus of Academic Authority and Responsibility***

- The Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences should be established as the *school* responsible for the admissions criteria, general education, scholastic standing, honors curricula, and degree certification of all arts and sciences students in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Its faculty would be comprised of the current Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and its executive dean would head that faculty; its students would be all arts and sciences students in New Brunswick/Piscataway. For consideration of general undergraduate requirements, academic authority would reside with an undergraduate faculty body consisting of the faculty of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and faculty from the professional schools that offer majors and minors available to arts and sciences students.

The schools in New Brunswick/Piscataway, would then be categorized as follows:

**Schools admitting undergraduates directly as first-year students:**

Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences

Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

School of Engineering

Mason Gross School of the Arts

School of Agricultural and Environmental Science (Cook)

**Professional schools admitting arts and sciences undergraduates into majors and minors:**

School of Communication, Information and Library Studies  
Rutgers Business School: Undergraduate–New Brunswick  
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy  
School of Social Work  
School of Management and Labor Relations  
Graduate School of Education  
Mason Gross School of the Arts  
School of Agricultural and Environmental Science (Cook)

- The newly designated School of Agricultural and Environmental Science should offer only its own majors (not arts and sciences majors or School of Communication, Information and Library Studies majors) to students. The present Cook faculty should engage in a discussion leading to a recommendation to the university administration regarding direct admission and transfer admission to the School of Agricultural and Environmental Science, as well as majors to be offered at the school.
- Academic authority over admissions criteria, general education, scholastic standing, honors curricula, and degree certification should reside with the faculties of the respective schools admitting first-year students.
- The responsibility for premajor academic advising should rest with the deans of the respective schools admitting first-year students. Responsibility for academic advising in the major should rest at the departmental level.

***Undergraduate Campuses: Local Campus Communities***

- The current undergraduate colleges should be designated as local campus communities, serving as vital centers for the integration of the academic and cocurricular aspects of undergraduate education. Students in the undergraduate schools would affiliate with one of six such campuses: Busch Campus, Cook Campus, Douglass Campus, Livingston Campus, Queen’s Campus (on College Avenue), or UCNB (a nonresidential/virtual campus for nontraditional-age students).
- Each campus should be headed by a dean, who would report to the vice president for undergraduate education (see below). Douglass Campus would be reserved for women; Cook Campus, although distinct from the School of Agricultural and Environmental Science, would remain generally focused on programs associated with its land-grant heritage; and UCNB (nonresidential) would be reserved primarily for nontraditional-age students, who are currently primarily enrolled in University College–New Brunswick.

***Vice President for Undergraduate Education***

- A vice president for undergraduate education should be appointed to serve as the principal advocate internally and externally for undergraduate education in New Brunswick/Piscataway. This academic officer would report directly to the executive vice president for academic affairs; would sit on the President's Cabinet, the Deans Council, and the Promotion Review Committee; and would be an ex officio member of the New Brunswick Faculty Council. The vice president for undergraduate education would be responsible for academic coordination among the schools, and for coordination among the campus communities. The campus deans would report to this vice president.
- The Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education would have administrative responsibilities in academic service areas for undergraduate education that cut across the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences, the professional schools, and the campuses. Such areas would include Undergraduate Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, Scheduling, Center for the Advancement of Teaching, Career Services, cross-unit academic support programs, and academic integrity boards.
- The Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education would have two standing bodies that would meet regularly for academic coordination across the schools and campuses: the Undergraduate Academic Council of Deans of the Schools and Campuses and the Council of Associate Deans for Undergraduate Studies.
- The Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education jointly with the New Brunswick Faculty Council should establish at least three standing committees— Admissions, Curriculum, and Student Life—whose task will be to ensure ongoing discussion of these central matters in undergraduate education in New Brunswick/Piscataway as they cut across schools.

***Vice President for Student Affairs***

- In order to achieve better and more equitable services throughout New Brunswick/Piscataway, the vice president for student affairs should be empowered to provide unified direction for all student life functions across all the undergraduate campuses. The vice president for student affairs would have responsibility for working with student affairs deans to ensure equity of services on each campus and within the learning communities. The vice president for student affairs would report to the vice president for undergraduate education, would sit on the President's Cabinet, and would sit ex officio on the New Brunswick Faculty Council.
- The vice president for student affairs should have responsibility for Housing, Dining, Residence Life, Health Services, Mental Health Services, Student Centers, Recreation Centers, Financial Services, Disabilities Services, Disciplinary Affairs (other than academic integrity), and New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide Student Life Policies.

## 7 | STUDENT AND FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

We want our students to have firsthand encounters with the research environment of the university, starting when they arrive at Rutgers. We want our faculty to develop ways of engaging students in the conduct of research and the discovery of new ideas, both in classroom settings and in out-of-classroom individual or group projects and experiences. Among steps to accomplish these goals, we recommend that:

- A Student-Faculty Forum should be appointed as a permanent advisory group in the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education and charged to discuss, and help facilitate, student-faculty interactions in the learning communities and throughout the campus community.
- A committee on Faculty-Student Engagement in Research Experiences should be appointed by each decanal unit enrolling undergraduates. These committees would define substantive and concrete ways of exposing students to research experiences.
- Deans of academic units, working with the executive vice president for academic affairs and the vice president for undergraduate education, should develop a comprehensive plan of support for undergraduate intellectual life, focusing especially on honors programs, learning communities, mentoring programs, and all activities that foster faculty-student connections beyond the classroom and laboratory.
- To involve faculty more centrally in discussions of undergraduate education, the president should convene a group of prestigious scholars from a wide range of disciplines and secure their commitment to participate in significant ways in their department's introductory courses and in the proposed learning communities.
- All departments should be expected to mount careful and vigorous faculty mentoring and teaching-evaluation programs.
- A campus task force should be formed by the vice president for undergraduate education to consider ways of making the cultural richness of the campus and of the New Jersey-New York area a part of the education of undergraduates at Rutgers.
- Assessment of our curricular and cocurricular programs should become a central part of our discussions of the effectiveness of our work.

## 8 | IMPLEMENTATION

We envision a Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway in which students expect to experience fully the academic resources of the university and to join faculty in creating a climate of intellectual adventure. To make this vision a reality, we have designed a new core curriculum, a new approach to student life, and a new structure to support these changes.

But first, we call on faculty, students, and staff to join vigorously in the discussions that will take place throughout the fall of 2005 about the proposals in this report. In the fall semester, the New Brunswick Faculty Council, the University Senate, student governments, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the faculties of the professional schools will all, we trust, offer forums that consider the ideas here, propose additional ones, and in the process bring the campus community

## *Transforming Undergraduate Education*

together in establishing this new culture where undergraduate issues are central to what we all do.

At the same time, if changes are to occur in a timely fashion, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Philip Furmanski should form implementation groups—one focused on the core curriculum, one on learning communities and student life, one on admissions, and one on structure—early in the fall 2005 semester. These implementation committees should take the report's recommendations, listen to the campuswide discussions, and formulate a plan of implementation and action. Ideally, the entering class of 2007 should encounter the new curriculum, the new campus structure, and a new engagement between faculty and students.

## INTRODUCTION

*The university's design should reflect the values of the university community.*

This statement recurs throughout these pages, whether the focus is curriculum or academic organization, campus planning or students' experiences. The Task Force on Undergraduate Education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway has focused its yearlong discussions on the fundamental principle that Rutgers, as New Jersey's only comprehensive public research university, is charged with bringing to the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus students from the state, nation, and world who want to take full advantage of the resources of a great research university, resources that begin with the teaching of a faculty whose work is organized around active research in the humanities, sciences, social sciences, and the professions. Our five working groups—curriculum, the student experience, admissions and recruitment, campus planning and facilities, and the structure of undergraduate education—have based their discussions on three central questions: What kind of experiences should an undergraduate student have while pursuing a degree at this research university? What are the special features of a Rutgers education? What does it mean to be a Rutgers graduate? The answers we have articulated are anything but simple; and the challenges to effective action are formidable.

Our search for answers to these questions led us to articulate a set of goals for all undergraduates and for our faculty in New Brunswick/Piscataway:

### **Overall Goals**

- Reconnect Rutgers faculty to the work of undergraduate education and provide opportunities for faculty to focus energy and time on undergraduates.
- Engage students in the exciting intellectual work that characterizes our campuses, from the time of admission to the time of graduation and beyond.
- Offer all undergraduates equal access to Rutgers' high-quality academic programs and to the distinctive educational experiences that characterize a research university.
- Provide undergraduates on all New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses ready access to learning communities of students with similar interests, as well as to facilities, services, and programs that meet their diverse needs.
- Recruit and admit to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway high-quality students who contribute to the rich diversity of the campuses and who seek the challenges and opportunities of a major research university.
- Improve the attractiveness, clarity, organization, and accessibility of undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

With these overall goals as our context, we then analyzed the chronic impediments that many Rutgers undergraduates confront as they negotiate their path through the university. These

discussions generated the following specific goals that inform the deliberations and reports of our working groups:

### ***Specific Goals***

- There should be an admissions policy based upon one set of standards for all arts and sciences applicants.
- There should be a single core curriculum built around a single set of expectations, and it should offer a distinctive vision of how undergraduate education is connected to the work of a major public research university.
- There should be one honors program serving all New Brunswick/Piscataway undergraduates.
- There should be an administrative structure at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway that treats all students equally and gives all students equal access to the university’s resources, no matter on which campus they choose to live.
- Support for students’ personal and academic success—through advisement, career counseling, learning support, and counseling services—should be equitably available on all campuses.
- The planning and maintenance of all of the university’s spaces—its classrooms, residence halls, student centers, and bus stops—should proceed in ways that ensure the equitable distribution of resources to all campuses, and these resources should be used to enrich the living and learning environments for all undergraduates.

The Task Force is convinced that we must do a better job designing undergraduate education and life in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Accordingly, our work has been to reimagine undergraduate education at this public research university—to define what it means for students to study, and for faculty and staff to teach and work at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. Our collective work on the curriculum, on student experience, on admissions and recruitment, on campus planning and facilities, and on the structure of undergraduate education should provide a stimulus to campuswide discussions. And these discussions, in turn, will reconnect us all—students, faculty, staff, and administrators—to the ongoing work of undergraduate education.

### **Undergraduate Education in New Brunswick/Piscataway and across the Nation: A Brief History of Attempts at Reform**

Rutgers’ present position as a major public research university is the outcome of nearly 25 years of work by faculty, staff, students, and administrators. In New Brunswick/Piscataway, the campus reorganized in 1980, moving from a federation of colleges, each with its own faculty, to a research university with faculty located in departments, professional schools, centers, and institutes. The result: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, became one of 34 public universities in the nation, and the only one in New Jersey, that is a member of the Association of American Universities, the most prestigious designation available to this sector of academic institutions.



In this new structure, however, one crucial organizational feature remained unrealized: control over undergraduate education for arts and sciences students was divided between the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, which was assigned authority over majors and courses, and the individual colleges, which through the college faculty fellows system control admissions criteria, general education and graduation requirements, and scholastic standing. In this structure, genuine faculty control over and participation in undergraduate education beyond academic departments or schools is nonexistent. As Mary Hartman, then dean of Douglass College, noted in 1988 (in the *Report from the Academic Forum Committee on the Curriculum in the Multipurpose Colleges*), the 1980 reorganization “enshrined the disciplines in splendid isolation . . . from the undergraduates.” In addition to the disengagement of the faculty, structure also dictates the distribution of student services. Each college manages the assignment of housing, the provision of counseling services, and the access to myriad services and facilities. The structure has the benefit of local delivery of services, but has among its unacceptable drawbacks the failure to provide all students full and equal access to the resources available on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus.

Frustration over this unintended consequence of reorganization is longstanding and has led, over time, to the formation of numerous faculty/student/staff committees whose “charge” has been to resolve the problem, to reconnect the faculty to undergraduates from the time they are recruited and admitted to the time they graduate. In 1989, there was *The Report of the Provost’s Committee on Undergraduate Education in the Context of a Research University*. In 1992, a universitywide committee produced *Rutgers Dialogues, A Curriculum for Critical Awareness*, a report focusing on undergraduate curricular issues on the New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden campuses. In 1996, *Building a Learning Community: Report of the Committee on the Delivery of Undergraduate Education* was discussed across the New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses. As valuable as these reports were, none of them succeeded in solving the fundamental problem of the separation of faculty both from students and from essential responsibility for undergraduate education. The reason: There was no single faculty body with authority to address and resolve these issues.

These local discussions of how best to reform undergraduate education are not unique to Rutgers. Indeed, a national discussion on undergraduate education in research universities has been under way for nearly two decades. The report from the Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in Research Universities contributed greatly to this discussion. This report, *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America’s Research Universities* (April 1998), focused on “the inadequacy, even failure” of undergraduate education at the nation’s research universities, and it urged research universities “to take advantage of the immense resources of their graduate and research programs to strengthen the quality of undergraduate education, rather than striving to replicate the special environment of the liberal arts college.” The most well-known reports that have followed the work of the Boyer Commission have confirmed, in the main, the assessment of the Boyer Report. Most have found, as we have, that outstanding teaching has become the expected norm, but that good teaching in the classroom has not translated into active faculty involvement with undergraduates outside the department, program, and center, and has not translated into faculty assuming responsibility for all of undergraduate education. The Michigan *Commission on the Undergraduate Experience* (2002) observed that amid the riches of the campus environment, “Too often, however, the

undergraduate experience at the University of Michigan is fragmented into disconnected pursuits, discrete subcultures, and generational enclaves.” The *Report on the Harvard College Curricular Review* (2004) expressed alarm at the increasing specialization of students and the distance between faculty and students; it concluded: “While specialization can advance understanding, it can also lead to greater fragmentation.” Voicing a theme that arose in Task Force discussions repeatedly over the past year, the Harvard report recommends that the faculty recommit itself to general education: “To educate College students broadly, the Faculty must step back from its research focus and the specialization that it seeks to foster in the concentrations and in its training of graduate students, and focus instead on how fields of knowledge intersect and can be made relevant and accessible to a broad audience.”

### **Undergraduate Education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway Today**

The Task Force found many layers of fragmentation in New Brunswick/Piscataway, not only in the relationship between the major specialization and general education, but also in admissions processes, in graduation requirements, in student experiences outside the classroom, in students’ access to facilities and services, in planning for classroom buildings and residence hall spaces, and, perhaps most critically, in the connections between students and faculty. We tried to articulate for ourselves what work by faculty and by students sustained this fragmentation, and what structural elements perpetuated it. Again and again, we returned to the faculty’s separation from decision-making responsibilities for undergraduate education as a root cause for the situation that prevails today: strong focus on departmental matters and little attention to undergraduate issues beyond the departments. We also recognized that many other issues also encourage this fragmentation. The absence from New Brunswick/Piscataway of readily identifiable places beyond classrooms and offices for faculty-student interconnections and exchanges has produced an environment that discourages connections. For our students, their study, social life, and work and/or commuting schedules claim so much attention and energy that participation in any out-of-class interchanges and cocurricular programs is rarely a priority when faculty themselves are not perceived as involved or interested.

As we conducted our discussions, we focused first on the structural elements of undergraduate education in New Brunswick/Piscataway. We were not at all surprised to find that the existing structure of the college system allows the university to lay claim to rich traditions of serving many different student populations: Douglass College, with its historic commitment to women’s education and, more recently, its programs for women’s leadership; Livingston College, with its commitment to equal opportunity; University College, with its commitment to serving adult students; Cook College, with its prominence in agricultural and environmental sciences and its commitment to the land-grant mission of the university; and Rutgers College, with its long history of commitment to the highest quality liberal arts education. The Task Force recognized the considerable accomplishments of the faculty, staff, and students who have devoted their energies to the colleges over the 25 years since reorganization, and we asked ourselves how we might preserve these traditions within change. For example: now that women comprise nearly 52 percent of the undergraduate population in New Brunswick/Piscataway, is it not possible, even imperative, to open to all Rutgers women the extraordinarily successful programs, many under the umbrella of the Institute for Women’s Leadership, that have been created for women on the

Douglass campus? Given that interdisciplinary programs have proliferated across all the campuses, from the Division of Life Sciences to the Department of Women's and Gender Studies and the Program in Middle Eastern Studies, is it not possible to produce a structure that encourages all students to pursue interdisciplinary work?

Far from finding structures in place that encourage such movement between colleges and between departments, what the committee found is a baffling array of requirements that prevent our students from taking full advantage of the opportunities here. We found as well a structure that serves to discourage faculty and student interactions, limiting contact between students and faculty in all areas of undergraduate education except those located in the major. And finally we found a structure that has had the unfortunate effect of generating a sense—now enshrined as fact—that a student is a better student because of the college of admission rather than because of the intellectual curiosity and accomplishment the student has brought to academic work in all of our classrooms, laboratories, and libraries.

Members of the Task Force who arrived at Rutgers since 1980 testified powerfully about the negative effects of the current structural arrangements, which they see as working together to generate the sense of disconnection they feel beyond their classrooms and offices. These faculty members spoke of the mystifications that characterize their interactions with the various colleges and their requirements, and their amazement upon learning that faculty here are not charged with responsibility for undergraduate admissions standards, general education requirements, and graduation requirements. The structure here builds in disconnection and disengagement with student life beyond the classroom.

Our challenge from the beginning has been to look beyond what we were and beyond what we are—and to break out of the confinements of our past, as strong and worthy as it is. We have imagined what undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway might be if we could redesign it afresh, working together as one community. And so, in the report that follows, we have set out to transform the living, learning, and administrative structures that shape the undergraduate experience at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. We have made recommendations that we believe will create a greater sense of connection to the university and a greater sense of faculty, student, staff, and administrative engagement across boundaries—whether those boundaries are between campuses, between the curriculum and the extracurricular, or between the major and general education. Our collective work on the curriculum, on the student experience, on admissions and recruitment, on campus planning and facilities, and on the structure of undergraduate education aims to provide the university community with a set of recommendations that will open up the rich array of opportunities in New Brunswick/Piscataway for our undergraduates and will reengage us all—students, faculty, staff, and administrators—in the work of undergraduate education.

### **The Task Force Process**

The Task Force has met many times since it received its charge from President Richard L. McCormick and Executive Vice President Philip Furmanski in April 2004. After reviewing and discussing the three earlier reports that focused on the undergraduate experience in Rutgers–New

Brunswick/Piscataway, the reports from Harvard, Michigan, North Carolina, Yale, and Berkeley, and the Rutgers Constituency Research Project Report, the Task Force divided into five working groups: Curriculum, Student Experience, Admissions and Recruitment, Campus Planning and Facilities, and Structure. Each working group added additional faculty, staff, and students not already serving on the larger Task Force in order to take advantage of the vast network of experiences available in New Brunswick/Piscataway for these discussions. Over 75 faculty, students, staff, and administrators participated in these working groups.

The working groups met throughout the year, beginning in summer 2004, and concluded their discussions and the reports that reflect those discussions in May 2005. (Following each section of this report is a summary of working group meetings.) During the year, the groups met with many students, from all campuses, and several times with student government leaders. The Steering Committee, made up of the chairs of the working groups, met three times with deans and chairs from throughout New Brunswick/Piscataway at the Leadership Breakfasts; and met with the President's Council, with his Administrative Council, and with many members of the Boards of Governors and Trustees. All sessions were devoted to reports of the deliberations that were occurring campuswide about the work of the Task Force.

The entire Task Force reviewed and discussed these reports in June 2005. We gave particular attention to Dean Carmen Twillie Ambar of Douglass College, who presented a report recommending retaining Douglass as a college for women while also making it a campus for all students in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Task Force members considered these recommendations thoughtfully, but in the end agreed to send forward the report as presented here. At the same time, all of us believe that the university must maintain its vigorous commitment to women's education and women's leadership by strongly supporting, and indeed strengthening, for the benefit of all women in New Brunswick/Piscataway, the programs that have proved so successful at Douglass. The leadership programs offered by the Institute for Women's Leadership have made a signal difference in the lives of many women students; and any changes must ensure the continued impact of these programs. We also want to emphasize here that any changes proposed in this report are intended to support the rich diversity of our students. Their diversity in gender, race, ethnicity, and age is one of our strengths. Indeed, our unity resides in these diversities.

We thus place the following pages before the Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway community with the belief that they represent the vision of a unified, reengaged community that we have been developing throughout a year of discussions among faculty, students, administrators, and staff. We do not all agree with every recommendation, nor with every analysis of the problems. But we join together in our conviction that this report will provide the ground for the provocative and necessary discussions that will reenergize our commitment to undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, and lay the foundations for meaningful reconnections of faculty and students.

Our aim has been to bring our community together around the core values of Rutgers as a public research university; to articulate an idea of this university as one informed by faculty-student connections and by core spaces—academic and physical—around which and in which faculty, students, and staff congregate. We have never pursued conformity or homogeneity in our vision of a unified Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. Rather, we have been determined to open

opportunities to students, and so have generated recommendations that are meant to ensure that our students leave Rutgers prepared for careers in a global economy and prepared to be involved citizens who live and work in a diverse democracy. We want our students to leave Rutgers with a sense of what lies at the core of an institution that fosters research in biochemistry, mathematics, sociology, psychology, history, literary study, the performing arts, criminal justice, the food sciences; and we want, as well, for our students to graduate with a profound awareness of the ways the creation of new knowledge at this research university has informed their own undergraduate work. We have sought to imagine reforms, in sum, that will put in place a new design for undergraduate learning at Rutgers, one that is founded upon the principle that the mission of a public research university is to provide a richly diverse and intellectually curious student population with access to the widest array of learning opportunities offered by an engaged and committed faculty.

### ***Organization, Discussion, Implementation***

*The report begins with our statement of the Principle of a Rutgers Undergraduate Education, then moves to Curriculum, and ends with Implementation. Following the discussion of Curriculum, we have placed a section on Learning Communities (suggested by most of our working groups) because we see these communities as providing a bridge between the classroom experiences of undergraduates and the amazing array of possibilities available to them on our campuses. Following the discussion of Structure, we discuss faculty and student responsibilities, the sine qua non of necessary fundamental cultural change. (Current students should know that no changes proposed will affect their progress toward their degrees; changes affect only students admitted after new requirements are adopted.)*

Throughout these pages there are repetitions of ideas, problems, and recommendations. We chose to retain these repetitions in this final draft because their presence represents the consensus the working groups developed, pursuing their charges separately, about the issues that prevent undergraduates and faculty from working together productively as members of a research community.

We ask the community to keep in mind that this document is a report from a faculty-student-staff Task Force. It is intended to bring us together around the issue of how to tap for undergraduates Rutgers' resources as a great public research university. But first, it is intended to provoke discussion. Our goal is that the community of faculty, students, alumni, administrators, and staff use this report and the coming discussions of it to build a plan for transforming undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.



# PRINCIPLE OF A RUTGERS UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

## Preamble

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is a public research university dedicated to providing broad access to higher education in a learning environment where all students are encouraged to excel. It is the collective responsibility of students, faculty, staff, and university administrators to work together to create and maintain a learning environment that reflects this dual commitment to access and academic excellence.

## Fundamental Principle

The primary benefits to undergraduates attending a public research university are the opportunity to learn from a faculty whose teaching is informed by ongoing research and the opportunity to live, study, and work in a large, diverse, and open community. Undergraduate education at Rutgers should be organized around academic inquiry grounded in active research in the humanities, the sciences, and the social sciences, and in the professional schools; and should take place in an intellectual atmosphere that connects academic inquiry to concerns that reach beyond the university community.

## Corollaries

- It is the responsibility of our students to commit themselves both to develop the habits of mind necessary to become life-long learners and to adhere to the standards that make serious academic inquiry possible: clarity in written and spoken expression, academic integrity, self-discipline, intellectual risk-taking, and adopting a critical stance toward received knowledge.
- It is the responsibility of our faculty to model and to foster in our undergraduates the habits of mind and action that constitute the heart of the work of teaching and research: creativity, curiosity, openness to alternative points of view, desire for the mastery of a subject area, critical insight, ethical conduct, perseverance, and a willingness to revise views on the basis of new evidence.
- It is the responsibility of our staff to provide in concert with faculty a student-centered, service-oriented learning environment, one that ensures students have: ready access to reliable information about university resources, cocurricular activities that enhance the intellectual life of their community, appropriate leadership experiences that prepare them to be active members of their communities beyond the campus, and support services that allow them to realize their intellectual potential.
- It is the responsibility of our administration to provide the university community with the organization and resources required to promote a shared culture of commitment to excellence in all aspects of undergraduate education: institutional structures that assist faculty and students in achieving their highest educational aspirations, an incentive system that encourages faculty participation in undergraduate education, academic support services that enhance learning, and physical facilities that are suited to a wide range of teaching needs.





# 1 | THE CURRICULUM AND RUTGERS UNDERGRADUATES

The Working Group on Curriculum spent fall 2004 studying recent efforts to reform undergraduate education at universities across the nation and more local efforts to reform undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway over the past 20 years. Having concluded its fall meetings with a survey of the core distribution requirements at Association of American Universities institutions, the Working Group divided up into two subcommittees. The first took on the task of considering the core distribution requirements and the second considered the curricular needs of “special student populations,” i.e., honors students, Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) students, nontraditional-age students, part-time students, and transfer students. The two-part report that arose from these deliberations follows.

## **Part I: Recommendations for a Core Curriculum**

### **I. Rethinking the Form and Function of the Core Distribution Requirements**

Our charge has been to draft a proposal for reconceiving both the form and the function of the undergraduate core distribution requirements. Mindful of the fact that previous efforts to revise the undergraduate curriculum at the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus have faltered for lack of an administrative structure to carry out recommendations and for lack of a governance structure that would allow the faculty as a whole to participate in deliberations about curricular reform, we have chosen to fulfill our charge by providing a sketch of a revised curriculum, rather than a fully elaborated blueprint for change. Because we believe that no true curricular reform can be realized without the broad participation of the faculty in the revision and implementation processes, we have crafted our proposal with the following goals in mind:

- The proposal is meant to serve as a starting point for a campuswide discussion of the rationale for undergraduate core distribution requirements.
- The proposal is meant to promote campuswide reflection both on the content and on the pedagogical goals of the undergraduate core distribution requirements.
- The proposal is meant to provide the newly enhanced vice president for undergraduate education with a model for how the undergraduate core distribution requirements might be reconceived.

### **II. Defining the Problems with the Current Systems for Handling Core Distribution Requirements**

The core distribution requirements subcommittee (hereafter, “the subcommittee”) surveyed the core requirements at other Association of American Universities institutions to establish a benchmark for assessing the current versions of the core distribution requirements in New Brunswick/Piscataway as represented by the Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway Undergraduate Catalog. In turning its attention to this catalog, the subcommittee thought about

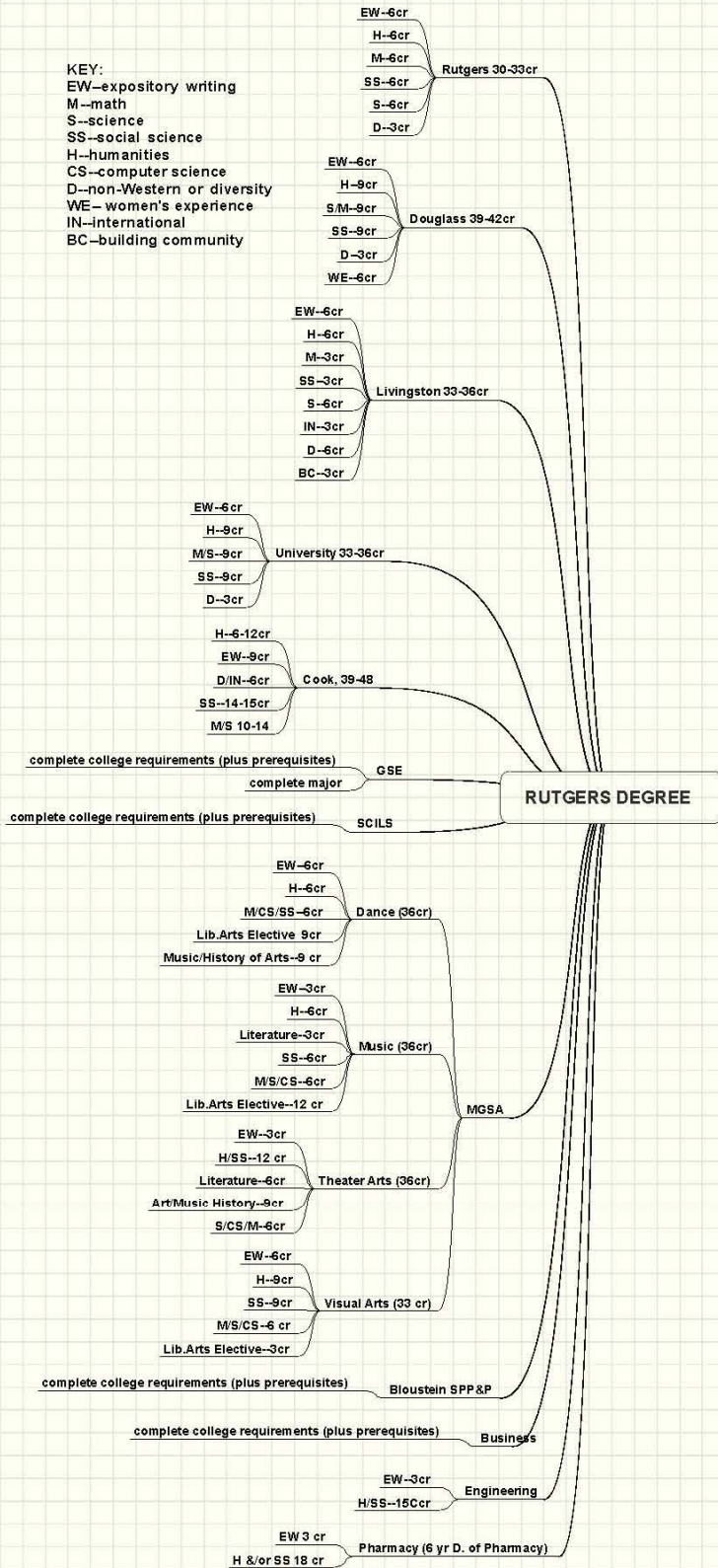
how the current versions of the core distribution requirements appear to prospective students, to current students, to new faculty, and to experienced faculty. While acknowledging that a great deal of serious and committed thought has gone into constructing these requirements over the years, the subcommittee felt compelled, nevertheless, to consider whether or not the current versions of the core distribution requirements provide a compelling argument for students to come to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway or for faculty to commit themselves to undergraduate education outside the major. We wanted to know as well if the core distribution requirements provided students with the kind of signature learning experiences that pave the way for future academic success.

In reviewing the many different versions of the core distribution requirements at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway (see the chart on the following page), the members of the subcommittee were struck by a number of shortcomings in the current system:

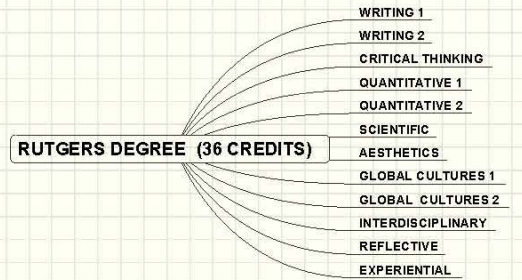
- There are inconsistencies in the core distribution requirements across the colleges, inconsistencies that needlessly confuse faculty and students alike, inconsistencies that work against creating a shared set of learning experiences for the student body. For example, Douglass College requires a demonstrated proficiency in a language other than English to the intermediate level; Rutgers College recommends proficiency; University College requires the equivalent of two units of secondary school work in a foreign language; and Livingston College makes no mention of foreign languages in its degree requirements.
- Taken college by college, the core distribution requirements appear generic and thus fail to distinguish the colleges from each other and to distinguish Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway from its peer institutions. While Livingston and Douglass Colleges do have distinctive mission courses as part of their core distribution requirements, there is, as one would expect, considerable overlap between Livingston’s Core Distribution Requirements, Douglass’s Liberal Arts Requirements, Rutgers College’s General Education Requirements, and University College’s Liberal Arts and Sciences Distribution Requirements.
- Taken college by college, the core distribution requirements appear most centrally concerned with providing a mechanism for getting students to sample a range of courses from across the disciplines. In each of the four main liberal arts colleges, students are required, as one would expect, to take a certain number of courses in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities, and they are accorded varying degrees of freedom in selecting which courses to take in these areas. What is required, in short, is that the students demonstrate that they have taken a distribution of courses. In its weakest form, this appears to require distribution for distribution’s sake.
- The core distribution requirements do not appear to articulate a distinctive vision of undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway or to have any obvious connection to the work of a major research university. While the subcommittee is well aware that there are many current courses that fulfill the core distribution requirements that have been carefully designed to provide the highest level of instruction, the subcommittee notes that the distribution requirements in themselves do not promote or require engaged pedagogical practice. Indeed, because the distribution requirements focus almost exclusively on the delivery of introductory

**CURRENT CURRICULUM**

**KEY:**  
 EW-expository writing  
 M-math  
 S-science  
 SS-social science  
 H-humanities  
 CS-computer science  
 D-non-Western or diversity  
 WE-women's experience  
 IN-international  
 BC-building community



**PROPOSED RUTGERS CORE**



NB: These requirements are proposed for all students regardless of major

content, the distribution requirements, as currently conceived, do not provide prospective or current students with an argument for what is to be gained from encountering that introductory content at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway rather than at some other college or university. That the majority of the subcommittee members, all of whom have been at the university for at least eight years, were unfamiliar with these requirements and unaware of the complexities produced by the current set of overlapping systems was itself seen to be part of a larger, more problematic dynamic, namely:

- The current highly baroque system provides one further disincentive for faculty engagement in the project of general undergraduate education.

With the problems so defined, the subcommittee concluded that the time was ripe for the university community in New Brunswick/Piscataway to reconsider both the form and function of the undergraduate distribution requirements.

### **III. Addressing the Problems: Our Recommendations**

***Recommendation 1:*** Develop one set of core distribution requirements for all undergraduates in New Brunswick/Piscataway.

In considering how best to address the problems outlined above, the subcommittee focused first on resolving the difficulties created by the current system of having multiple, overlapping, conflicting sets of core distribution requirements. It is the recommendation of the subcommittee that Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway have *one* set of core distribution requirements for all undergraduates. (The challenges of implementing this recommendation will be addressed later in this document.)

***Recommendation 2:*** Shift the emphasis in the distribution requirements from *distributing* student enrollments across disciplines to engendering engagement with the *core* mission of a research university.

While the subcommittee is aware of the practical considerations that have gone into designing multiple sets of distribution requirements that direct students to take a sampling of courses offered by departments across the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus, it is our conclusion that the current models do not actively and overtly seek to provide students with the range of intellectual experiences that lie at the core of the research university. In recommending that the emphasis in the core distribution requirements be shifted from distributing students across the disciplines to introducing students to the university’s core mission, the subcommittee quickly found itself faced with the daunting task of succinctly defining the intellectual work that lies at the core of an institution that seeks to foster the development of insight and understanding across the full range of human thought, experience, and emotion. What is it that lies at the core of an institution that fosters research in biochemistry, mathematics, sociology, psychology, history, literary study, the performance arts, criminal justice, and the food sciences?

***Recommendation 3:*** Reconceive the core distribution requirements as extending horizontally and vertically throughout the undergraduate curriculum.

There is no one intellectual act that lies at the heart of the university, no single unifying principle that can be designated as residing at the university's core. Indeed, what has made the university one of human culture's greatest achievements is its ability to house multiple, conflicting, contestatory ways of knowing, simultaneously fostering research into the full range of human expression and experience, the very building blocks of the material world, and the dimensions and fate of the universe—all projects that, by their very definition, take place at the very edge of human understanding.

While *any* set of distribution requirements can succeed at giving students a sense of the many different kinds of expertise that are to be found at a university, the subcommittee recommends a more ambitious goal for this part of the undergraduate learning experience: we recommend reconceiving the core distribution requirements as having two distinct, but interrelated functions. During the first two years, the core distribution requirements should provide undergraduates with a solid foundation in the fundamental areas that make academic success and academic research possible: writing, reasoning and information competence, quantitative thinking, and scientific inquiry. This is the core's horizontal dimension.

The core distribution requirements should also be designed to have a vertical dimension extending from the first year of study until graduation because what lies at the core of university work is the development of increasingly nuanced levels of understanding. So reconceived, the core is not something one finishes off during the first two years of study; the core remains central to one's course of study throughout the undergraduate experience.

***Recommendation 4:*** Recognize that the students' experience of the core distribution requirements at a research university will differ, of necessity, from the students' experience of those requirements at a small liberal arts college.

In crafting our recommendation for the Rutgers Core, the subcommittee has been driven by this question: what kind of intellectual experiences should a student have while pursuing a degree at a research university? There are some intellectual experiences we would like all of our students to have that don't arise organically at a research university, e.g., regular work in small classes and the opportunity to receive sustained mentoring from the faculty. Respecting the differences that distinguish a liberal arts college from a research university, we have sought to specify core distribution requirements that capitalize on what a research university is capable of offering to all of its undergraduates. Thus, while it has been tempting throughout the planning process to insist that *all* students take a course in department X or that *all* students know about the intellectual achievements in field Y, the subcommittee has proceeded with its deliberations on the assumption that the primary function of the core distribution requirements is to provide students with a broad array of intellectual experiences that will best prepare them for academic and future success. While we recognize that this shift in emphasis is jarring, we also note that the cognitive disturbance this causes is rather quickly resolved by familiarizing oneself with the distribution systems currently in place, which do not have provisions that ensure that all students master a given set of facts or great ideas or that they take anything beyond an introductory course in any one department.

**Recommendation 5:** Require that all students admitted to the proposed Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences have a minor as well as a major field of study. (In the event that the Task Force’s recommendation on structure is not approved, require all students admitted to the liberal arts colleges to have a minor as well as a major field of study.)

By giving the core distribution requirements a vertical component and allowing for the possibility that some of these requirements may be fulfilled within any given student’s major area of study, the subcommittee has generated a model that frees up sufficient space in a student’s schedule to accommodate both a major and a minor area of study. The subcommittee recommends, therefore, that a major and minor area of study be required of all students enrolled in the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences. This requirement will benefit all students by providing the opportunity to work in depth in more than one academic area.

Whether a student’s selected major and minor areas of study are closely aligned or disparate in nature will depend upon each student’s particular needs and interests. The subcommittee notes that when major and minor fields are closely aligned, the same courses may be required for both. The decision on whether or not to allow courses to be double-counted toward both a major and minor should be left to the vice president for undergraduate education’s standing Curriculum Committee.

#### **IV. Reimagining the Form and Function of Distribution Requirements: A Proposal for the Rutgers Core**

The Rutgers Core is meant to serve the following purposes:

- Provide all Rutgers undergraduates in New Brunswick/Piscataway with the same set of core distribution requirements, creating a signature undergraduate experience that will assist in building community and in recruiting the best students to the university.
- During the first two years of undergraduate study, provide undergraduates with a solid foundation in the fundamental areas that make academic success and academic research possible—writing, reasoning and information competence, quantitative thinking, and scientific inquiry.
- Throughout the undergraduate experience, provide undergraduates with opportunities to encounter multiple modes of thinking, knowing, and understanding as preparation for engaging with multidimensional, multimodal, multivariable real-world problems. The vertical component of the Rutgers Core offers students the opportunity to work either inside or outside their major area of study on aesthetics, global cultures, and interdisciplinary projects; it also gives students the opportunity to engage in experiential learning and in the kind of self-reflection that lies at the heart of any ethical practice. In this way, the Rutgers Core serves to complement the work students pursue in the major, providing them with multiple opportunities to reflect on, to contextualize, and even to perfect the very notion of disciplinary expertise.

In sum, the function of the Rutgers Core is to introduce students not to *the* life of the mind, but to the many possible *lives* of the mind that are available at a research university. (For a visual image of the proposed Rutgers Core, see the chart appearing earlier in this chapter.)

## **V. The Rutgers Core Distribution Requirements Defined: One Model for Creating a Central Educational Experience Shared by All Undergraduates**

### **1. The Foundation: Writing, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Thinking, Scientific Inquiry (18 credits in all)**

#### **A. Writing (6 credits)**

*Rationale:* What does it mean to write well at the university level? The two required Rutgers Core writing courses seek to introduce students to the very notion of intellectual community that makes academic research possible. To achieve this goal, the required writing courses train students to think analytically and to synthesize information and ideas culled from multiple sources, so that students are prepared to produce writing that is not only formally correct, but that also engages with other writers, researchers, and thinkers in order to generate a new insight or understanding worthy of expression.

#### *Sample Courses, Sample Content*

**W101:** W101 provides all entering students with training in how to read and respond to extended works of prose. Students write and revise six papers on large, open-ended problems, such as the role of religion in a secular society, the changing nature of work in the age of technology, and the future of democracy in the wake of globalization. Over the course of the semester, students learn to use textual evidence appropriately; generate productive questions in response to the assigned readings; anticipate objections and provide counter-examples; outline, draft, and revise; participate in peer review; test conclusions; and develop nuanced arguments, as a result of having analyzed and synthesized information provided from disparate sources. The W101 course is the only course in the Rutgers Core that is provided by a single entity—the Rutgers Writing Program.

**Writing in a Discipline:** The goal of the second required writing course is to provide undergraduates with discipline-specific writing instruction, thereby introducing prospective majors to the writing protocols most prized in their chosen area of concentration. Writing in a Discipline courses, thus, would be offered by departments across the campus. Students considering majoring in one of the sciences might enroll in a W-designated course that provides instruction in the production of lab reports; students considering majoring in business might enroll in a W-designated course that focuses on reporting on financial research; and students interested in history might enroll in a W-designated course that provides training in archival research.

**To qualify as a writing-intensive course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement,** the course in question must require multiple drafts of assigned papers. This requirement is meant to ensure that the pedagogical focus of the writing-intensive courses remains squarely on the students' writing.

## **B. Critical Thinking (3 credits)**

*Rationale:* The research enterprise depends on the collection, assessment, and interpretation of information. Today's technology has revolutionized the research process by easing access to information and by accelerating the accumulation and exchange of information. However, technology is less helpful in assessing the quality or reliability of information, or in drawing conclusions from it. The Rutgers Core Critical Thinking requirement is designed to prepare students to work in an information-rich environment. In Critical Thinking courses, students hone their ability to find reliable and useful information, and they receive training in how to make reasoned arguments from the evidence they have collected. We jointly identify these complementary activities as *Critical Thinking* and we see mastery of both activities as essential preparation for academic success and for future civic engagement.

### *Sample Courses, Sample Content*

Critical Thinking courses provide training in both *reasoning* and *information competence*. *Reasoning* denotes explicit discussions of such basic elements of logic as conjunction (“and”), disjunction (“or”), negation (“not”), syllogisms, converses, inverses, and contrapositives. *Information competence* addresses identifying, finding, understanding, evaluating, and using information. Students would learn how to evaluate information sources for reliability and possible bias, and then apply fundamental logic and analysis to information to achieve understanding. Information technology skills—such as making the most efficient and thorough use of an Internet search engine—would be taught in Critical Thinking courses but would not be their sole focus. The reasoning component of the Critical Thinking requirement would not need to be as extensive as a philosophy department logic course; however, an explicit module on the basics of logic should be included. To ensure that students become fluent in making a wide variety of concise logical arguments, reasoning assignments should include multiple, relatively short exercises, although Critical Thinking courses might also include a long paper. Information competence assignments should make extensive use of library, World Wide Web, and other information sources and include at least one research project that requires students to integrate information presented in diverse formats from multiple sources into a single work.

Due to the fundamental nature of the skills involved, Critical Thinking courses could be offered by any number of departments and could focus on a variety of different topics, such as economics, evolutionary biology, psychology, history, or social policy, as long as sufficient time was allocated for covering basic information and reasoning skills. Discipline inquiry or research methods courses could also be adapted to fulfill this requirement.

**To qualify as a Critical Thinking course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement**, a course must address both reasoning and information competence. A Critical Thinking course reinforces the basic building blocks of logic and argument, while addressing the six major components of information competence: framing the research question, accessing sources, evaluating sources, evaluating content, using information for a specific purpose, and understanding the economic, legal, and social issues affecting the use of information.



**Alternatives:** At the cost of some complexity, the possibility of meeting the information competence and reasoning portions of the requirement in separate courses could also be considered.

### **C. Quantitative Thinking (6 credits)**

*Rationale:* It would be hard to overstate the importance of mathematics to contemporary society. Mathematics is the international language of science; major policy and life decisions are made on the basis of statistical information and mathematical projections. Despite this importance, for many students, mathematics is nothing more than the rote application of formulas to previously designated problem sets. Quantitative Thinking courses are designed to help students connect mathematical operations to the real world of decision making. To this end, Quantitative Thinking courses provide training in collecting and analyzing numerical data; constructing mathematical models of real systems or problems; engaging in formal, deductive, probabilistic reasoning; and using reasoning in practical problem solving, analysis, and critical evaluation.

#### *Sample Courses, Sample Content*

Quantitative Thinking courses may use numerical, quantifiable, empirical techniques, as in entry-level courses currently offered in departments and programs such as biology, chemistry, computer science, physics, engineering, business, economics and other social science courses that contain significant mathematical or statistical components. Quantitative Thinking courses may also include model building and problem-solving skills. Quantitative Thinking courses may even focus on content construction that conveys numerical information through abstract representations such as programming languages, symbols, and/or graphs (as is the case, for example, in symbolic logic courses offered in philosophy). Required courses in mathematics and statistics would be considered quantitative courses if they included practical problem solving. Whatever department is offering the course, the overarching goal of the Rutgers Core distribution requirement in Quantitative Thinking is to ensure that our students are able to reason quantitatively and that they are able to use those reasoning skills to solve practical problems.

**To qualify as a Quantitative Thinking course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement,** a course must have either quantitative (numerical, geometric) or formal (deductive, probabilistic) reasoning as its primary focus; it must also make significant use of quantitative reasoning in practical problem solving, critical evaluation, or statistical analysis.

### **D. Scientific Inquiry (3 credits)**

*Rationale:* The physical world is full of order and patterns. It has been the goal of science to discover these patterns through observations and experiments and to create from these relationships a network of understanding of the world and natural phenomena. This process of scientific inquiry is basic for gathering, interpreting, and evaluating evidence to explain and understand the world around us and to use this process to apply, predict, and test this knowledge. Scientific inquiry courses help students develop an appreciation for the scientific method and use observations and models to lead to abstract conceptualization of natural phenomena.

*Sample Courses, Sample Content*

Scientific Inquiry courses develop students' understanding of the natural world through the scientific way of understanding, using systematic observation and experimentation to develop the theories central to the discipline and to test the hypotheses supporting these theories. In Scientific Inquiry courses there must be some provision for active learning, such as hands-on experience with the collection of empirical data and the theoretical analysis of the data, so that students can derive explanations for processes that occur in the natural world. Many courses already exist at Rutgers that provide students with access to the process of scientific inquiry:

- Moving Bodies 01:119:148. In this course students understand how bodies function through an examination of the process of movement.
- Impact of Chemistry 01:160:127. A goal of this course is to create an informed citizenry capable of appreciating science and of critically analyzing complex issues that involve science, particularly chemistry.
- Great Ideas That Changed Physics and the World 01:750:296. This course presents major discoveries in physics and explores the ways in which those discoveries have influenced significant historical, political, and economic events. The course also shows how knowledge of important physical principles can assist us today in making decisions good both for ourselves and for society.
- Introductory-Level Science Courses. Introductory-level science courses that include systematic observation and experimentation to develop and test hypotheses would satisfy this requirement.

**To qualify as a Scientific Inquiry course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement**, a course must engage students in the conceptualization of science as a process rather than as an accumulation of facts. The students must become familiar with basic concepts, principles, and skills within a discipline, but more importantly, they must engage in the process actively by making and analyzing observations, defining and testing hypotheses, designing and doing experiments, collecting and analyzing data, or developing and using models.

**2. The Vertical Core: Aesthetics, Global Cultures, Interdisciplinary/Multi-perspectival Approaches, Reflective Thinking, Experiential Learning (18 credits in all)**

**A. Aesthetics (3 credits)**

*Rationale:* Every human culture has developed aesthetic practices. Along with our preoccupations with food, clothing and shelter, tools and exchange, explorations and relationships, we have had an abiding interest in representation, magic, play, and beauty. We have long and varied traditions of making two- and three-dimensional visual representations; of finding/creating sounds outside of voice, and of making patterns of sounds; of using the human body to express a full range of feelings; and of using language to paint pictures metaphorically, to tell stories, and to express feelings. Aesthetic practices employ resources from the material world and reconfigure the shape of the quotidian—and they do so for no direct, visible, practical purpose. Aesthetic practices present us with a paradox—purposeless purpose. They seek to nurture, to mirror, to celebrate, to disturb, to reflect, and—like all other life forms—to replicate.

Aesthetic objects and performances invite us into an alternative world partly to enable us to see the more regular world we live in—difference is the path by which we see. The binocular vision we enjoy physiologically allows us to see in three dimensions; the metaphoric is another kind of binocular vision which allows us “to see” more complex dimensions in our lived lives. The Rutgers Core distribution requirement in aesthetics is designed to help students to experience, see, and reflect on some of the various shapes that beauty can take.

*Sample Courses, Sample Content*

Consistent with the other dimensions of the Rutgers Core, courses that fulfill the Aesthetics requirement must engage the students beyond the level of recognizing and identifying. Specifically, Aesthetics courses are designed to help students become engaged in and with primary aesthetic artifacts—poems, paintings, string quartets—and then also to study the very material of the aesthetic experience—the words, colors, and sounds that make the experience possible. Courses that fulfill this requirement may attend to a historical range of aesthetic production or a thematic range, the aesthetic production of a singular culture or multiple cultures. Such courses may have any number of theoretical approaches to the aesthetic. Courses offered in art history, history, English, comparative literatures, philosophy, music, dance, or any of the foreign language courses that focus specifically on the aesthetic experience would fulfill this requirement.

**To qualify as an Aesthetics course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement, a course must be designed so that students have ample opportunity to engage with and then assess aesthetic artifacts.**

**B. Global Cultures (6 credits)**

*Rationale:* The Rutgers Core requirement in Global Cultures is designed to train students to think in and about a diversified world, one where cultural variety and difference exist both within and beyond the borders of the United States. In order to assist students in integrating their intellectual, professional, and personal lives into the global marketplace, we propose requiring both an introductory course and a capstone course (to be taken in the last three semesters). Students are encouraged to take courses that promote an appreciation of the world through an awareness of different relations, systems, and networks of cultural exchange. Students are expected to experience the Global Cultures courses as a “surprise of otherness,” with that otherness manifesting itself as cultural, national, or racial difference. This requirement can be fulfilled in traditional disciplines—such as political science, history, foreign literatures, or anthropology—or in interdisciplinary courses that look at transnational perspectives.

*Sample Courses, Sample Content*

Courses that fulfill the Global Cultures requirement would take up one of the following “sources of tension” in the context of global/internationalist debate: moral tensions, racial tensions, political tensions, cultural tensions, social tensions, religious tensions, environmental tensions, or linguistic tensions. The introductory and the capstone courses are to be comparative in nature, looking at both the *object* of study as well as *method* of inquiry as points of conversation about

culturally inflected modes of thinking and knowing. We imagine that introductory and advanced foreign literature courses could be designed to fulfill this requirement.

In order for the Global Cultures requirement to function as more than a mandatory encounter with multiculturalism, students in introductory-level Global Cultures courses are to be introduced to the importance of global studies so that they, in turn, can take the initiative in diversifying their future course work to include a broad-based sampling of courses that cover the gamut of national, global, international, environmental, and multi-perspectival topics. At the capstone level, Global Cultures courses are meant to provide students with the opportunity to situate a central problem or concern within their major area of study in a global/international context. Such courses might focus on the human genome project, international trade, the history of U.S. foreign relations, world Anglophone literatures, or cross-cultural experiences of exclusion and collaboration.

**To qualify as a Global Cultures course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement**, a course must help students conceive of their own cultural location as one of many that relates in complicated ways to other world views. Global Cultures courses explore how forms of difference—e.g., cultural, national, ethnic, geographic, environmental, religious, among others—constitute what might be understood as “otherness.”

### **C. Interdisciplinary/Multi-perspectival Approaches (3 credits)**

*Rationale:* It is essential that students receive training in how to connect and think across the various components of their educational experience, so that they will be prepared to provide the kind of complex, multifaceted solutions our increasingly complex, globalized society requires. To this end, the Interdisciplinary/Multi-perspectival Approaches requirement is designed to ensure that students receive training in thinking across the disciplines, so that they, in turn, will be better prepared to respond to the complexity and the fuzziness of real-world problems and issues.

#### *Sample Courses, Sample Content*

In an ideal world, all Interdisciplinary/Multi-perspectival Approaches courses would be team-taught by instructors with different disciplinary backgrounds. Other Interdisciplinary/Multi-perspectival Approaches courses will have a modular design, with a significant part of these courses taught by a professor or a series of professors outside the primary professor’s discipline. And finally, a less desirable, but more practical solution is to provide Interdisciplinary/Multi-perspectival Approaches courses taught by individual professors: in this format, as in the team-taught and the modular design options, the professor must include content from at least two different disciplines and require students to synthesize information from multiple disciplines to address real-world problems. The following are examples of courses that would fulfill the Interdisciplinary/Multi-perspectival Approaches requirement:

- Environment. Environmental courses lend themselves naturally to an interdisciplinary approach. For example, there are presently courses related to climate change in at least five different departments at Rutgers (geography, geological sciences, physics,

environmental science, and marine science). These courses introduce students to connections between the natural sciences (chemistry, physics, biology, geology, meteorology, and oceanography) and the social sciences (political science, economics, and sociology).

- **Feminism, Policy, and the Poor.** This course examines why it is that women constitute almost 70 percent of the world's 1.3 billion poor, drawing on research in history, political science, economics, and literature.

We can imagine, as well, courses on globalization, stem-cell research, HIV/AIDS, and environmental sustainability, that would meet this requirement, as well as courses on the construction of a major project (dam, electrical grid, bridge, or water supply system) that would bring together engineers, social scientists, and humanists to provide a multi-perspectival assessment of the project's impact and value.

**To qualify as an Interdisciplinary/Multi-perspectival Approaches course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement,** a course must combine components of two or more disciplines. Following Helga Nowotny's discussion of the emergence of a "transdisciplinary" mode of knowledge production, we believe that interdisciplinary courses should seek to "provide for an integration of perspectives in the identification, formulation, and resolution of what has been defined as a shared problem."<sup>1</sup> A student could fulfill the requirement by doing an interdisciplinary research project for which there would be co-advisers from at least two different departments.

#### **D. Reflective Thinking (3 credits)**

*Rationale:* Most of undergraduate education is focused on content, but there is a moment in every research project when it becomes necessary to focus on the ways we learn, the ways we "make" knowledge. The Rutgers Core requirement in Reflective Thinking is meant to prepare students for this second order of studying—for the moment when we study how we study and think about how we think. In these courses, students will be invited not only to think about how we examine what we examine, they will also be asked to reflect on the very institutions in which we do our work. Such reflection provides the foundation for the constitution of an ethics of practice.

#### *Sample Courses, Sample Content*

Because ethical thinking, civic engagement, professional development, and academic research are founded on self-study, it is essential that students receive training in the protocols of reflective thinking. Such training might occur as part of a college mission course, e.g., Douglass College's "Shaping a Life," or courses that are connected to the Rutgers Citizenship and Service Education (CASE) program. It might also be found in courses offered in sociology, psychology, communication, literary and cultural studies, engineering, biology, political science, history,

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<sup>1</sup> Helga Nowotny, "The Potential of Transdisciplinarity," <http://www.interdisciplines.org/interdisciplinarity/papers/5/language/en>.

history of science, education, anthropology, gender studies, ethnic studies, and philosophy, to name a few. Research and writing assignments in courses that meet the Rutgers Core requirement in Reflective Thinking would invite students to engage in developing and carrying out some form of self-study appropriate to the given context. We imagine the kinds of Reflective Thinking courses would vary widely in their thematic content—from courses in writing autobiography, to courses that study subjective approaches to culture, to courses on the history of science, to courses in ethics or cybernetics. What connects courses that fulfill the Reflective Thinking requirement is the activity of studying the role of self-consciousness in development and/or putting into practice the systematic self-study of micro- or macro-, textual, personal, or institutional systems.

**To qualify as a Reflective Thinking course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement,** a course must require that students engage in reading both theoretical and case-based materials which focus on the particular discipline in question, so that the students come to see general changes in the discipline's approach over time as well as specific cases of disciplinary paradigm shifts.

### **E. Experiential Learning (3 credits)**

*Rationale:* No student's university education would be complete without the opportunity to engage in the kind of learning that emerges directly from and is grounded in experience. This kind of learning flourishes in many different places on the university campus: in the studio and performing arts; in the Study Abroad program; in internships; in the CASE program; in the cooperative education program. In all Rutgers Core Experiential Learning courses, the learning is inseparable from the doing; and students are encouraged to generate final projects that both emerge from and reflect their mastery of the experiential register that is the given course's focus.

#### *Sample Courses, Sample Content*

Experiential Learning courses immerse students in the core activity of a discipline. In the humanities, such immersion might take the form of drafting a play and then staging a performance; it might also take the form of spending a research-intensive semester in the Alexander Library's rare book collection generating a study of medieval texts. In the social sciences, such immersion might take the form of a CASE course on the political process that involves frequent trips to the State House in Trenton; it might involve an internship at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research; it might involve a summer spent working with the anthropology department at its archaeological site in Kenya. In the sciences, this might involve a senior seminar that highlights the roles that creativity and imagination play in the conceptualization and design of experiments; it might involve, as well, an independent study collecting and analyzing samples of water and air quality in New Brunswick during the Route 18 expansion project. Whatever the discipline, the focus of Experiential Learning courses is on the doing of the discipline.

**To qualify as an Experiential Learning course that fulfills the Rutgers Core distribution requirement,** a course must provide students with the experience of being immersed in the activity of a discipline. In some disciplines, this immersion will involve research-intensive work; in other disciplines, this immersion will require travel to off-campus locations to explore ideas in

action; in still others, it will necessitate engaging directly in acts of artistic creation and performance.

## **VI. Implementation**

In putting together this proposal, we have assumed the following:

- That the central recommendations of the Task Force's Working Group on Structure will be adopted, with the result that the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences will be created and the position of vice president for undergraduate education will be endowed with the budgetary power, the legislative authority, and the staff support required to bring about meaningful, substantive curricular reform.
- That, following the adoption of the Task Force's recommendations, it will be the work of some as yet unformed Core Curriculum Implementation Committee, working in concert with a Faculty Governance Committee, to determine the appropriate methods for seeking faculty input on and eventual ratification of whatever emerges as the final proposal for the Rutgers Core.
- That representatives from the various schools will serve on the vice president for undergraduate education's New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide Curriculum Committee and that this committee would then work to coordinate the efforts at each of the schools to launch the new core curriculum.

Working on these assumptions, we have crafted a proposal that is designed to help the curriculum committees at the various schools and the vice president for undergraduate education's Curriculum Committee rethink the form and the function of the core distribution requirements.

The members of the subcommittee anticipate and welcome a thorough review and revision of the preliminary core designations suggested here. Following that revision, it is our hope that there will be New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide support for the general model for reconceiving the Rutgers Core outlined here and that the vice president for undergraduate education's Curriculum Committee can then set about assisting each of the individual school's departments to develop both entry-level and upper-division courses that embrace this effort to provide students with access to the broad range of mental experiences the university community simultaneously embodies, represents, and promotes.

## **VII. Extensive Sample Courses**

The subcommittee took the categories designated in the Rutgers Core and searched for currently existing courses that looked as if they would generally satisfy the criteria developed by the subcommittee. The information provided in Appendix 2 of this chapter offers between 40 and 50 examples for each category. This sampling is, by definition, suggestive rather than complete; it is sufficient to the task of illustrating the fact that many departments currently offer a good range of courses that would fit into the Rutgers Core. Naturally, many new courses would also be created.

## **VIII. Issues and Concerns**

While this proposal is a sketch rather than a finely detailed outline for the core curriculum, the subcommittee is aware that contemplating the implementation of the Rutgers Core proposed here immediately raises practical questions. The questions below are not meant to be exhaustive; they are provided to address concerns that have been raised during the deliberative process.

*How would courses be designated as fulfilling one of the Rutgers Core requirements?*

Departments would submit to their school's curriculum committee either newly designed or already extant courses to be considered for designation as satisfying any one of the areas of the core. This process will allow for the creation of a core that is porous and inclusive, and will enable each individual department to define how its particular ways of thinking and problem solving can fit into the range of intellectual experiences covered by the distribution requirements.

The vice president for undergraduate education's Curriculum Committee would provide guidelines to each of the schools to ensure that the same standards are applied campuswide in determining which courses fulfill the Rutgers Core distribution requirements. Given the extensive amount of work that this redesignation process will take, the vice president for undergraduate education will need to have the resources to compensate members of these curriculum committees with summer research moneys and released time.

*Why is there only one required course in science?*

The sciences are positioned to offer courses throughout the core: critical thinking courses, quantitative thinking courses, writing in the disciplines courses, global cultures courses, interdisciplinary courses, etc. So, it would be more accurate to say that the core requires that all students take at least one course that is explicitly concerned with scientific content. It is possible to imagine a student who only takes one science course in the core; it is equally possible to imagine a student who takes a number of courses that fulfill core requirements that are offered by the sciences. The pedagogical goal of the core is to foster a climate where all the disciplines are encouraged to provide stimulating entry-level courses for nonmajors and prospective majors alike; if this goal is achieved, all the core requirements will serve as invitations to explore further rather than, as now, obligations to be checked off on the way to the degree.

*Can courses that count toward the Rutgers Core also count toward the major/minor?*

In recommending that the core requirements extend throughout a student's experience at Rutgers the subcommittee expects that some core courses will also simultaneously fulfill major/minor requirements in particular disciplines. Rather than standing apart as a denigrated group of basic courses that students "get out of the way," the Rutgers Core, as imagined here, is understood to be an integral part of departmental offerings and student learning.

*Can one course fulfill more than one of the Rutgers Core requirements?*

While it is easy to imagine a single course having elements that relate to more than one of the core distribution requirements, the subcommittee has assumed that the vice president's Curriculum Committee would develop specific qualifications that must be met to satisfy each designated area of the core. The vice president's Curriculum Committee would need to decide



whether one course could satisfy more than one core requirement and, if so, whether a single course with a dual designation could satisfy two core requirements at one time for a student.

*What happened to the “diversity requirement”—also known as a “non-Western” or “multicultural requirement”?*

The traditional “diversity requirement” encouraged students to pay attention to questions of racial and ethnic diversity and to the important ways in which diversity informs particular political ideas and subjectivities. Requiring a diversity component was seen as an important measure to guarantee that students think actively about how race and ethnicity shaped their appreciation of a multicultural society and world.

The subcommittee is aware that there is no explicit diversity requirement in the Rutgers Core, but rather a hint of one in its recommendation for a “Global Cultures” requirement. Some might be concerned that this shift detracts from a multicultural, multi-perspectival understanding of race, class, ethnicity, and gender issues and concerns. It is the feeling of the subcommittee that in its reconfiguration of the core, the “diversity requirement” cannot be located in just one place within the curriculum. Rather, the subcommittee recommends that diversity be understood as a factor that is woven throughout the core and thus will emerge as a topic not just in Global Cultures courses, but in other core courses as well.

The subcommittee further believes that in order to think seriously about diversity, students must have access to an excellent advising system that will help guide them to appropriate sets of courses. Finally, the subcommittee believes that faculty and departments must rethink how they teach and incorporate cultural difference into their programs of study. The subcommittee is confident that these two conditions both can and will be met and that students will encounter diversity not just in one course, but throughout their time at Rutgers.

*What incentives are there for departments and faculty to contribute to making the Rutgers Core a meaningful experience for Rutgers undergraduates?*

Faculty who teach in the undergraduate core curriculum are contributing significantly to the university’s mission. Core courses as imagined here are exciting opportunities for faculty to teach materials and issues that are meaningful to them; the Rutgers Core is also meant to give our undergraduates the opportunity to work with some of our finest teachers under conditions that encourage pedagogical innovation. The subcommittee discussed several ways such contributions could be recognized: 1) Faculty teaching in the core could receive steps as part of the merit pay program; 2) Faculty who regularly teach in the core could be designated as “Core Faculty” and their pedagogical work could be recognized in the promotion process; 3) A presidential award could be made annually to faculty who develop particularly innovative courses for the core.

*How would transfer students be introduced to the core?*

The subcommittee recommends that transfer students receive up to 18 transfer credits toward the foundation of the core distribution requirements. The subcommittee recommends, as well, that under ideal circumstances transfer students will fulfill, at a minimum, all the requirements of the vertical component of the core distribution requirements with courses taken at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

## **Part II: Recommendations Concerning Special Student Populations**

There are five groups of students in New Brunswick/Piscataway to which we have given special attention in our discussion of the current curriculum and curricular reform: honors students, Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) students, nontraditional-age students, part-time students, and transfer students. So characterized, the special student populations total about 50 percent of the Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway undergraduate student body.

### **I. Recommendations Concerning Honors Students**

***Recommendation 6:*** We recommend establishing a single general honors program for all qualified undergraduate students matriculated in the New Brunswick/Piscataway schools.

#### *Background*

The special student populations subcommittee (hereafter, “the subcommittee”) began its deliberations by reviewing the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) proposal for a general honors program for students matriculated in the current liberal arts colleges. While the subcommittee supports the goals of the FAS proposal and even though we have adopted many of its suggestions and some of its specific wording, we recommend the creation of a single, common New Brunswick/Piscataway General Honors Program that is larger in scope and available to all qualified students who matriculate in any undergraduate school at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

We present a general outline of the General Honors Program rather than a detailed and specific set of recommendations. The latter should be approved by the undergraduate faculty body (see below) upon the recommendation of the Honors Program Committee, a standing faculty committee of that body.

#### *Rationale for a Single General Honors Program in New Brunswick/Piscataway*

Honors programs benefit both students and faculty. What emerges is an interdisciplinary community of scholars, old and young, drawn together by their love of the life of the mind, who share insights, ideas, and intellectual challenges in a variety of settings. Such programs allow large state research universities to compete with elite private colleges in attracting and keeping their region’s most talented students, and they provide those students with the opportunity for rich intellectual growth that not only nurtures their individual talents but improves the intellectual life of the university as a whole.

The creation of a single honors program in New Brunswick/Piscataway would ensure that the full range of the campus’s opportunities are available to all honors students, and it would make easier the task of explaining to potential students and their families the extraordinary wealth of educational possibilities available at Rutgers. Equally important, it would facilitate an honors experience that provides a coherent progression of challenges and opportunities, seamlessly linking honors courses and activities in particular departments to honors courses and activities

outside a student's major or minor field of study. Because the program would help to attract and retain outstanding, committed students and faculty, it would improve the experience of all students and would benefit the scholarship of all faculty.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Working Group on Structure, our proposal envisions a newly constituted undergraduate faculty body (representing all the faculties in New Brunswick/Piscataway that matriculate undergraduate students) selecting, in a manner to be determined by the by-laws of that body, an Honors Program Committee from within its ranks. That committee will develop detailed and specific recommendations for the General Honors Program and submit those recommendations to the newly constituted faculty body for approval. The vice president for undergraduate education will administer the General Honors Program, ensuring its quality across all units.

We believe that such a program will be a successful tool for recruiting both students and faculty, and that it should be given its own section in the undergraduate catalog. Furthermore, we also believe that having the vice president for undergraduate education accountable for the General Honors Program will simplify its administration and aid in making its benefits transparent to prospective students.

#### *Admission to the General Honors Program*

The Honors Program Committee will propose flexible admissions criteria to the newly constituted undergraduate faculty body. These criteria should allow students with diverse sets of talents and accomplishments to enter and continue in the General Honors Program. The number of credits required of each student will depend upon the point in a student's career at which he or she enters the program. For example, first-year students entering the General Honors Program might be required to complete 18 credits, whereas students entering the program who had already completed a substantial number of credits toward graduation, either at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway or another university or college, might be required to complete only 12 credits. A minimum number of credits should be required of all students regardless of the point in their careers at which they enter the program.

#### *Opportunities Available to Students in the General Honors Program*

The opportunities available to students in the General Honors Program *may* include, but are not necessarily limited to: access to honors courses or honors sections of courses developed by the Honors Program Committee; access to all 100- and 200-level honors courses and sections of courses developed by departments or programs (provided the student satisfies the prerequisites as established by the department or program); early registration; housing for honors students; access to some graduate courses; participation in cocurricular activities developed by the Honors Program Committee or a school; and the opportunity for independent study or research with a faculty member.

## *Transforming Undergraduate Education*

### *Requirements for Students in the General Honors Program*

Students must complete a specified number of honors credits that may be earned in a variety of ways. Those requirements should be divided into two groups:

1. All students should complete a given number of honors credits offered by their school or major program that would include honors seminars, special honors sections of courses, or internships.
2. Advanced students should complete a specified number of 300-, 400-, or 500-level classes, and they should complete a senior project under the direction of a faculty member or members.

In addition, all students should be required to maintain a specified GPA and be in good academic standing within the university.

### *Relationship of the General Honors Program to Departmental Honors Programs and the Core Curriculum*

The subcommittee recommends that every department or program in New Brunswick/Piscataway that offers an undergraduate major provide an honors option within the major. The nature of these honors options will vary depending upon the faculty resources available and the type of program. For example, smaller programs could 1) require additional work of their honors students enrolled in their non-honors courses; 2) have special discussion sections of larger non-honors courses; or 3) offer senior independent study research courses. The honors option within the major should be clearly delineated in the New Brunswick/Piscataway Undergraduate Catalog. Although many courses in the departmental honors options will be used to satisfy the requirements of the General Honors Program, the department-based honors options and the General Honors Program should remain distinct programs. A student may graduate with both departmental honors and as an “honors scholar” (or some other appropriate designation on the diploma) for having completed the General Honors Program. Nevertheless, the requirements are distinct, and a student may obtain either without obtaining both.

Whenever possible, courses satisfying the requirements of the General Honors Program should be developed so that they fulfill the Rutgers Core requirements. This is necessary in order to make it possible for students to satisfy the requirements for both within an appropriate time frame.

### *Implementation of the General Honors Program*

The criteria for admissions to the General Honors Program, the opportunities available to students in the program, and the requirements for completing the program should be voted upon and approved by the campuswide undergraduate faculty body (mentioned above) upon the recommendation of the Honors Program Committee. Upon faculty approval, the vice president for undergraduate education shall be charged with the implementation of the General Honors Program. The success of the General Honors Program requires that the vice president for undergraduate education have access to the resources and staff commensurate with the task.

## **II. Recommendations Concerning Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Students**

### *Background*

The Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program is a state-mandated and state-financed program designed to admit and to graduate students who come from economically and educationally deprived areas in New Jersey. The state has mandated that approximately 10 percent of our student body be EOF students.

Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway has developed an outstanding set of curricular and cocurricular activities to assist EOF students. These focus primarily on academic and mentoring programs in the summer prior to and during a student’s first year at Rutgers. As a result, the retention rate of EOF students enrolling in the second year is only moderately lower than the retention rate of students who satisfy the standard Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway admissions criteria. Similar comments can be made about the comparable retention rates throughout the career of EOF students at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. It is moderately lower each year, and therefore cumulative over time. Given the lower admissions criteria of EOF students (as mandated by the state), the EOF retention and graduation rates are very encouraging and reflect the success of the programs developed by the EOF staff and cooperating departments as well as the ambitions and persistence of the EOF students.

Our subcommittee’s specific task was to determine whether there are curricular recommendations that, if enacted, would further enhance the success of our EOF students. We met with the EOF directors both in the colleges and in the central administration, reviewed material supplied by them, and reviewed data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. In addition to the fact that the retention rates of EOF students are moderately lower than that of regularly admitted students for the first three years, we noted that the graduation rate of EOF students who register for their fourth year at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway is only slightly lower than the graduation rate of non-EOF students who register for their fourth year. Consequently, we believe that it would be advisable to consider developing curricular and mentoring programs beyond a student’s first year, concentrating in the second and third years.

In addition, the committee noted that:

- Most faculty members in New Brunswick/Piscataway are not sufficiently knowledgeable about the EOF program.
- Many faculty members who have worked with the EOF staff in developing courses and academic support programs are aging, and within the foreseeable future, they will retire. Further, there is a dearth of younger faculty involved with the program.

***Recommendation 7:*** Therefore, we make a recommendation, limited in scope, but potentially very important, namely, that there be established a New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide EOF Faculty Support Committee to work with the Office of the University Director of Student Academic Support and Achievement.

The function of the EOF Faculty Support Committee would be to assist the office in developing and improving the course offerings and mentoring programs for EOF students and other students with similar academic support needs. In particular, the EOF Faculty Support Committee should work with the office to determine whether additional curricular and academic support initiatives should be developed for students beyond their first year designed to improve the retention rate up to the senior year. The members of the EOF Faculty Support Committee should be drawn from all faculties in New Brunswick/Piscataway with an objective of including tenured faculty members who are relatively early in their academic careers. Deans of the faculties should assist the office in recruiting faculty members for the EOF Faculty Support Committee, and the faculty on the committee should view their role, in part, to act as liaisons between the committee and their home departments and faculties.

### **III. Recommendations Concerning Nontraditional-Age Students**

#### *Background*

We define nontraditional-age students as those who have been out of high school for at least four years and/or those who are 25 years of age or older. Nontraditional-age students are an important part of the Rutgers student body and their experience-based knowledge enriches the learning of traditional students.

The population of nontraditional-age students is diverse. Some enroll as transfer students from New Jersey's community colleges. Others are postbaccalaureate students who would like to change careers by obtaining a degree in a different field or who want to take preparatory courses for entering a professional school. Some are persons who never went to college; some are persons who had some college experience and did not do well; and some are persons who did well in their prior college experience. Some nontraditional-age students attend part time, and some attend full time. They possess a multiplicity of life experiences, work experiences, and prior academic experiences/success. For many the transition is relatively easy, but for others entering or reentering college life is filled with anxiety and uncertainty.

***Recommendation 8:*** We recommend maintaining, as part of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences, an administrative unit dedicated to advancing the education of nontraditional-age students. The university should establish a Task Force on Educating Nontraditional-Age Students, made up of faculty and staff who serve them from throughout the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus, and charge this group with providing a comprehensive report on the structures and organization of services that will best support these students.

At Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, University College–New Brunswick has historically had a mission focused on the education of nontraditional-age students. In the fall of 1999, 54 percent of University College's student body was 25 years of age or older, and 69 percent were 23 years of age or older. By the fall of 2003, these percentages had dropped somewhat to 47 percent (1,659 students) and 64 percent (2,229 students) respectively, a gradual decline that has continued.

Because of the unique needs of nontraditional-age students, it is important that a unit, headed by a dean with the appropriate staff, continue to focus on their education under any restructuring of Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. This unit should be part of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and should be charged with the responsibility of maintaining and enhancing the success of our nontraditional-age students.

***Recommendation 9:*** We recommend strengthening and expanding transition programs.

Given the variety of experiences that nontraditional-age students bring to the university, the academic success of many is dependent upon their enrollment in a formal e-credit or no-credit academic support transition course or courses. Some transition courses should be taken prior to enrollment and others during the first year. Strengthening and expanding existing transition programs and courses for academically at-risk students are essential to the success of some nontraditional-age students.

***Recommendation 10:*** We recommend increasing the availability of evening and weekend courses and offering some selected courses in a one-meeting-per-week format in the evening.

Increasing the number of weekend and evening courses is needed to reverse the decline in the number of nontraditional-age students at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. A major cause of that decline has been the timely response of other New Jersey colleges to the specific needs of nontraditional-age students with regard to scheduling and types of courses available. Other New Jersey colleges have increased curricular offerings at night, markedly increased the number of courses offered on the weekends, increased distance learning courses and programs of study, and provided academic support and other services at times convenient for nontraditional-age students.

Rutgers needs to offer more of its curriculum at times that are convenient for nontraditional-age students: at night and on the weekends, and perhaps in the evening in one-meeting-per-week formats. (Between fall 2002 and fall 2003, the number of Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway course sections offered at night declined by 36 sections, primarily because state budget reductions led Rutgers to reduce the number of courses overall. Financial support for weekend courses is also a continuing issue.) Such courses also serve traditional students, many of whom now take courses at night and on the weekend. At present, 60 percent of the enrollment in Saturday courses consists of traditional students. We recommend that all undergraduate degree programs at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway offer courses in the evening or on the weekend and consider whether it would be appropriate to offer some courses in the evening in a one-meeting-per-week format. The vice president for undergraduate education should facilitate the offering of such courses. This would ensure that all such programs have some offerings for nontraditional-age students.

***Recommendation 11:*** We recommend increasing the number of majors available in the evening or on the weekend.

One of the greatest advantages of the Rutgers undergraduate curriculum, other than its quality, is its variety. Very few universities can boast the variety and comprehensiveness of majors offered

by Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. The 2003–2005 New Brunswick/Piscataway Undergraduate Catalog lists some 87 majors; however, of these, only 27 are listed as majors available at night. Worse still, among these 27 majors, choice of courses at night is often very limited. There is a close correlation between the majors with which University College students graduate (28 majors in 2003) and those offered at night. Yet, 10 or more University College students were enrolled in each of 32 majors during the fall of 2003.

The subcommittee recommends that, over the next five years, Rutgers expand the number of majors available at night and on the weekend. There are currently no majors that can be completed solely on the weekend, yet there are over 1,000 registrations per year in courses offered on Saturdays. The vice president for undergraduate education should develop incentives to encourage departments and programs to offer their courses, and wherever possible their majors, so that students can fulfill the requirements in the evening and/or the weekends.

Faculties in New Brunswick/Piscataway should consider adding attractive interdisciplinary majors to serve weekend students. Once these are developed by cooperating departments, they might be made available to all students. Weekend students would be served by broad, inclusive majors.

Rutgers should also consider adding more focused, career-related majors; in particular, it should consider developing majors that would appeal to nontraditional-age students, given workforce trends.

***Recommendation 12:*** We recommend permitting University College (or whatever unit succeeds it) to grant credit for life experience.

At present, nontraditional-age students with significant life experience can have that experience evaluated for purposes of earning credit at Thomas Edison State College. Those credits are then accepted by and transferred to University College.

The Working Group on Curriculum has recommended that experiential learning should be part of the reimaged Rutgers Core. It would be inconsistent to encourage traditional-age undergraduates to engage in experiential learning while not acknowledging the experiential learning that has already occurred on the part of nontraditional-age students. Hence, we recommend that the Curriculum Committee (a committee of the New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide undergraduate faculty body), with the assistance of the vice president for undergraduate education, propose mechanisms to the New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide undergraduate faculty body that would allow for portfolio assessment of life experiences for degree credits for nontraditional-age students. These credits would be accepted by the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and other Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway schools that award academic credit on the basis of portfolio assessment. The Curriculum Committee should also propose an upper limit to the number of such credits that can be allowed for any one student. After examining the past practices at University College and at other institutions, we recommend that the Curriculum Committee begin their investigation of this issue with a default upper limit of 12 credits to be awarded on the basis of portfolio assessment.



#### **IV. Recommendations Concerning Part-Time Students**

##### *Background*

Fewer than 50 percent of New Brunswick/Piscataway regularly admitted undergraduate students graduate at the end of their fourth year, whereas the six-year graduation rate is approximately 75 percent. Most students now work at least part time, and job-related responsibilities often change over time. Many students are parents, or have to help take care of their own parents and/or siblings. Throughout the course of their undergraduate careers, many students move or seek to move between part-time and full-time status.

The various undergraduate colleges at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway presently have different policies with regard to the minimum course load that is required of all students. Students who enter Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway knowing that they will be part-time status are assigned to University College, which is currently the only unit dedicated to their education. However, students who are initially full time often want to change to a part-time status, because of high demands at work, personal considerations, or family responsibilities. When this happens, the other colleges occasionally allow a temporary change of status. For instance, Livingston states, “Part-time status is conferred only in exceptional circumstances and for a limited time.... Special permission *prior* to registration must be obtained from the Office of the Dean.” Rutgers College states, “Only in cases of extreme hardship and with approval of the dean of instruction may a student carry a part-time credit load of less than 11.5 credits.” Given these rules, some students are forced to transfer from their original matriculating college to University College, and in some cases they transfer back to their original college if they resume full-time study. Graduation requirements change, advising and mentoring is handed from one college to another, scholastic standing rules change, etc.

***Recommendation 13:*** We recommend that all matriculating schools in Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway enroll both full-time and part-time students.

The subcommittee believes that it is best that students take the number of credits that they can handle given their other responsibilities. Therefore, while the committee recognizes that there is a complex set of noncurricular issues surrounding shifts between part-time and full-time status that must be addressed (e.g., financial aid, health benefits, housing, and scholastic standing), and while the committee recognizes that such changes in status require thoughtful consultation with academic advisers, we recommend that all matriculating schools in Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway enroll both full-time and part-time students, and allow students to change easily from one status to the other depending on their own informed judgment concerning how many academic credits are appropriate, given their life circumstances.

## **V. Recommendations Concerning Transfer Students**

### *Background*

Transfer students make up approximately one-quarter of all incoming students to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway each year, and their education is an integral part of the mission of the university. The largest number of transfer students comes from county colleges in New Jersey. Access to higher education is greatly enhanced in New Jersey by the affordability of county colleges and the opportunity that successful students have to transfer to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

The subcommittee examined data relevant to the assessment of the success of transfer students at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway—in particular, the experience of those transfers and nontransfers who entered Rutgers in the fall of 2000. The transfer students’ composite SAT scores were almost 100 points lower than nontransfer students (for those transfer students who had such scores). Nonetheless, by the fall of 2001, the grades of continuing transfer students at Rutgers were equivalent to the grades of nontransfer students who continued into their second year. About 19 percent of transfer students did not continue into a second year at Rutgers compared to about 12 percent of nontransfer students. Nevertheless, by the fall of 2004, 63 percent of these transfer students had graduated from Rutgers (with the largest number graduating three years after initial entry); about 30 percent had dropped out, and the remainder were still continuing their studies. The four-year graduation rate of regularly admitted first-year students is approximately 50 percent, and the five-year graduation rate is approximately 68 percent. Thus, after an initial period of adjustment to the university, the success of transfer students at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway is similar to that of nontransfer students. Put another way, the stereotype of transfer students held by some faculty—i.e., that transfer students are generally less academically successful than nontransfer students—is not accurate.

The subcommittee also considered anecdotal evidence regarding the experience of transfer students at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway which might, in part, be the cause of the higher drop-out rate at the beginning of their university careers. One problem seemed to be availability of suitable courses in a student’s initial semester. Many courses had been closed prior to the time transfer students began to register. Another problem seemed to be simple lack of familiarity with the campus and with the services available to students.

We do not recommend any new academic degree courses for transfer students because most transfer students are now successful at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, and we believe that the success rates can be improved with the types of changes suggested below.

***Recommendation 14:*** We recommend improving orientation, academic support, and advising of transfer students in their initial semester.

***Recommendation 15:*** We recommend adding sections of classes so that transfer students (and other students) can get into the courses needed for graduation.

**Recommendation 16:** We recommend encouraging departments to hold some “seats” in classes for transfer students.

**Recommendation 17:** We recommend establishing transfer admission standards at levels that lead to a greater probability of success. (Currently University College is required to admit, on probation, all students who have an AA from a New Jersey county college with a GPA of 2.0 or above; the success rate at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway is lower for these students than those with a GPA of 2.5 or above who are admitted on a regular basis.)

**Recommendation 18:** We recommend admitting transfer students earlier in the admissions process so as to enable them to register for courses before they close.

**Recommendation 19:** We recommend increasing the number of evening and weekend courses, since many transfer students also work while they attend Rutgers.

Our Working Group on Curriculum’s proposal to reimagine the Rutgers Core in order to provide all students with opportunities to engage in multiple modes of thinking, knowing, and understanding will pose special problems for transfer students, since particular classes (e.g., Introduction to Psychology) that articulate automatically from a New Jersey county college to Rutgers have similar content in terms of subject matter, but they may not have the same content in terms of the skills they foster. The proposal that transfer students receive up to 18 transfer credits toward the foundation of the core distribution requirements is important for ensuring that the new core does not unfairly increase the time to graduation for transfer students. It is important that as discussions proceed about the reimaged core, other faculty deliberative bodies keep in mind the special issues that surround transfer students.

## **Conclusion to Part II**

Our goals in presenting these curricular and cocurricular recommendations for special student populations are twofold. First, we want to enable the faculty to reconnect with our undergraduate students in academic matters that go beyond departmental concerns. Second, we want to improve the curriculum and the cocurricular activities for our special student populations, a group that is approximately half of the overall undergraduate student population.

Rutgers will accomplish the second goal only by accomplishing the first. Thus, we have neither provided detailed solutions to all of the relevant problems that we confront nor furnished ironclad prescriptions for seizing the opportunities that are available. To do so would have hindered accomplishing our first goal. The faculty will reconnect with undergraduate education only when its decisions result in action. We have merely sought to initiate the discussions among and between the faculties in Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway and to provide a useful context in which those discussions will take place.

Appendix 1

## **About the Working Group on Curriculum**

### **Membership**

*Chairs:* Richard E. Miller, English, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Peter Klein, Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Barbara Balliet, Women's and Gender Studies, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Jeanne Boyle, Associate University Librarian, Public Services and Communications  
Kieron Burke, Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Jolie Cizewski, Vice Dean of the Graduate School–New Brunswick; Physics and Astronomy,  
Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Emmet Dennis, Dean, University College–New Brunswick  
Monica Devanas, Director of Faculty Development and Assessment Programs, Center for the  
Advancement of Teaching  
Richard Duschl, Learning and Teaching, Graduate School of Education  
Jonathan Eckstein, Management Science and Information Systems, Rutgers Business School  
Martin Gliserman, English, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Carol Goldin, Director, Academic and Strategic Planning, Office of Institutional Research and  
Academic Planning  
Arnold Hyndman, Dean, Livingston College  
Marc Manganaro, Dean of Academic Affairs, Douglass College; English, Faculty of Arts and  
Sciences  
Howard McGary, Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
James Miller, Environmental Sciences, Cook College  
Dona Schneider, Urban Studies, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy  
Benigno Sifuentes-Jáuregui, American Studies and Comparative Literature, Faculty of Arts and  
Sciences  
Lea Stewart, Communication, School of Communication, Information and Library Studies  
Paula Voos, Labor Studies and Employment Relations, School of Management and Labor  
Relations

The Working Group on Curriculum, cochaired by Peter Klein of the philosophy department and Richard Miller of the English department, began its work in June 2004 with a general meeting and the assignment of summer reading. This was followed by six meetings in the fall of 2004 (9/7, 9/21, 10/5, 10/19, 11/2, 11/16, 11/30); the Working Group read and discussed the three major reports on undergraduate education at Rutgers written over the past two decades (Qualls I, Qualls II/*Dialogues* Report, and the Pomper Report); the Working Group read and discussed numerous reports on curricular reform at other Association of American Universities institutions (Harvard, Michigan, UNC-Chapel Hill, Berkeley, Yale), as well as the Boyer Report; and, finally, the working group surveyed the distribution requirements at over 60 AAU institutions.

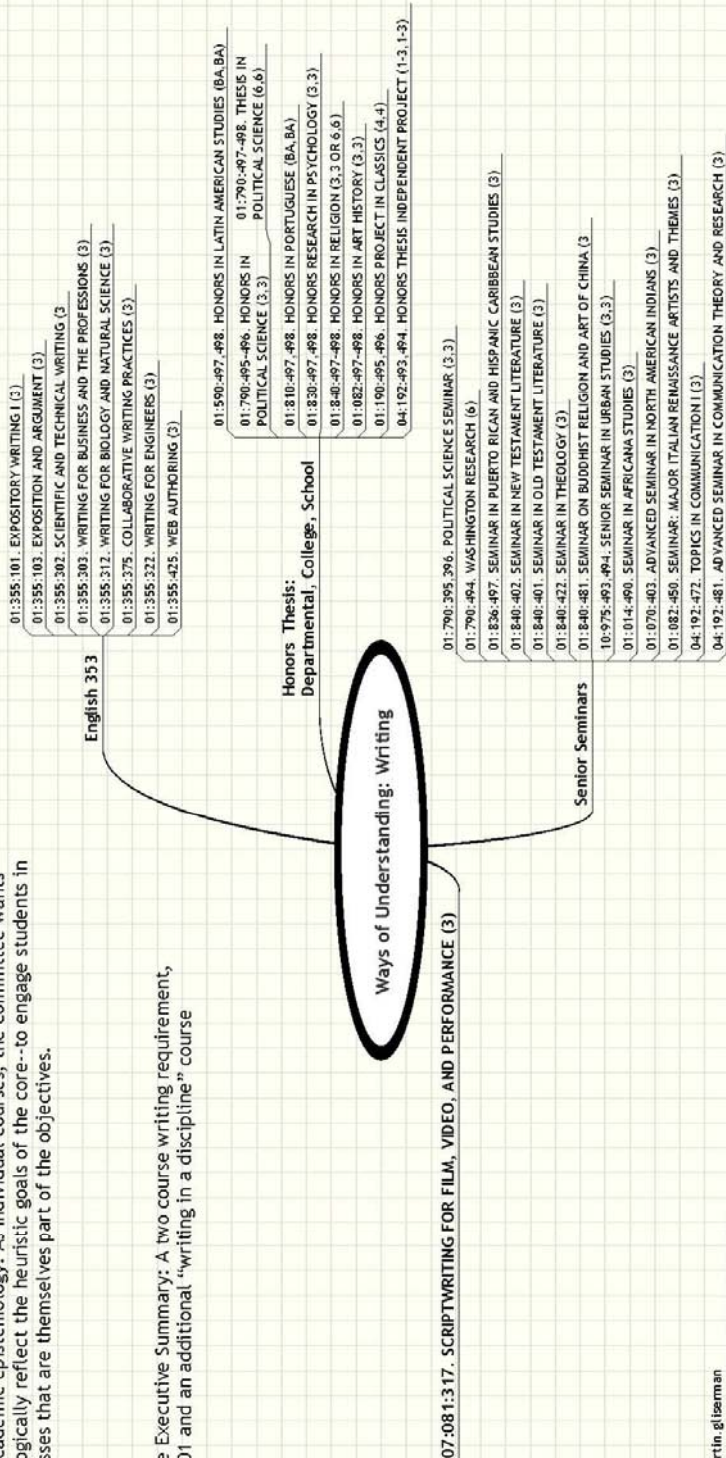
In spring 2005, the working group divided into two additional subcommittees: one, chaired by Peter Klein, focused on the curricular needs of special student populations (honors students, EOF students, nontraditional-age students, part-time students, and transfer students); the other, chaired by Richard Miller, focused on the curricular needs of the general student population and the core distribution requirements. The core distribution requirements subcommittee met eight times during the spring semester (1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 3/8, 3/22, 3/29), including two meetings of the Working Group as a whole to discuss drafts in progress, and concluded its work with the entire Working Group's unanimous support of the plan to forward this document to the Task Force on Undergraduate Education. The special student populations subcommittee met 12 times during the spring semester (1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/22, 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26).

Appendix 2

*Examples of Current Courses That Might Satisfy the Rutgers Core*

The examples on this first map and the following maps are not meant to be definitive or all inclusive. The listings represent a limited range of departments and possibilities. From descriptions in the current course catalogue the courses displayed here could be a good fit for the core courses imagined by the Curriculum Committee of the Task Force on Undergraduate Education. The Curriculum Committee wants the Core, as a group of courses, to challenge students by offering nine fundamental dimensions of an academic epistemology. As individual courses, the committee wants offerings to pedagogically reflect the heuristic goals of the core--to engage students in the learning processes that are themselves part of the objectives.

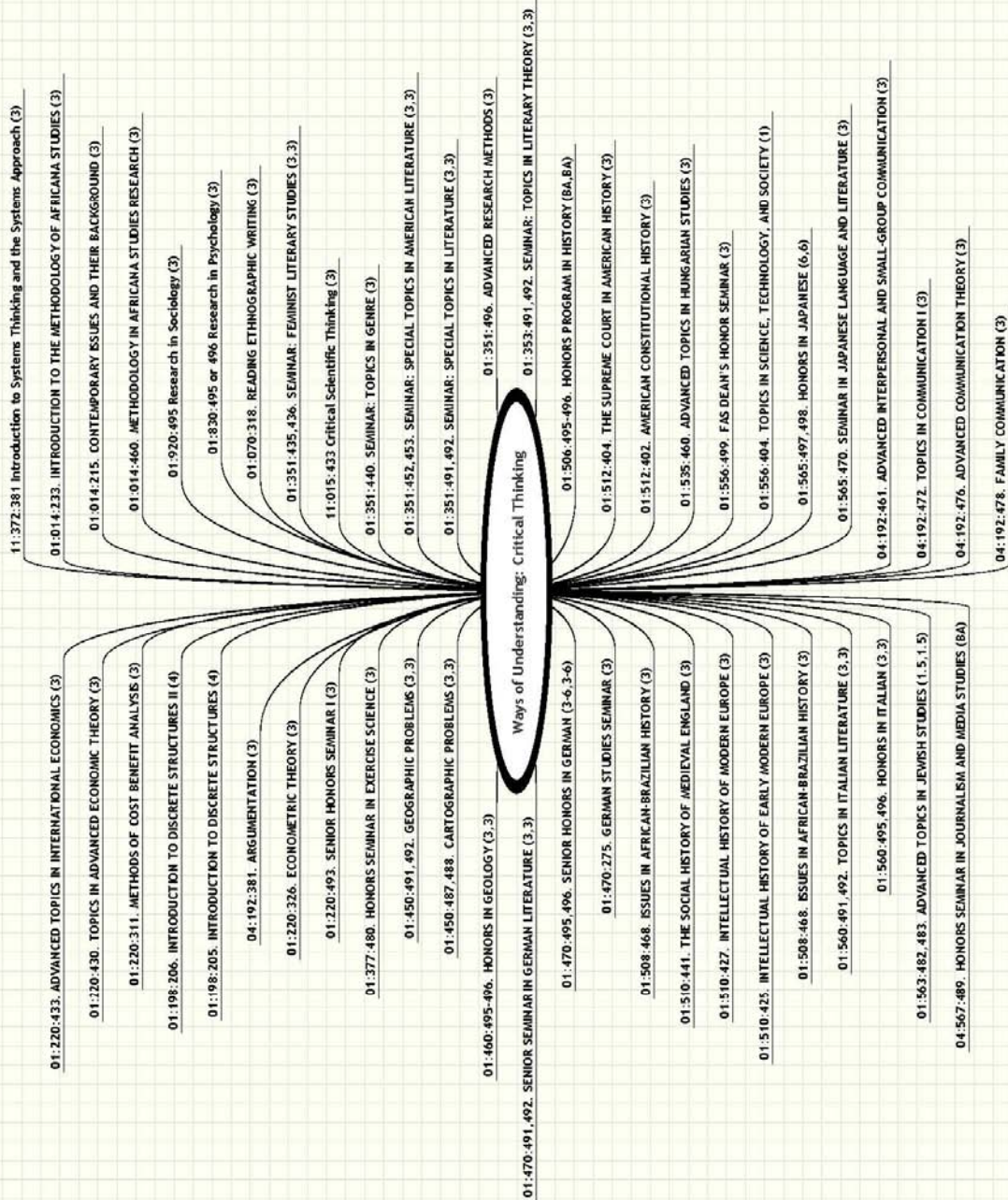
from the Executive Summary: A two course writing requirement, Expos 101 and an additional "writing in a discipline" course



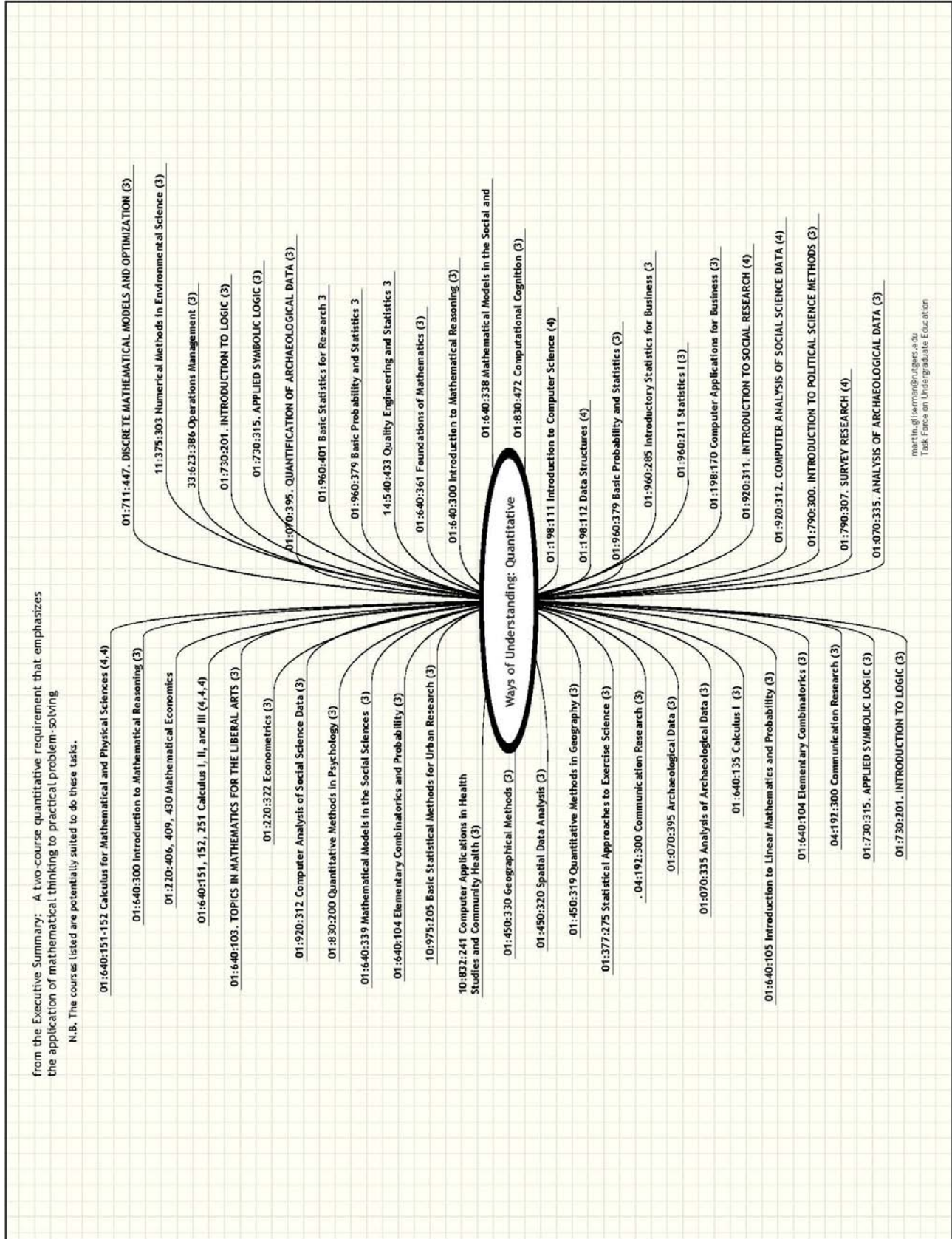
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from the Executive Summary: A "critical thinking" requirement that combines information literacy skills with explicit training in making logical arguments  
 N.B. The courses listed are potentially suited to do these tasks.

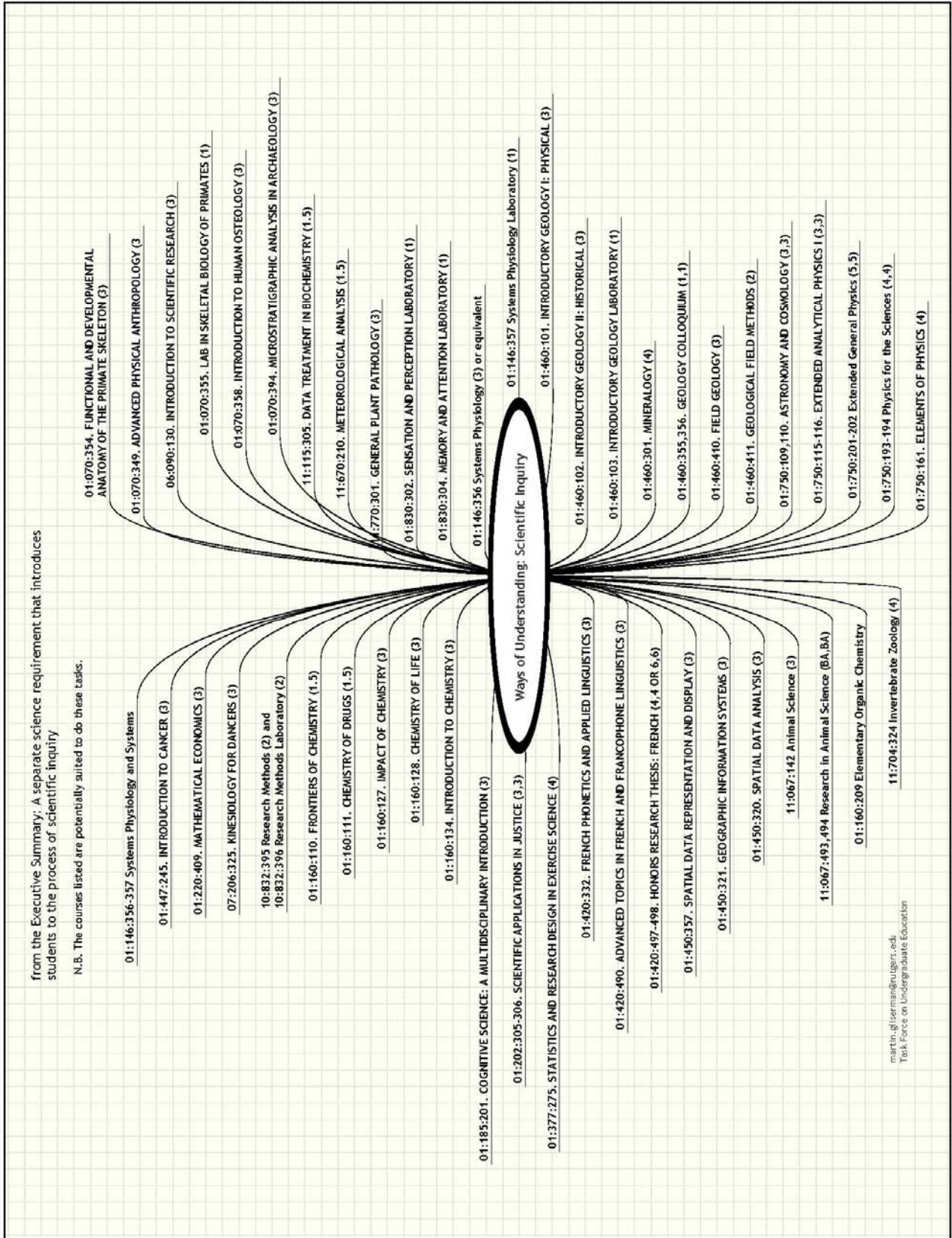


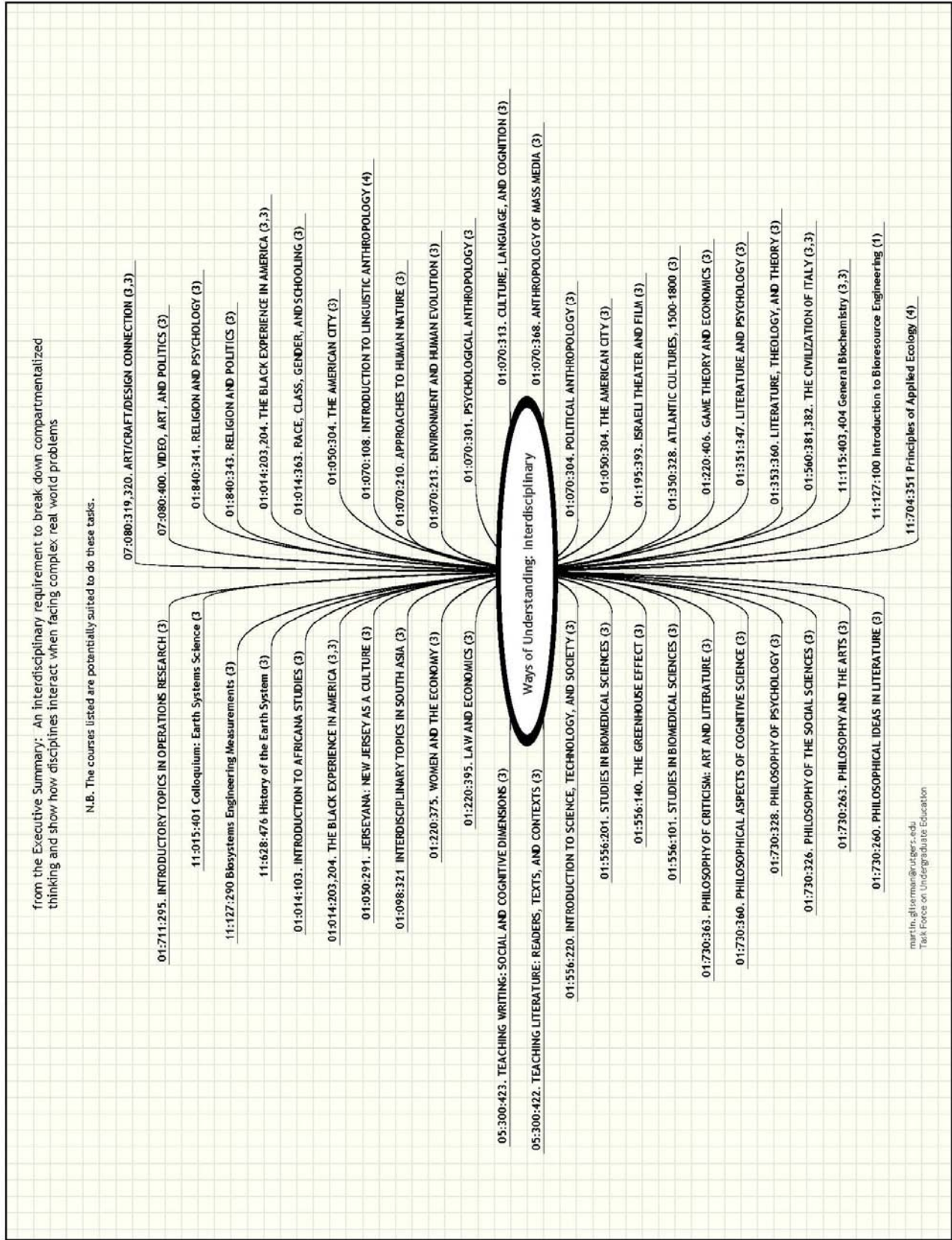
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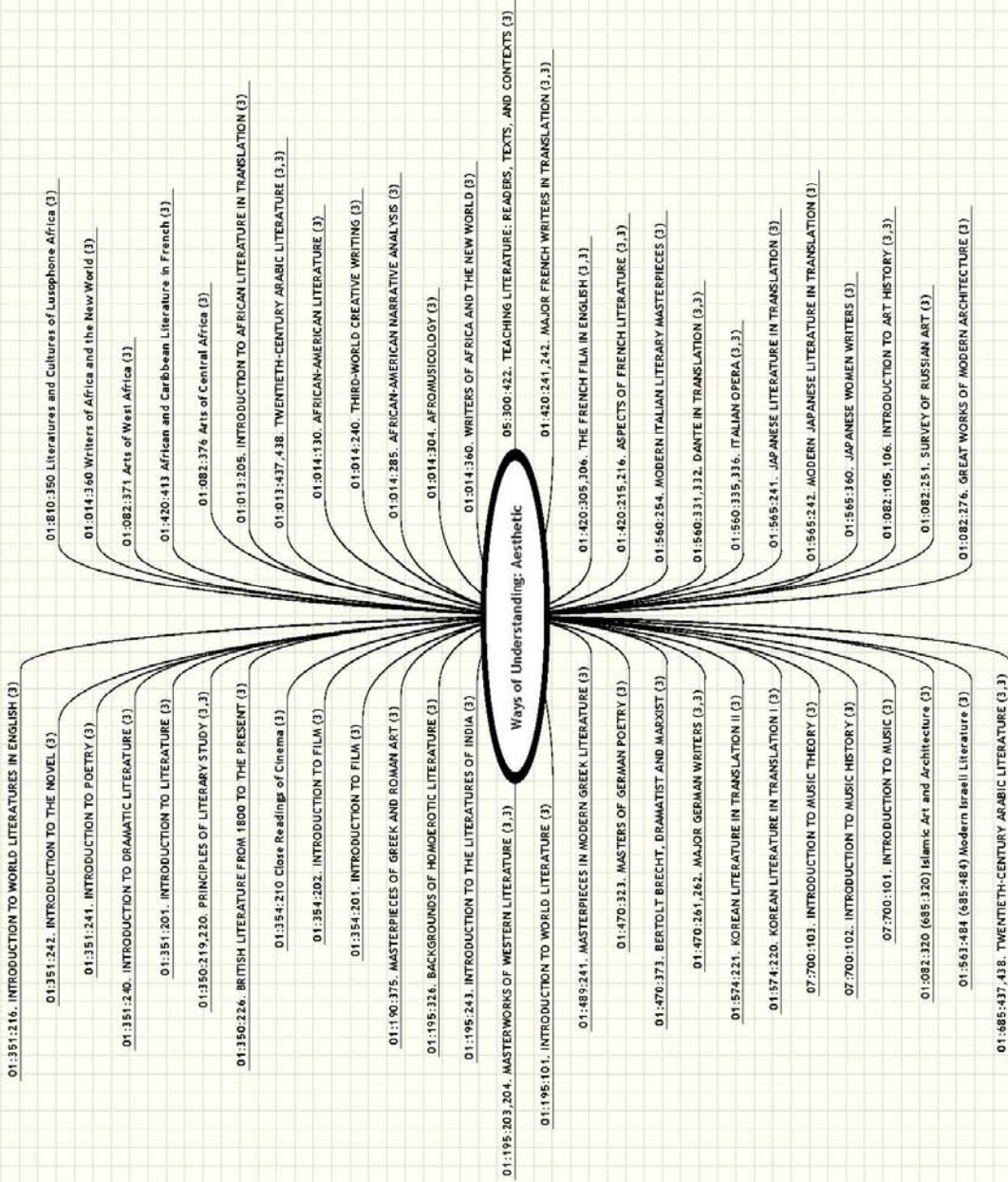






from the Executive Summary: An aesthetic requirement which is designed to help students to experience, see, and reflect on some of the various shapes that beauty can take

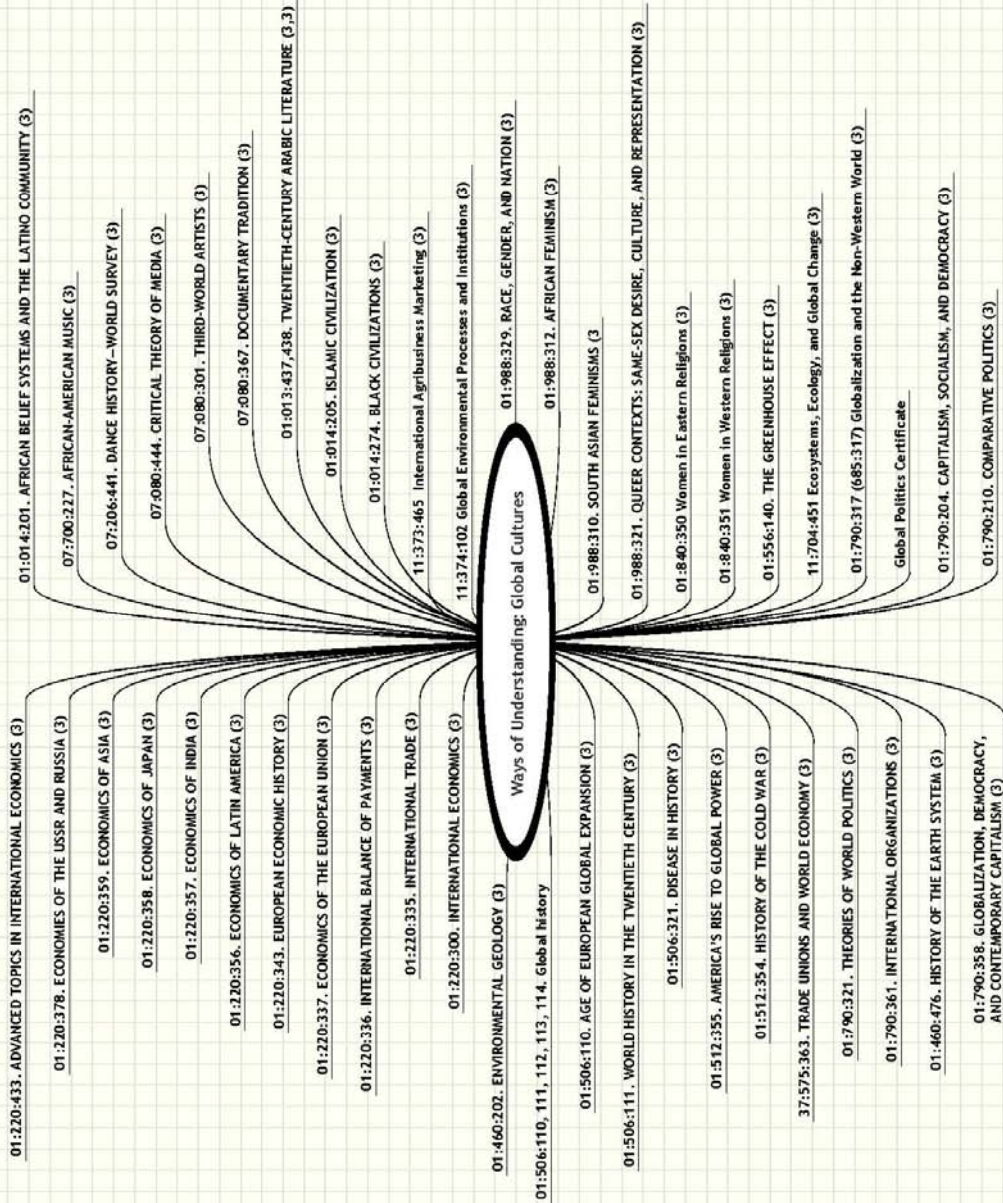
N.B.: The courses listed are potentially suited to do these tasks.



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from the Executive Summary: A global/international requirement designed to train students to think in and about a diversified world, one where cultural variety and difference exist both within and beyond the borders of the United States

N.B. The courses listed are potentially suited to do these tasks.

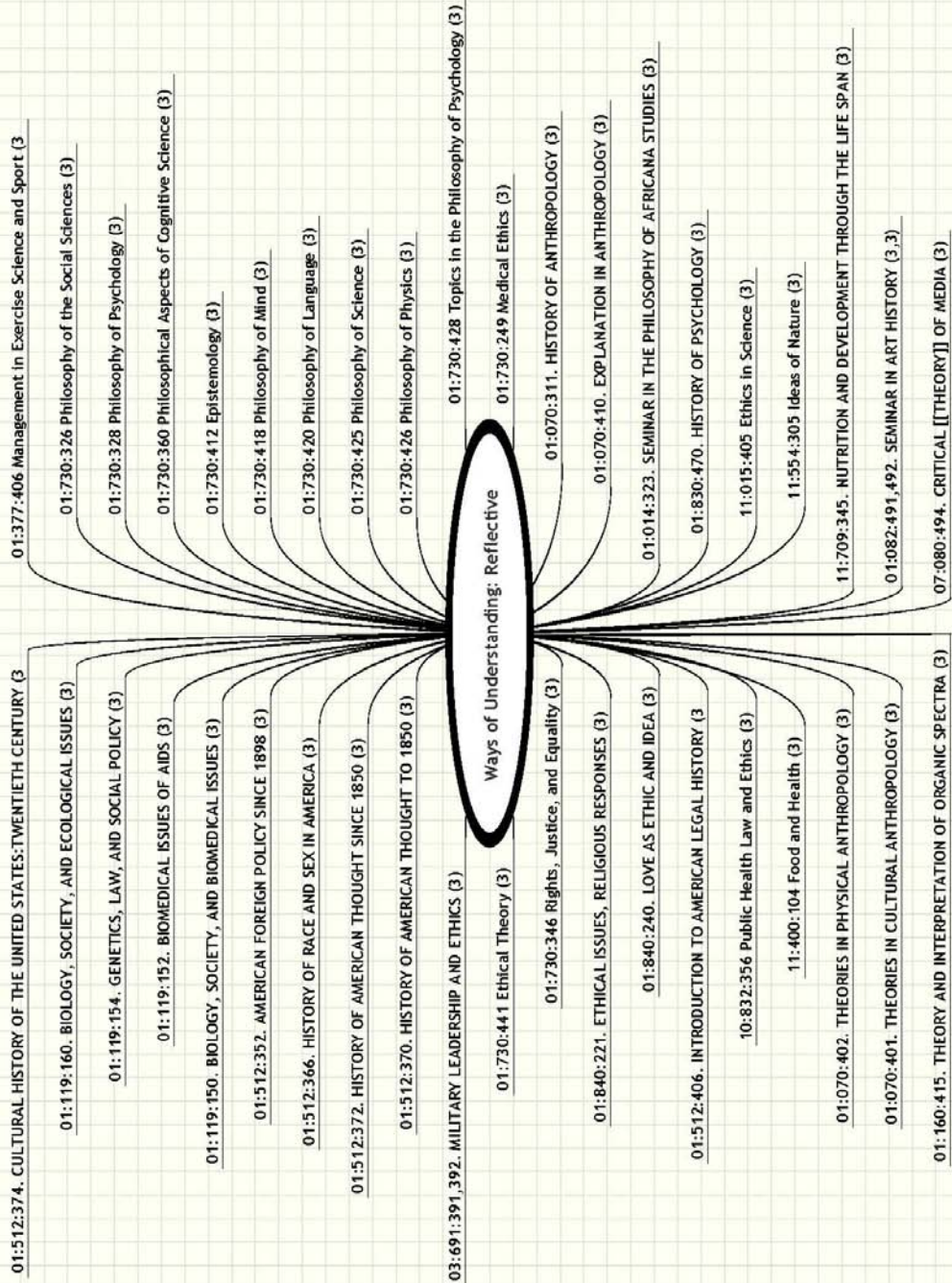


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from the Executive Summary: A reflective thinking requirement, so that students have an opportunity to see general changes in a discipline's approach over time as well as specific cases of disciplinary paradigm shifts

N.B. The courses listed are potentially suited to do these tasks.



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## 2 | UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND CAMPUS LIFE

**Recommendation:** The administration should initiate, plan, and develop the capacity, incentives and support systems (and provide the necessary resources) to create and sustain effective learning communities at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

### Introduction

The majority of Rutgers undergraduates in Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway do not live on campus; in the academic year 2004–2005, approximately 14,000 lived off campus or commuted, while 12,600 lived in university housing. Given the size of the undergraduate population in New Brunswick/Piscataway, the geographically dispersed facilities, and the history of the colleges, there are convincing reasons to seek opportunity in the geographical dispersion, to build on the colleges’ legacies, and to satisfy students’ needs for identity and connection that smaller communities provide. With our geography and our history as context, we have imagined campus life focused around learning communities.

What are learning communities? The National Learning Communities Project defines “curricular learning communities” as “classes that are linked or clustered during an academic term, often around an interdisciplinary theme, and enroll a common cohort of students. A variety of approaches are used to build these learning communities, with all intended to restructure the students’ time, credit, and learning experiences [in order] to build community among students, between students and their teachers, and among faculty members and disciplines” ([http://learningcommons.evergreen.edu/03\\_start\\_entry.asp](http://learningcommons.evergreen.edu/03_start_entry.asp)). We see these communities in broader terms, as at once curricular and cocurricular—the bridges between students’ and faculty’s work in classrooms and laboratories and the larger campus communities. These communities enable undergraduate students to connect their academic and nonacademic interests and aspirations. They provide special housing options for undergraduates who prefer to reside on campus. They invite commuting students into the campus community to explore the potential of intellectual community beyond their classes. They bring together faculty and students in a nongraded but strongly intellectual environment.

Thus we are conceiving our campuses as more than simply residential locations. We see them as:

- *Learning communities that promote and inspire interdisciplinary research among faculty, students, and staff.* Connected to interdisciplinary centers, institutes, and departments, these communities work toward combining interdisciplinary research between, for example, the sciences and the humanities, or urban development and public health and policy, or religion and politics. With proper resources and support, these communities have the potential to serve as incubators for cutting-edge explorations in a diverse range of areas such as computational science, bioinformatics, systems biology, integrated sciences (life, earth, and physical sciences), language, literature, culture, etc.

- *Learning communities set up to encourage and sustain learning in relation to specific themes or professions.* For example, a learning community focusing on critical thinking about values may be established to encourage faculty and students to reflect upon the values that underlie social, political, scientific, and professional issues. Students in professional majors, such as fine arts, communication, engineering, business, or public policy, whose professional school does not have a residential campus or section of a campus set aside for it at present, may find an advantage in being concentrated in a particular geographical location, joining housing with cocurricular programming that links with academic requirements.
- *Learning communities that also function as civic communities.* These communities can inspire and challenge students to engage with issues of the day—on the campus, at the university, in the city, state, region, and beyond. Some civic-learning communities can operate as mediation centers and community service centers, while others can serve as venues hosting regularly scheduled local forums that focus on campus issues. Because some students may choose to participate in communities that have residential requirements, learning communities can be established around particular programs that reflect the residents' interests and aspirations—e.g., women's leadership and/or women and politics on the Douglass campus. Civic-learning communities can encourage “competition” among the campuses through extracurricular student activities such as debating societies, intramural sports, and performances. They can also support outreach efforts in community service by sponsoring activities at local schools that can help develop students' sense of their civic duties and responsibilities.

## **Learning Communities**

Ideally, learning communities are designed around themes or purposes that have in common the intention 1) to foster engagement by offering programs that illustrate model civic engagement and progressive change; 2) to support interdisciplinary, integrative, community-based, and multi-unit programs that cut across institutional and school boundaries; and 3) to create infrastructures that facilitate learning.

The experience of learning or gaining knowledge is not about the accumulation of credits, of course, any more than the process of teaching is about classroom performance. Learning communities are intellectually rich opportunities to build knowledge and set students on paths that prepare them to benefit from the college experience. Focused on knowledge creation and utilization, learning communities may be particularly effective for thinking about ways to share knowledge, to accommodate and adjust to changes in the learning process, and to draw connections between different and complementary academic programs.

A number of other postsecondary institutions—500 as of 2001 (*New York Times*: April 24, 2005, p. 27)—have established substantial learning communities, and several have more than a decade of experience. From their histories, it seems clear that, to be successful, learning communities need to establish a clear purpose; maximize human interaction; establish new pedagogies for “active” and, in some instances, cooperative and collaborative learning; allow for flexibility and individual differences; integrate academic studies and experiential learning; and set high



expectations. Learning communities are not about exclusion, but about the successful engagement of faculty and students in activities that allow undergraduates to deepen skills and to develop knowledge across disciplines. Learning communities integrate academics with student life and help engage students in the university and, in many instances, the greater community. The engagement of faculty in significant roles within these communities is critical to their success.

Learning communities in New Brunswick/Piscataway can create small communities within the larger university. The size of learning communities with residential components can range from a dozen students located on a single floor of a dormitory to several hundred participants made up of students, faculty, staff, and graduate students, residing in a multiple building complex. (The College Park Scholars Program, a learning community at the University of Maryland, involves 1,600 students in five buildings, with 24 faculty members associated with a dozen programs, reflecting collaborations that include the humanities, behavioral and social sciences, life sciences, and engineering.)

The University of Maryland-College Park experience is illustrative. The university's Committee on the Academic Environment determined, in 1988, that, in order to create vibrant communities, various members of the campus (including faculty and staff from residence life) would need to be committed to the new enterprise. A committee was formed to develop guidelines for living-learning communities, to think through funding and staffing issues, and to create a process for approving proposals. No community began without one to two years of planning. Having a purpose and mission, clearly delineated roles for faculty and staff, and commitments from students helped determine the viability of a proposed community.

At present, there are already several living or residential learning communities at Rutgers. Douglass College has established communities made up of language, cultural, and special-interest houses, such as the Human Rights House, that reflect undergraduates' interests. On Busch campus, there exists a residential learning community focused on television production and programming. (The *New York Times* recently published a piece on Rutgers' living-learning communities; see Lisa W. Foderado, "Learning Communities; Under One Roof," *New York Times*, April 24, 2005.)

Recognition of current student living patterns in New Brunswick/Piscataway suggests that learning communities ought to be mainly nonresidential, with options for residential components, rather than the other way around. Students should not only be encouraged to participate in a learning community if they live off campus, but should also be allowed to participate in any community they choose if they live on campus (and no matter where they reside). While a given campus might be permeated with the activities and the flavor of the learning communities, the focus should be on the activities and the students, faculty, and staff within the community, not on the residential living. Douglass is likely to be the hub of activities relating to women's and gender issues. For example, women who want to immerse themselves in the study of women's issues might well benefit from living on the Douglass campus, but they need not do so to be a part of a learning community located there.

There are many ways to determine the eligibility requirements and the selection process for learning communities. For instance, students might apply by submitting statements of interest or by presenting writing samples or portfolios of their work. Students could also be invited by learning communities or programs to participate. Learning communities should provide incentives to students through a variety of strategies: by demonstrating that participation is both an honor and an opportunity; by recording students' participation on transcripts; by providing internships and other opportunities for preprofessional networking; and by offering sustained mentoring by faculty, staff, and alumni/ae. These and other strategies can help convince students that their participation in learning communities does matter—that it “counts” toward their future.

Creating learning communities at Rutgers will require leadership from the campus deans, initiative from faculty, sustained support from the administration and staff, and a willingness of students to commit to full participation. It will take more than simply collecting people in one place.

### **Focuses of Learning Communities**

Learning communities provide sustained, long-term opportunities for students at every stage of their college life. Different communities can be created to meet the particular needs of first-, second-, third-, and fourth-year students, and, in addition, to provide them with appropriate challenges and opportunities at each stage of their college career. Communities can be set up to help members of the entering class orient themselves to college life, while other communities can be established to offer advanced capstone courses for seniors. Communities can be established to encourage scholarly and social interactions between graduate students and undergraduate students, and others can be set up for transfer students to help them transition to the experience of attending a research university.

At Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, learning communities are likely to range considerably in scope and diversity. Some communities can be created to provide intensive academic and cocurricular experiences in specific disciplines or aspects of a discipline in accordance with the proposed core curriculum. Some communities can be established in conjunction with centers and institutes to promote interdisciplinary research, while others can be created to provide preprofessional opportunities for undergraduates. For instance, communities could be set up especially for groups of honors students. Another could be set up in relationship to the Rutgers University Press for students who have an interest in publishing. In such a scenario, students could benefit from interacting with and learning from the professional staff of the press. An additional benefit of learning communities results from the integration of university staff into the lives and learning experiences of undergraduate students.

A learning community can be organized for faculty, students, and staff interested in exploring research in computational science, an area of scholarly inquiry that uses computers to complement experiments and theoretical research in biology and chemistry. Evidence suggests that computational science can prove to be indispensable for addressing complex problems in the traditional domains of science and engineering, as well as in more recent areas of concern such as national security and public health. A federal advisory committee has recommended that

universities across the nation launch interdisciplinary ventures in the area of computational science (“Computational Science: America’s Competitive Challenge,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 29, 2005, p. A33). Given the enormous national interest in this area and the prospect of federal support, Rutgers should consider creating a learning community focusing on computational science.

Existing programs at Rutgers can become learning communities. One prospect is the Douglass Project for Rutgers Women in Math, Science and Engineering, which can be expanded to include residential opportunities (on several campuses) that offer cocurricular programming, internships, and apprenticeships in industries where women are significantly underrepresented (e.g., nuclear engineering and nuclear physics). Advisory groups of scientists (and former graduates) can be recruited to help students and faculty design the focus of the program. Engaging with controversial issues of the day involving science—the impact of new medical possibilities, such as cloning; the challenges presented by issues relating to the end of life, and so forth—will add to the potential scope and dimension of this learning community.

Learning communities, moreover, can provide opportunities for training teachers. The potential of learning communities to function as a teacher’s academy that encourages young men and women to enter the teaching profession may well attract participation by faculty from the Graduate School of Education and other schools and disciplines at Rutgers, as well as garner support from the New Jersey Department of Education and local public and private schools.

The Leadership Alliance, a coalition established in 1992 by 29 higher education institutions, has identified the critical need to attract more minority students to different scientific and engineering fields. Given this concern, a learning community can be organized at Rutgers in a “parallel” structure to coordinate with the Graduate School’s RISE program (Research in Science and Engineering), which has succeeded in attracting and preparing talented students from underrepresented groups for careers in those fields. Such a learning community, moreover, can help to address Rutgers’ concern with preparing undergraduates in areas such as quantitative biology. This example suggests the ways in which learning communities can serve to meet both institutional goals and social objectives.

A Law and Society House can be developed as a learning community—residential for some participants—for students and faculty to examine questions that probe how law shapes societal issues such as inequality, citizenship, health care, and work. Such a learning community can draw upon research from various disciplines—political science, philosophy, history, health, sociology, economics—to examine law-related issues ranging from ethics and professional judgment to social justice and public policy. To enhance its intellectual mission, this community can offer a range of cocurricular activities such as study groups, casual gatherings, and lectures by faculty and other legal scholars. Prelaw students should find affiliating with this learning community attractive for helping them gain admission into law school and, subsequently, placement in firms. Students who are not likely to pursue law as a profession can benefit from participating in this learning community as well because the experience can help them gain substantive knowledge and hone their critical thinking skills.

Other learning communities can be developed to meet the diverse needs of preprofessional students in the sciences and the humanities. Faculty from many disciplines can be attracted to participate in preprofessional learning communities that provide an ethical foundation to business majors; arts education for students preparing to teach in primary and secondary schools; law and literature for those intending to be accountants; cognitive science and conflict resolution for premedical students; grounding in sociology and economics for prelaw students; philosophy for physicists; etc. Students who participate in these learning communities can be awarded certificates not only to indicate their preprofessional preparation, but also to make them more attractive candidates to potential employers and professional schools.

Learning communities that focus on civic engagement and social responsibility can help students develop their citizenship skills and values, provide faculty with opportunities to integrate their teaching and research with public and community engagement, and establish partnerships between the university and the local community. Civic learning communities are likely to attract faculty and staff from various centers and institutes at Rutgers, such as the Community Development Institute, the Eagleton Institute of Politics, and the Center for American Democracy (which sponsored a community service house on the College Avenue campus some years ago). Not-for-profit organizations and political and advocacy groups can potentially serve as partners for internships and cocurricular activities.

A learning community that focuses on food and culture can attract students, faculty, and staff from different disciplines: food science and urban ecology, American studies, anthropology, and perhaps even literature and film studies. This community might consider, among other issues, the different ways humans use food: to satisfy human nutritional needs, to communicate, to build and sustain community, and to create culture. Cook's Student Organic Farm, which operates as a co-op and offers a soup kitchen, supplying some 300 "shareholders," might serve as a partner in this venture.

There is renewed interest in cooperative education at other public universities (e.g., Michigan, Maryland, Penn State), which can offer unique ideas for learning communities in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Currently at Rutgers, there are co-op programs at the School of Engineering involving 20 students and at Cook College involving more than 300 students. Learning communities set up to provide co-op programs involving business, pharmacy, the liberal arts, and the sciences (and, notably, computer science) can be especially attractive for students, faculty, and career services staff. Establishing such learning communities can help address the proposed experiential learning requirement in the core curriculum.

For a comprehensive bibliography on learning communities, see <http://www.acuho.ohio-state.edu/resource%20center/Living-Learning.html>. Also see web sites for the following universities where learning communities have been established: Minnesota, Michigan, Maryland, North Carolina, Miami of Ohio, Arizona, Virginia, and California-Berkeley. The National Learning Communities Project home page provides a variety of information about learning communities as well. The experience of learning communities at other universities can be useful to determine the establishment of residential and nonresidential communities at Rutgers in the immediate future.

## **Incentives and Funding**

The culture, ethos, and character of teaching within learning communities can prove to be both challenging and rewarding not only to students but also to faculty. We should therefore design our policies and our incentive and reward systems to complement the pedagogical aspirations of faculty (and counteract the inclination and practice—the institutional culture—that cause faculty to distance themselves from anything other than their own disciplinary worlds). A useful model for rewarding faculty commitment to undergraduate education is available from the Academy of Distinguished Teachers at the University of Texas-Austin. Developed to improve the quality and depth of the undergraduate experience, the academy honors tenured faculty for excellence in teaching, promotes a sense of community among teachers, fosters research, and advises on teaching policies and practices. Distinguished teachers—5 percent of the tenured faculty—are recognized and receive extra pay for their “sustained and significant contribution to education, particularly at the undergraduate level” (<http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/academy/>). Other strategies can be implemented to promote faculty commitment to working with undergraduates beyond the classroom. Funds can be allocated for teacher scholars recruited to serve as mentors to colleagues, to give public presentations on teaching, to advance “good” practices, and to work with student academic leaders on the campuses. Funds should also be made available for the development of innovative and long-term teaching projects, especially those that are explicitly connected to learning communities.

Financial resources will be needed to develop and implement learning communities. At the start, planning grants should be made available. After reviewing submissions by campus deans and a core group of faculty and support staff from residence life and student services, the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education will administer and award these grants. These grants can draw from some portion of the Academic Excellence Fund. Alumni interest can also be generated to support and fund learning communities, particularly those that build on the history, legacy, and geography of the campuses. Private support should be sought as well.

Staff support of faculty is essential to developing and sustaining learning communities. Accordingly, we recommend that a Task Force on Learning Communities be established, consisting of faculty, students, and staff; this task force will facilitate development and provide long-term continuity. The main goal is to avoid elaborate and difficult requirements and to plan the process so that faculty are encouraged, and supported, in their work with undergraduates in learning communities.

## **Conclusion**

The creation of a single Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences will make possible the direct and sustained reengagement of faculty and students in undergraduate education. To make this reengagement dynamic and meaningful requires the involvement of everyone—students, faculty, administrators, and staff. Establishing and sustaining stimulating and effective learning communities is an essential part of this process of discovering the potential of Rutgers as a research university *for* undergraduates.



## **3 | THE UNDERGRADUATE’S EXPERIENCE**

### **I. OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION**

The experience of being a student at Rutgers extends beyond the classroom, and includes a broader experience than even the Learning Communities will provide. The Working Group on the Student Experience concentrated on the following critical aspects of student experience at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway: advisement, academic support, cocurricular activities, residence halls, counseling centers, and safety issues. Addressing these issues can help enhance the willingness and ability of students to become more engaged in the institutional culture and intellectual life of the university.

#### ***Who Are Our Students?***

Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway has a very large and diverse undergraduate student population. Because Rutgers students come from a variety of cultural, economic, and educational backgrounds, efforts to maintain and improve upon the high-quality educational experience offered by this institution will need to continue to accommodate and reflect this diversity. In fall 2003, 14 percent of students in New Brunswick/Piscataway came from families where neither parent had attended college, and an additional 15 percent came from families where one or both parents had some college experience but did not complete college. The racial, ethnic, and gender composition of the student body is now enormously varied. The enrollment of Asian-American students has increased during the period from 1976 (when data about race/ethnicity were first collected) to 2004, from 1.4 percent (317) to 21.4 percent (5,737). The number of Latino/as has more than tripled in this same time period, from 2.4 percent (547) in 1976 to 8.2 percent (2,210) in 2004. In 1976, African Americans constituted 8.4 percent (1,893) of the population at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway; in 2004, they constituted 8.6 percent (2,309).

### **II. PROBLEMS: WHAT OUR STUDENTS ARE TELLING US**

Three main themes underlie the problems we identified in our discussions: disparities, confusion, and disengagement of both faculty and students. Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway is a difficult and complex university to navigate, and students often experience what they believe to be the “runaround.” The Rutgers Constituency Research Project Report commissioned by the university points to the positive perceptions of Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway in the community in general, but also identifies many problems with respect to the student experience at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. Among the problems identified in the report, and confirmed by students in our focus groups, are concerns with safety, advisement, career counseling, and residence halls.

## *Transforming Undergraduate Education*

### *A Disengaged Community*

The Undergraduate Task Force identified a recurrent problem at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway—namely, the disengagement of the faculty from the academic and cocurricular lives of undergraduate students. The Working Group recognizes that there are many faculty members who care deeply about undergraduate education. Yet faculty in New Brunswick/Piscataway do not perceive teaching and, especially, service to be valued at the university. Although instructions for promotion and tenure include references to the value of teaching and service, the main criterion for tenure is scholarship. Departments at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway may define criteria for merit increases within the framework set for general teaching/research faculty. However, some departments may choose to make research the *only* or the major criterion for merit increases for faculty, thereby creating a tangible disincentive for faculty members to spend time on teaching and service. Against this backdrop, the task of reengaging faculty in teaching and service and in more active participation in undergraduate education beyond the classroom is not easy.

Students' engagement in the life of the university is frequently compromised. Participation in events and activities at the university is constrained by complex work and class schedules. Many of our students are commuters and many who live on campus work and have little time for events on campus outside of class. The majority of students in the classes of faculty members in the Working Group work at least 10 hours a week.

Participation in the life of the university is also compromised by failures in communication. Although efforts to communicate with students are varied and sometimes numerous, students frequently do not access their email accounts or post office boxes. They also tend to rely on informal sources of information.

### *The Constituency Report*

The Constituency Report provides an overview of some of the key issues influencing the quality of students' experiences at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. The following are some of the responses provided by Rutgers students that are included in the Constituency Report.

<i>Aspect of Rutgers</i>	<i>Percent of respondents who were positive</i>
Overall quality of educational experience	83%
Teaching quality	78%
Cocurricular Activities	73%
Student Services	67%
Career Counseling	60%
Academic Advising	52%
Availability of Courses	51%
Residence Halls	49%
Likely to Recommend Rutgers	53%

The Constituency Report does not break down students' responses based on their college affiliation. The focus groups we conducted suggested that students' judgments of aspects of Rutgers noted above most likely varied by college.



### *Focus Groups*

Members of the Working Group met with the Vice President for Student Affairs' Leadership Council, and conducted focus groups with students from Douglass, Rutgers, Cook, Livingston, and University Colleges as well as the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy and the School of Engineering.

Students in the focus groups recognize and appreciate that many people at the university—both staff and faculty—work very hard to assist the undergraduate student population. It was also clear that these students valued Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway and had many positive things to say. However, the quality of students' experiences at the university varied widely. Some students felt they belonged to a cohesive community, while others felt that they were treated like second-class citizens.

It is important to note that the students who participated in these discussions are not necessarily representative of Rutgers students, as they are successfully engaged in the university and have more access to faculty, staff, and resources than more typical students. Nevertheless, many of their beliefs about their positive experience at Rutgers, as well as the problems they identified, are consistent with the findings of the Constituency Report. Among the problems identified by the focus groups are issues concerning the quality of the residence halls, advisement and career counseling, availability of courses, and safety issues.

## **III. ADVISEMENT**

### ***BACKGROUND***

Extensive efforts are made to provide academic advice to students. Premajor advising is largely provided by the colleges, and the colleges devote considerable effort to making advisement available and accessible to students. A variety of types of advisement are available including orientations, drop-in advising, peer advising, first-year advising, availability of advising office, etc. The advising for majors is provided by individual departments, though this service varies considerably among departments, with the number of majors influencing the scope and methods of advising available to students. Career Services provides career advising, and special advising offices offer advising for students with specialty or professional concentrations, such as premedical students.

The issue of advisement has been of concern for some time, and has previously been considered in detail by the University Senate, other special committees, and the New Brunswick Faculty Council. These bodies voiced a number of concerns, including the lack of coordination among services and the failure of many students to take advantage of the resources available to them.

## **PROBLEMS**

The Constituency Report noted that only 52 percent of current students surveyed ( $n > 1000$ ) were positive about their experiences of academic advising and only 60 percent of students were positive about their experiences of career counseling. Thus, every second student at the university is unhappy about his or her experience with academic advising. According to the University Senate Report on advising: “At Rutgers, a survey of 1,295 former Rutgers students who had discontinued their studies for three consecutive semesters found that user satisfaction with advising/counseling services was lower in all areas than that of graduating seniors.”

### **Advising Services – Satisfaction Rates**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Former Students</b>	<b>Graduating Seniors</b>
Academic Advising	47%	54%
Career Planning	52%	67%
Psychological Counseling	46%	75%

The fact that these students were not at Rutgers for the full four years, and so had less opportunity to use these services, might have led them to be somewhat dissatisfied with university resources such as Career Services. These findings, however, are consistent with other studies of student perceptions of advising services and student satisfaction. Perhaps most significantly, the Rutgers survey illustrated that, in comparison to students who graduated, those who withdrew consistently reported a lower rate of faculty interaction.

Students in our focus groups provided insightful comments about the need to improve the advising services offered at Rutgers. While these students felt that it was an individual student’s responsibility to seek information, they reported that students were frequently given the wrong information by various sources. While admitting that they also ignored email messages from the university, they criticized the impersonal and nondescript subject headings and the blandness of the content of the messages. (Again, it is important to keep in mind that the students in our focus groups tend to be the more involved students who take responsibility for their work and actions. They also tend to be linked into a network of individuals who can answer questions.)

## **OUR DELIBERATIONS**

In our discussions, we distinguished among first-year advising (basically following the college requirements), premajor advising, and advising in the major. First-year and premajor advising are largely provided by the colleges, and each college has its own advisement system(s). Major advising is provided by the departments. The Rutgers University Senate Instruction, Curricula, and Advising Committee provided a set of recommendations (see Appendix 2) related to advising that formed the basis for some of our discussions on advising. The committee’s recommendations addressed the following: the process of academic advising, who advises, training and professional development, and technology.

### *Availability of Advising*

Students in the focus groups reported that the student population does have access to advising in a variety of ways—such as the advisement office at Livingston College, peer and staff counselors, residence hall counselors, and friends—though some students, admittedly, may not actively take advantage of these resources. Students reported getting conflicting information from various sources or being misadvised and getting contradictory advice in response to the same question. The various differences in policies across the colleges—e.g., regulations about grade changes, graduation requirements, etc.—create confusion and frustration for students. Some students also reported being confused with the designated title of “counselor,” as the term is used to describe staff with many different kinds of functions, from psychological counseling to academic counseling.

From conversations with the college deans, it was clear to us that intense efforts are made to reach students and provide them with information. We appreciate the university's efforts in providing different advising options to ensure that more students will have access to some form of advisement. However, we also feel that this variety has the unfortunate effect of impressing upon students the misleading idea that “all sources of advice are equal.” Because there are so many delivery mechanisms for advising, students are led to think that anyone can provide advice and, as a result, fail to seek the proper authority for advice.

### *Orientation Programs*

Student orientation programs, conducted primarily by the colleges, are important for introducing new and transfer students to the rich array of services and resources at Rutgers. However, at present, there is little or no coordination among the colleges to provide a unified and equitable orientation program that introduces all incoming students to the New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses. Many universities offer extensive orientation programs and employ professional, full-time staff to assist new and transfer students. Instituting a unified, equitable, and professionally organized orientation program at Rutgers is necessary to help new and transfer students better understand and navigate the complex administrative structure and geographical layout of Rutgers.

### *First-year and Premajor Advising*

Advising concerns begin with the information available to students on entry to the university. It is critical that students be placed in appropriate classes in their first semester, and that classes be appropriate both in terms of student interest and placement. However, in our focus groups, students told us they did not realize the importance of the placement exams nor their function. They reported treating them carelessly, and some felt that they were placed in inappropriate classes.

First-year advising is usually done by professional staff. Premajor advising is also most frequently done by professional staff; typically, such advising is related to the general graduation requirements of the college. Although there are many counterexamples, it seems that the efforts of the college staffs, academic departments, and career services are not well coordinated. For

## *Transforming Undergraduate Education*

instance, the staff at Career Services reported that students often come to their offices seeking academic advice about course selection. For many students, the relationship between Career Services and general academic advising remains unclear. The involvement of faculty in premajor advising seems to be limited, which is problematic if students are choosing majors with a view to having a career with the major. Students often have unrealistic expectations about what a career in a particular field will be like. They also are likely to have limited knowledge about the choices that are available to them.

We endorse the University Senate recommendations that training programs should be provided and that there be greater use of web-based assistance (see Senate recommendations 5,6,7,8). Web-based information offers a great deal of potential for advising students on where to find information and when to seek advice, and for providing a way to check graduation requirements (see Senate recommendations 8, 9). A degree check system is well underway to being fully implemented; this system will allow students to check their progress towards a degree. Most of the college web pages do not do a good job of informing students *why* they should seek advice, and few provide links to necessary sources of information. None of the college web pages seems to link advisement and careers, although a few departments do so. One exception is the Rutgers College web site, which provides clear links to Health Professions advisement, prelaw advisement, and teacher education programs. Responses to many routine inquiries could be automated through the use of web-based advising systems, and enable students to use face-to-face advisement time to discuss more pressing issues. An excellent model is provided by University College's email-based advising program, "Ask an Advisor." Advising information is computerized and available to all advisers. The potential of giving and receiving conflicting or inaccurate information is greatly reduced, because this system allows advisers to retrieve information and summaries of previous visits made by students.

### *Career Planning*

Working Group chair Angela O'Donnell and colleagues are currently conducting a National Science Foundation-funded analysis of students' choices of careers. The project's 2004 survey of 895 students at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway underscored students' focus on careers. Students reported choosing majors that provide challenging courses whose content will help them in future jobs. They indicated that they expected their majors to help them find interesting jobs related to the major, that they want their careers to be challenging, and that they expect to succeed in their careers. They also reported that teachers and parents have little influence over their choice of majors. These findings suggest a troubling disconnect between general advising and career planning.

### *Faculty Involvement*

Any recommendations intended to increase faculty participation in advising (for example, Senate recommendations 3 and 6) must be considered in light of the perceived lack of value attached to teaching and service. As advising is a component of these activities, the Working Group felt that the faculty have little/no incentive to participate in advising. Members believed that simple "affirmation" of value would not result in any meaningful participation by faculty in advisement. The Senate recommendations also acknowledge the problems with incentives (see Senate

recommendation 6). The Senate recommendations for increasing faculty participation are predicated on the idea that advising remains localized within the various colleges, which is contrary to our own recommendations.

The Senate recommendations call for the recruitment and/or hiring of supplemental advisers, though it is not clear how such recruitment would occur. When colleges have run “majors fairs,” they often rely on the same faculty, creating an undue burden on particular faculty who are willing to participate in such events. The lack of coordination among the colleges in these efforts creates problems for faculty. Working Group members believe that it is not feasible to implement Senate recommendations 3 and 4.

### *Major Advising*

How departments advise students about majors varies enormously across departments. Large departments in particular find advising to be a challenge. Departments may share advising among all or most faculty, assign one or more faculty to serve as advisers, or may employ adjunct faculty or a staff member to advise all majors.

Several departments in the university provide models that we consider noteworthy.

*A Department with a Small Number of Majors.* The Department of Physics and Astronomy has a small number of students pursuing the majors offered by the department. It lists its undergraduate majors on its web site. Thirty-three students were expected to graduate in May 2005, 38 in 2006, and 20 in 2007. A student in one of our focus groups commented very favorably about the interactions between students and faculty in the department. The web site for undergraduates in the department includes information on major and minor programs, a group photograph of students majoring in physics, and information about available scholarships, prizes, and internships.

*A Department with a Large Number of Majors.* The Department of Psychology has approximately 1,400 students majoring in psychology and a similar number minoring in psychology. Professor Len Hamilton has devoted a great deal of time and effort to providing comprehensive information for students on the department's web site. Included on that site are information about research and graduate schools, descriptions of the majors and minors, a checklist for the major, and a schedule for applying to graduate school. In addition, Professor Hamilton established email advising through the use of [advisor@psych.rutgers.edu](mailto:advisor@psych.rutgers.edu). Students' inquiries are typically answered within 24 hours, and hundreds of email exchanges occur every month. The efforts involved in this enterprise are quite impressive. Extensive advisement information is available through the psychology department web site at <http://psych.rutgers.edu/undergrad/advising.html>. Detailed information is also provided to students about the steps they need to take in order to be prepared to apply to graduate school in psychology (see <http://psych.rutgers.edu/undergrad/gradschool.html>).

*ARTSYS: NJ Transfer.* Both Cook College and University College use ARTSYS, a web-based data information system designed to assist prospective transfer students from New Jersey community colleges with their course selections at the community college. They can find out if

there is an equivalent course at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, and if the course satisfies a general or a major requirement. NJ Transfer can also be used to look up the Recommended Transfer Program for any undergraduate major at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

*Summary*

Despite heroic efforts by many staff and faculty to provide advice to students, students report dissatisfaction with advisement. Some of the problems relate to the differences in requirements and policies across colleges (e.g., requirements for a minor or participation in the honors program). These issues are being addressed by the Working Group on Curriculum of the Task Force on Undergraduate Education. There is a lack of coordination between departments and colleges and a need to bridge the gap between first-year advising, premajor advising, and advising in the major. There are some exemplary practices in place that might be used as models.

*RECOMMENDATIONS*

***Recommendation 1:*** The university should establish a central advising office on each campus. This office should include personnel from career services.

- The purpose of a central office will be to coordinate advisement services.
- Individuals will be identified whose responsibility it is to coordinate with the academic departments in various disciplines to bridge the gap between premajor advising and advising in the major. This may require the appointment of professional advisers with expertise in social sciences, humanities, sciences, and mathematical disciplines.
- Specific advisers for transfer students will be appointed.
- The office will be responsible for developing and providing training in advisement in accordance with the standards of the National Academic Advising Association.

***Recommendation 2:*** Student records should be digitized so they are available from any location (with appropriate security) in which advisement might occur. Records of advice provided should also be maintained.

***Recommendation 3:*** The use of NJ Transfer should be extended.

***Recommendation 4:*** Standards for the provision of information on college web pages should be developed and implemented so that consistent kinds of information are made available to students.

***Recommendation 5:*** The university should develop an orientation program for all new and transfer students; and program organizers should report to the vice president for undergraduate education.

**Recommendation 6:** University orientations should be supplemented with information relevant to the campus on which students live as first-year students.

**Recommendation 7:** A study of successful orientation programs at other institutions should be conducted and the university should consider implementing best practice programs recommended by the National Orientation Directors Association.

**Recommendation 8:** Students should be strongly encouraged to limit the number of hours that they work. Excessive work interferes with students' ability to profit from the educational opportunities at the university.

**Recommendation 9:** A clearinghouse of opportunities to work on faculty research should be made available so that students can work on campus rather than elsewhere.

#### **IV. ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

##### ***BACKGROUND AND PROBLEMS***

Rutgers has an extensive set of academic support services including the Learning Resource Centers (now called Rutgers Learning Centers); the centers of the Writing Program; the Douglass Project for Women in Math, Science, and Engineering; the Math and Science Learning Center; the Office of Minority Undergraduate Science Programs; the Educational Opportunity Fund Programs; the Student Support Services Program; the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program; and the Academic Support Services for Student Athletes. Faculty participation in the Learning Resource Centers in particular, but also in other academic support units, is necessary if faculty are to have trust that these services are appropriate and relevant to the needs of their courses. Faculty members have repeatedly expressed grave concern about the lack of faculty participation in and oversight of the Learning Resource Centers and other academic support services. This is a key area in which the faculty are disengaged not by volition, but by established structures. These services are intended to help students succeed in courses and curricula developed, taught, and/or overseen by the faculty. This lack of coordination between these academic services and faculty remains a problem, however. Students consequently suffer from this disconnect because:

- Faculty may not be alerting students to appropriate sources of support.
- Faculty may not be taking advantage of some services that are available to them that would assist them to help students in their courses.
- Students may not make use of services that the faculty does not support.

##### *Previous Studies and External Review*

The New Brunswick Faculty Council established a committee at its October 15, 1999, meeting to examine the functioning of the Learning Resource Centers (LRCs). The committee was asked to “(i) address faculty and administrative concerns regarding the LRCs and their interactions with faculty and with other academic support and retention programs, (ii) make recommendations for

improving the impact and effectiveness of the LRCs, and (iii) devise and implement an effective mechanism for ongoing faculty advice and oversight of the LRCs.” The subsequent external review of all academic support units derived from the work of this committee. The 2002 External Review of Academic Support Service made the following recommendations that centered on the need for the development of systematic, ongoing, and timely assessment programs.

- Each academic support program should gather, in a systematic fashion, basic utilization data, such as the demographic characteristics of students who participate in their programs and services.
- Academic support services should systematically assess level of student satisfaction, as well as faculty/academic department satisfaction with their services and activities.
- Academic support services should engage in systematic assessment of the impact of their programs on specific outcomes, such as academic achievement, educational attainment and the acquisition of various academic skills and competencies (i.e., writing proficiency).
- There is a need for various academic support units to not only increase cooperation and collaboration among themselves, but also with important institutional constituents such as faculty and academic units.
- The review recommended that the university consider reinstating the Advisory Committee on Developmental Education to improve coordination between and among various academic support units.
- Because few directors were aware of an “institutional retention initiative,” more attention should be directed at helping directors understand the critical role they play in achieving specific institutional retention objectives.
- The review highly recommended that more institutional attention be focused on the transfer student experience. Academic support programs can, and should, play an important role in ensuring the success of transfer students.
- More attention should be paid to services for disabilities.
- In discussions of the LRCs, the review made no recommendation regarding which of the following two perspectives should prevail:
  - A disciplinary perspective that favors learning support embedded directly in the disciplines; or
  - A generalist perspective that strengthens ties between Learning Resource Center staff members and faculty/staff/administrators in mathematics, science, and English.

#### *Changes since the External Review*

The external review document was presented in 2002, and much has changed since its publication. Data is routinely collected about usage of resources, although data about the connections between use of services and achievement are infrequent. Services for disabled students have been relocated to the Learning Resource Centers and there are some greater efforts at communication and coordination. The Working Group discussed at length the recommendations of the external review team. At this time, there is little formal faculty participation in academic support programs. There are, of course, counterexamples, but there is



no structure in place to coordinate the activities of various support services that may serve the same students.

### *Students' Responses to Academic Support*

Focus groups conducted with users of the Learning Resource Centers by the Center for Organizational Development and Leadership indicated that users were positive about the availability of these centers. The executive summary notes that students want “to have services that included expert advice and teaching from well-trained advisers and tutors who are always available; personal support and small group study settings; teaching of study skills and test preparation assistance; help developing time management skills; career advice; job preparation, and information about jobs and internships.” Thus, students' needs are both discipline specific and discipline general.

Additional focus groups conducted with students at the various colleges also indicated that students were positive about the LRCs, the EOF program, and the Math and Science Learning Center (other sources of support were not mentioned). Some students in the focus groups did not use the centers but had heard from others that they were helpful. The students who did use the centers were very positive about them. Students in the engineering and pharmacy schools wished to have more tutoring available to them in their subject areas.

### *Response to the External Review by CSPAD*

In response to the external review, the Committee on Standards and Priorities in Academic Development (CSPAD) made the following recommendations:

- The Learning Resource Centers should be reorganized as discipline-based programs, except for a general study skills component. The discipline-based centers should be within academic departments. Outcomes data measuring the effect of LRC services in both the short term and long term should be developed.
- The Math and Science Learning Center should be incorporated into the reorganized Learning Resource Center structure.
- Stable funding for the writing centers of the Writing Program should be secured; a permanent director should be hired; latent demand should be evaluated and the program should be funded to meet the demand.
- To improve the Office of Minority Undergraduate Science Programs, cooperation with the math and science tutoring programs for the general student population should be explored.
- EOF and similar programs should strive for more coordination and information sharing; they should also seek supplemental funding from new sources. The external reviewers and CSPAD did not comment on the McNair Program.
- Academic Support Services for Student Athletes should improve outcomes assessment and should seek external funding.
- Douglass Project for Rutgers Women in Math, Science, and Engineering should survey current and former participants to obtain hard assessment data; press for support for demonstrably successful programs from the Rutgers University

Foundation and within the university; and continue to develop contacts with regular faculty.

- Project L/EARN should be supported with release time for the faculty director and through university resources to supplement National Institute of Mental Health funding.

Because only a summary of the CSPAD report was available, it was not possible to gain an understanding of the reasoning behind these recommendations. It was noted by the Working Group that CSPAD does not have a history of evaluating academic support programs. Instead, it typically evaluates the quality of academic departments as evidenced primarily by the quality of the faculty and graduate programs.

Members of the Working Group did not agree that the LRCs should be reorganized as discipline-based centers within academic departments. The staffing and faculty resources to provide these services if organized in this way are simply not available. The issues related to security and supervision that would result from basing these services in academic departments would be enormous. Many of the recommendations made by the CSPAD committee reiterate the recommendations of the external review with respect to the need to collect assessment data. CSPAD recommends that outcome data be collected for the Learning Resource Centers, the Douglass Project, and support services for athletes. The committee does not include recommendations for assessment for the other support services. Members of the Working Group agree with the need to coordinate services in order to limit duplication of services and to prevent the possibility of working at cross-purposes. We also support the need for the collection of assessment data. Without assessment data related to all of these programs, decisions about how to coordinate services cannot be made adequately.

***Recommendation 10:*** The university should institute a Coordinating Council on Academic Support to improve coordination between and among various academic support units and to oversee the collection of outcomes data from the various academic support units. Currently, there is little coordination among units.

- The Coordinating Council should report to the vice president for undergraduate education.
- The Coordinating Council should make recommendations about policies affecting academic support, identification of priorities, and communications to students.
- The Coordinating Council should be responsible for ongoing evaluations of the effectiveness of support services that include measures of use and effects on achievement.
- The composition of the council should include faculty from the disciplines in which students most typically need support (chemistry, biology, physics, psychology, English, mathematics, economics) and the directors of the various academic support services.
- Criteria for selecting tutors in various disciplines should be established by faculty in the various disciplines.
- Training of tutors should include both domain-general skills and domain-specific skills.

- Training in domain-specific skills should involve faculty from the targeted disciplines.
- Directors of academic support services should report to the vice president for undergraduate education.

## **V. COCURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### ***OVERVIEW***

There are many problems for students with respect to cocurricular activities and general students' experiences at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. Among these are 1) problems of identity with the university and college community, 2) disengagement of both faculty and students, and 3) structural impediments to creating a rich set of cocurricular and extracurricular activities as well as individual variances in the ability of students to take advantage of the rich cocurricular activities offered by the university.

### ***PROBLEMS***

#### *Identity and Community*

President McCormick asked the Task Force at its initial meeting, “What does it mean to be a Rutgers student?” The answer at this time is that it *depends*. Only 53 percent of students who responded to the Constituency Report were very likely to recommend Rutgers. Thus, almost half of our students report that they were either not likely or only somewhat likely to recommend Rutgers to others. The following anecdote illustrates the widely varied experiences of students. One student known to a member of the Working Group came to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway with her best friend from grade school. She and her friend went to high school together and, when they came to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, they lived in the same residence hall and later shared a house. One student loves Rutgers, has small classes in her selected major, has developed friendships with people in her major, has close interactions with the faculty, and has been involved in research experiences with faculty members. Her friend has had the opposite experiences. Her classes remain large even late in the major. The faculty are distant from students, and students in the major do not know one another. Her experience has been one of alienation. To decrease students' sense of alienation will require a comprehensive set of strategies to ensure that most, if not all, students have a positive experience while at Rutgers. Positive connections between faculty and students, such as the one described above, are not rare, though such experiences need to be created and cultivated on a regular basis.

In the focus groups we conducted with small numbers of students from each of the colleges and from the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy and the School of Engineering, we encountered similar disparities in the experiences of students. The students who seemed happiest were those at Cook College. They felt very identified with Cook and believed that it was very easy to get involved with research and that their professors were very involved with student activities. The college has a co-op office that helps students get involved in credit-bearing research or internships. The students valued these opportunities. Cook students do not have a lottery for

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housing, and they can remain in the same residence hall for multiple years. Residence Life also runs a Faculty Floors Mentor Program. Faculty go to the residence halls and hold classes or discussions with students on various environmental topics. Cook students with whom we spoke were concerned about the possible dissolution of Cook College (rumors about the work of the Task Force greatly exceeded the pace of the Task Force). Mostly they were concerned that any changes would ruin their sense of community.

Students at Livingston College did not share the views of Cook students, and are among the least satisfied students at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. They felt they were treated as second-class citizens and almost everything about their experience served to remind them of this. They noted the disparity between their student center and those at other parts of the university. The campus center has no informal seating areas to encourage interaction. Students were very concerned about safety and lighting. They noted none of the very large buses went to Livingston, something they felt provided further evidence that they were not valued. It would be fair to say that they reluctantly identified with Livingston. One student reported that she lied when she was asked to which college she belonged.

Students at other colleges fell between these extremes. Students at Douglass College expressed feeling connected to their college, and feeling a sense of community. However, they were also very concerned, as they had heard there were plans to abolish the college structure. Students in the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy felt that faculty did not have time to engage with them. They felt that there were good programs run by students but these were poorly attended as students were also disengaged. Rutgers College students who attended the focus group were committed to the university but also recognized that their experience was not the same as that of many of their peers. The size of Rutgers College made it difficult for students to feel connected to their college or even to the university. The University College students with whom we spoke did not feel particularly connected to University College. Those we spoke to were full-time students who participated in the general life of the university and were not representative of nontraditional-age students who were taking classes at night. They noted, however, that unlike students at the other colleges, they had almost no facilities (one poorly furnished lounge in Scott Hall) and no student center to call their own.

Students' experiences of feeling identified with the university or college and their belief that they are part of a community vary as a function of both the college in which they are enrolled and the major they have selected. The disparity of resources across colleges institutionalizes a disparity in the quality of student experience.

### *Disengagement of the Faculty and Students*

One of the fundamental principles guiding the work of the Task Force is that undergraduate education should take place within an intellectual environment that connects the academic and the larger university community, a principle that clearly requires faculty to be engaged in the lives of students beyond the classroom. We appreciate the significant and creative efforts made by a large number of dedicated staff at the various colleges to provide interesting programs of cocurricular activities in the residence halls and campus centers. However, at this time, we also feel that more involvement on the part of faculty is necessary. We find that some faculty members are disinclined to participate more fully in nonrequired activities such as student clubs

and in cocurricular activities in the residence halls. To increase faculty involvement and interactions with students at this research institution, faculty need to be rewarded and recognized for doing so. We understand that simply inviting faculty into the residence halls to give an occasional lecture on a topic will not solve the problem of the lack of faculty involvement with undergraduate students. Approaches that are more creative are required to develop more meaningful involvement of the faculty with the lives of students. The absence of faculty in the life of students is troubling, but understandable. Other institutions such as Stanford University and the University of Michigan have addressed this concern with some success. Rutgers should explore approaches that have worked at these institutions to see if they might be adapted for use here.

Aside from the general climate that discourages faculty participation in students' activities, there are also real and increasing demands on faculty time. The demands on faculty at a research university do not permit the kind of engagement that might occur in a four-year liberal arts college. The diversity of programs and colleges requesting faculty participation for duplicative efforts also discourages faculty from participating in many activities, and reduces the number of faculty who will participate in any given event.

Faculty are not the only members of the community who are disengaged. Many students are also disengaged. Students frequently return home to their families on weekends, spend many hours working, do not check communications from the university, or do not participate in the many events sponsored by the university. At this time, there is an obvious conceptual distance between the kind of university envisioned in the fundamental principle listed above and the one many students currently experience.

### *Structural Impediments to Creating Rich Cocurricular and Extracurricular Experiences*

The college structure presents both tremendous opportunities and great impediments for the creation of rich cocurricular and extracurricular experiences. Each college has its own set of student clubs. Rutgers College produces a booklet called "Pathways: A guide to student involvement," which lists a significant number of clubs, though most are not specifically connected to Rutgers College. Douglass has more clubs associated with women's issues, but it also includes many student organizations that are not specifically associated with the college's mission. Although the current college structure makes it difficult to determine the exact number of clubs at Rutgers, there are at least several hundred active student clubs that provide a variety of cocurricular opportunities for students.

In many of the focus groups we conducted, students expressed their concern about the challenges of obtaining recognition and funding for student clubs and organizations. For an organization to be recognized and funded by all five of the colleges, it must adhere to five different sets of policies, complete five sets of forms, and seek recognition and funding on five separate occasions. These variations were seen as significant impediments to efficiency and effectiveness of student organizations.

With the exception of men joining Douglass clubs or organizations, any student from any college can join any student club or organization, regardless of which college supports it. Club sports,

however, are funded only by Rutgers College, and only Rutgers College students are assessed the club sports fee, even though students from all the colleges participate in the club sports program. Intramural events are held primarily within college intramural programs but an intramural team could have members participating from any college. There is a different process in each college for the allocation of student fees to support student clubs and organizations; and there is, in addition, a complicated system of payment exchange among colleges for the transfer of student-fee moneys to support jointly funded programs.

Use of space by student organizations in the student centers and recreation centers is confusing and unnecessarily difficult. There are eight sets of policies governing the space assignment process: four different policies for the student centers and four for the recreation centers. Students are forced to go “door to door” hoping to find space for organizational meetings and programs. Playing fields are controlled by the four residential colleges and have separate sets of rules governing their use. Space for organizational meetings, speakers, and large-scale events is inadequate to support the needs of the students. In particular, students in our focus groups expressed great frustration with the process for reserving rooms for events. This was one area in which the “RU screw” is clearly alive and well. Students must attempt to reserve rooms five weeks in advance of an event. In some cases, they needed to talk to three or four separate people simply to find out if a room were available for use. These differences in procedures across colleges are very frustrating for students. Colleges act in very proprietary ways over the spaces in their student centers and do not always cooperate with requests from student organizations at other colleges. University College students and student clubs have very low priority in the assignment of spaces, and do not have a proprietary set of resources for their college. Current operating procedures promote competition among colleges rather than a shared focus devoted to serving the needs of students. The current environment will be perpetuated unless considerable efforts are made to redress the problem of unequal resources and the lack of a unified and equitable system of delivering services to all students.

### *Best Practices*

We are confident that there are many examples of programs at Rutgers that appear to be working well in serving the diverse needs of students. Here we isolate a few examples that are illustrative of the range of programs and services that succeed in providing positive experiences and services to undergraduates.

*Citizen and Service Education Program (CASE).* The CASE program provides opportunities for students to engage in community service. Many courses have community service components. In these courses, students have the opportunity to link classroom learning and learning outside the classroom. The mission of the CASE program is to prepare students to participate as active citizens and contribute to their communities. The various organizations and communities in which students participate benefit from their involvement.

*Aresty Research Center for Undergraduates.* The Aresty Research Center for Undergraduates is a new center funded by Jerome and Lorraine Aresty. It specifically encourages faculty to engage undergraduate students in research experiences and encourages undergraduate students to become involved in a variety of programs. Among the programs supported by the center are life

science fellowships in the summer, sophomore year research assistantships, advising about research, and funding for student research projects. This is a new venture and its success is not yet documented. However, it has the potential to communicate and realize the vision described in the fundamental principle that guides the work of the Task Force.

*Special Interest Housing.* The provision of special interest housing allows students who share a common interest to live together and permits the organization of special programs related to their interests. A number of the colleges allow for special interest housing. For example, Rutgers College has special interest housing related to Latin Images, German, Spanish and other topics. Douglass College has a number of living/learning communities such as the Human Rights House. Busch campus has a living/learning community focused on television production and programming has provided 30 students with hands-on training from the professional staff of the university.

*Faculty Floor Mentors.* At Cook College, the Faculty Floor Mentor Program is a pilot program conducted in the first-year residence halls. There are also mentors for commuters and transfer students. At least one professor serves as a mentor to a floor in the residence halls. Faculty mentors are encouraged to attend campus events. They also lead discussions on the floors.

There are numerous other programs that are ongoing and are helpful to students. A great many people work very hard to enhance the quality of students' experiences.

***Recommendation 11:*** Learning communities should be established based on interests. This will not be a simple task and an implementation committee should consider how these kinds of communities could be established and sustained.

***Recommendation 12:*** Incentives should be provided to tenured and tenure-track faculty to involve undergraduate students in their research.

***Recommendation 13:*** The student centers should be independent of the colleges and managed by an individual(s) who reports to the vice president for student affairs.

***Recommendation 14:*** The vice president for student affairs should have responsibility to distribute resources to support student services that come from the revenues generated by the student centers.

***Recommendation 15:*** A common set of policies for room reservations and other administrative activities conducted in the student centers should be established so that students can more easily reserve and use rooms.

***Recommendation 16:*** A single set of policies governing the creation and operation of student clubs and organizations should be created.

***Recommendation 17:*** Club sports and intramurals should be funded by student fees assessed uniformly; all students should be able to participate in all clubs and organizations (with the

possible exception of selected all-female or all-male activities); and intramural events should occur on a New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide basis.

**Recommendation 18:** A common set of policies governing the use of space by student clubs and organizations should be developed and the procedures to schedule that space should be the same among the student centers and among the recreation centers.

**Recommendation 19:** The university should study the construction needs of the student centers with the intention of building more student meeting rooms and space suitable for large-scale public events.

**Recommendation 20:** Student clubs that have little specific connection to a college should be managed by a central office whose director reports to the vice president for student affairs.

**Recommendation 21:** Specific clubs that are affiliated with the mission of a college will continue as part of the college structure.

**Recommendation 22:** The Working Group supports the recommendation of the Working Group on Structure that student recreation centers including the playing fields report to the vice president for student affairs.

## **VI. RESIDENCE HALLS**

Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway has made a significant investment in student housing. With approximately 12,600 students living in university residence halls and apartments, Rutgers' housing capacity is second only to that of Michigan State University. Student satisfaction with the residence hall experience varies. The Constituency Report noted that one out of every two students was dissatisfied with the residence halls. Cook College students rate their residence hall experience highest and Livingston College students rate theirs the lowest. Part of student satisfaction appears attributable to the type of building in which students reside (e.g., students prefer apartments to living in high-rise residence halls) and part to the social milieu of the residence hall living unit.

Residence hall students are more involved in campus activities and intramurals than nonresidence halls students are. Indeed, the experience of living in the halls appears to help students develop close friendships and connects them more closely to the university. Living in the residence halls during the first year of college should help students develop friendships, learn about the campus and student services, and should play a positive role in student retention.

Students have favorable opinions of special lifestyle programs offered in some residence halls, such as first-year interest groups and theme living units. We found that all of the colleges provide some type of program in most of their halls; however, special lifestyle units and programs designed around an academic theme were not available to all students in their particular college.



In the current system, students are assigned to residence halls based on their affiliation with a particular college. This system prevents students from joining special lifestyle programs offered by a college with which they are not affiliated without special permissions and approvals. In addition, students are prevented from having friends in different colleges as roommates, and students are limited to the housing options available in their affiliated college regardless of where the majority of their classes may be located or what style of residence hall living (e.g., apartment) they may want or need.

Room vacancies in a residence hall assigned to a college cannot be used to address over-assignment of students to rooms in a residence hall controlled by another college without agreement among the colleges. When students from one college, such as Rutgers College, are assigned to live on a floor in a building controlled by another college, such as Livingston College, students in the same building operate under different college policies with different residence life staff based on the college with which the student is affiliated. If a disciplinary situation requires intervention by a college staff person, students frequently receive different sanctions based on staff from different colleges making different judgments.

Hall directors hired to supervise the resident assistants (preceptors) include both graduate students and full-time staff. They receive different rates of pay and the qualifications for the positions they hold differ widely. Some of the differences in pay and in duties among the colleges are difficult to explain. The residence hall directors are supervised either by area supervisors (assistant deans) or by the dean for residence life at a college. Resident assistant student staffs (preceptors) in the residential colleges have virtually identical duties, yet they are remunerated at different pay rates depending on their college affiliation. Student staff training is conducted independently by each college, but the information covered in the training is essentially the same information. This system requires university personnel needing to share information with student staffs to appear multiple times to provide the same information.

Residence halls with a large number of first-year students should have additional staff. First-year students are especially vulnerable to the developmental/mental health issues that can have a negative impact on establishing a successful academic career or becoming engaged in the life of the university.

Students know and generally have positive opinions about the hall directors and other residence hall staff. They know the student affairs staff in the colleges, frequently better than the faculty. With few exceptions, faculty are absent from the life of students in the residence halls. The exceptions are associated with faculty invited to do occasional programs in the halls or the involvement of faculty in special lifestyle units or theme residence halls.

***Recommendation 23:*** The Working Group supports the recommendation of the Working Group on Structure that residence life programs be combined into one program reporting to the vice president for student affairs.

***Recommendation 24:*** University administrators should consider building faculty apartments in residence halls when new residence halls are constructed or significantly remodeled, and a

program that supports faculty in-residence with appropriate release time for this involvement should be developed by the university.

**Recommendation 25:** Consideration should be given to retrofitting selected residence halls on campus with accommodations for faculty to live in residence halls or adjacent to them.

**Recommendation 26:** Resident assistants (preceptors) should be paid the same for the same work.

**Recommendation 27:** Hall directors should receive the same training and have academic degrees and experience appropriate to their level of responsibility.

**Recommendation 28:** Special lifestyle units, first-year interest groups, theme housing, learning communities, and similar programs need greater faculty involvement and should be expanded.

**Recommendation 29:** The university should study the feasibility of requiring full-time, first-year students to live in residence halls during the first year of college, if the student is not living at home with parents nor has another valid exemption (e.g., married, single parent). At the very least, first-year students should be strongly encouraged to live in the residence halls. If this recommendation were to be implemented, appropriate consideration would need to be given to the staff needed to support large numbers of students make the transition to university life.

## **VII. COUNSELING CENTERS**

College counseling centers serve an important role at the university. Developmental, social, neurophysiologic, and psychosocial influences converge in the college years to create conditions for the emergence of mental health issues. Bipolar disorders, major depressive disorders, adolescent schizophrenia, substance abuse, personality disorders, and unresolved personal and family issues manifest themselves during this period in the lives of students. The first episodes of bipolar disorder, depressive illness, and schizophrenia are most likely to occur while students are in college.

Rutgers provides psychological counseling for students through a student's affiliated undergraduate college. In addition, counseling services designed to provide clinical practices for graduate students preparing for careers as mental health professionals are provided through the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology (fee based), the Graduate School of Education, and the School of Social Work. Psychiatric Services and the Alcohol and Drug Assistance Program provide counseling to students through the Hurtado Health Center.

Although there are occasional meetings among the college-based counseling center directors, the college counseling centers operate independently of each other. Funding levels, policies, staffing, and staff credentials vary among the college counseling centers. The counseling center for Rutgers College operates 12 months a year, but most of the others operate either nine or 10 months a year. Policies regulating the number of times a student can be seen for counseling in one academic year, client loads for therapists, and procedures for student intake and referral vary

by college. The small number of mental health professionals in some colleges (one or two counselors) limits the choices students have to see a therapist who might best meet their needs. The disproportionate allocation of counseling services results in students waiting to get appointments with a mental health professional that can vary from several days to several weeks, depending on the student's college affiliation.

Psychiatric Services currently has two full-time psychiatrists. In recent years, the number of students entering universities using psychotropic medications has increased substantially. Pharmaceutical research, marketing, and changes in ADA regulations, have resulted in a much wider use of psychotropic medications to treat depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders, and learning disabilities. Many of these medications have made it possible for students to attend college who previously could not have attended. The more frequent use of psychotropic drugs also has placed an increased demand on psychiatrists to monitor and adjust the dosages of these medications. Psychiatrists receive referrals from all five of the college counseling centers and from clinical practice facilities in professional psychology, social work, and education.

The understaffing situation in Psychiatric Services should be addressed in FY 05-06 with the proposed addition of a psychiatrist and a psychiatric social worker. However, the addition of staff neither addresses the complex problem of coordinating treatment plans for individual students referred by multiple college counseling centers nor the synergy that emerges from a more closely linked relationship between psychologists and psychiatrists.

Group therapy is common on most college campuses the size of Rutgers, but has been only modestly successful here. This therapeutic approach is not only an efficient method of addressing some common problems students experience, but it is frequently a preferred treatment modality for certain therapy issues such as low self-esteem, bulimia, relationship difficulties, sex role identity conflicts, and some developmental issues. One of the reasons students offer for their reluctance to participate in group therapy is the fear that in a small, residential college population, there is a high likelihood that the student will know other students in the group and that the student's anonymity will be compromised. In a system where students were not restricted to one counseling center, but could use any of the counseling centers, anonymity is more likely and students with issues in common are more likely to be attracted to a group with a particular therapy group focused on that issue. Currently, students can sign up for groups at any of the centers in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Some of the difficulties in running groups include the travel schedules of students, semester breaks, clinical contraindications, staff limitations at some locations, and the need to maintain time for intakes, crises, and emergencies.

The college counseling staffs include therapists with terminal degrees and master's degrees. Some therapists are licensed, while others are not. None of the counseling centers has been accredited by the International Association of Counseling Services or the American Psychological Association, although some of the counseling centers would likely meet the standards for one or both associations if they were better funded. Supervised internship programs for graduate students in mental health-related academic programs are available in some of the college counseling centers, but none of the college counseling centers offers an APA-approved internship—the "gold standard" for internships in counseling and psychology.

**Recommendation 30:** The Working Group supports the recommendation of the Working Group on Structure that the college counseling centers be centralized and report to the vice president for student affairs. Counseling services should continue to be provided on each of the four residential campuses and consideration should be given to adding a counseling center on the Busch campus.

**Recommendation 31:** The Working Group recommends that a task force composed of mental health professionals be appointed to develop common policies and practices for the counseling centers and to develop a closer working relationship between Psychiatric Services and the reorganized counseling center.

**Recommendation 32:** The Working Group recommends that a permanent committee be appointed with representation from the reorganized college counseling center, the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology, the Graduate School of Education, Psychiatric Services, School of Social Work, and the Alcohol and Drug Assistance Program. The purpose of this committee would be to bring greater coordination and improved service delivery to students seeking counseling therapy and/or psychiatric services.

**Recommendation 33:** The university should study the current funding for counseling centers and consider additional sources of revenue to support staff and operational needs of the centers.

**Recommendation 34:** The university should study the feasibility of developing an APA-approved internship program in the reorganized counseling center. The use of qualified new professionals through internship programs has proven to be a successful model for increasing the availability of highly qualified therapists at a modest cost.

## **VIII. SAFETY**

The Constituency Report indicated that concerns about safety and crime were frequently mentioned when participants in the surveys were asked to indicate what negative things came to mind when they thought about Rutgers. Only 26 percent of current students surveyed were positive when asked about whether Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway was a safe campus to walk around. This contrasted with 39 percent of students at both Newark and Camden who felt it was safe to walk around. Reporting of crime at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway is complicated by the fact that crimes are committed against Rutgers community members both on and off campus and different police forces are responsible for addressing crimes. Recent crime reports seem to suggest that the crime rates are not as high as students fear. However, high-profile crimes such as rape receive a great deal of attention and may contribute to students' concerns about crime. The Working Group noted that there is very little in the way of efforts to educate students about how to best prevent crime. Public bulletin boards contain no information about things that should concern students. Students in our focus groups commented about their concerns with safety. They also noted that the infrequency of buses late at night left them for long periods at bus stops that were not always well lighted.

**Recommendation 35:** A lighting study should be conducted on each campus to determine the adequacy of lighting around campus buildings, parking lots, and bus stops.

**Recommendation 36:** Resources should be invested in providing information to students about safety issues.

**Recommendation 37:** Information about sources of assistance when a crime is suspected or has occurred should be widely distributed.

Appendix 1

**About the Working Group on the Student Experience**

**Membership**

*Chairs:* Angela O'Donnell, Educational Psychology, Graduate School of Education  
Kathleen Scott, Cell Biology and Neuroscience, Faculty of Arts and Sciences; Faculty  
Council Liaison

Carmen Twillie Ambar, Dean, Douglass College  
Gregory Blimling, Vice President for Student Affairs  
M. Nalette Castillo, Student, Rutgers College '07  
Zhe Chen, Student, Rutgers College, '07  
Nicole DiDonato, Graduate Student, Graduate School of Education  
Muriel Grimmatt, University Director, Student Academic Support and Achievement  
Patricia Grove, University Director, Rutgers Learning Center  
Elizabeth Leake, Italian, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Richard Martin, Computer Science, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Claire McInerney, Library and Information Science, School of Communication, Information and  
Library Studies  
Isabel Nazario, Associate Vice President for Academic and Public Partnerships in the Arts and  
Humanities  
Kenneth Roy, Director, Psychological Counseling Services, Livingston College  
Linda Schulze, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Charles Sims, Mathematics, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Daniel Tichenor, Political Science, Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Minna Urrey, Student, Rutgers College '05  
Lily Young, Environmental Sciences, Cook College

The Working Group on the Student Experience met nine times. In addition, Angela O'Donnell met with the deans of Rutgers, Livingston, Douglass, and University Colleges. Angela O'Donnell and Kathy Scott also met with staff in career services. Members of the working group also met with the Vice President for Student Affairs' Leadership Council and the director of residence life at Rutgers College. Focus groups were also conducted with students from Rutgers College, the School of Engineering, Cook College, University College, Douglass College, and Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy. We also received information from Institutional Research, the Rutgers College Governing Association Leadership Roundtables, and consulted documents such as the University Senate's Recommendations on Advising, the Constituency Report, and various reports from other universities.

Appendix 2

**University Senate Recommendations on Advising**

The Senate recommendations include the following:

1. The University should affirm academic advising as an important teaching component which seeks to assist students in identifying and achieving their academic goals, to encourage students to take advantage of a variety of educational experiences, and to assist students in developing their decision making skills so that they become responsible and active participants in their educational experiences.
2. The academic units (Colleges/Schools) should develop coherent academic advising programs that are in line with the above University goals. The responsibilities of both the advisors and the advisees within each program should be clearly defined and readily accessible.
3. Each school or college which relies on faculty to act as primary or supplemental pre-major academic advisors should develop an ongoing recruitment program.
4. Each school or college which has chosen to rely solely on professional staff for pre-major advising should assess whether or not the current staffing level is adequate in light of current expectations and demands. Where it is deemed inadequate, the unit should either hire additional staff or consider recruiting faculty and/or peer advisors.
5. Schools and colleges that currently have no training programs for faculty advisors should develop such programs. Units with existing programs should assess and if necessary modify their programs to ensure that they can adequately prepare advisors to work with students in a developmentally-based advising program.
6. To assist the Schools and Colleges to develop a core group of faculty advisors who could then either work with a general advising program in offering professional development opportunities to other faculty advisors, or could develop departmental advising programs, the University should annually award five (3 in New Brunswick, 1 in Newark, 1 in Camden) "Academic Advising Fellowships" to faculty recommended by their Deans and/or department chairs to attend either the NACADA (National Advising Organization) Summer Institute or other major academic advising conference.
7. Investigate the use of web-based advising assistance for all colleges
8. Any central student advising services site that is developed should include links to career and personal counseling sites and documents.
9. Implement a University degree check system to allow for better coordination between departments and colleges/students, and up-to-date monitoring of the academic career by students and academic advisors.
10. Identify internal "best practices" within current advising programs as well as external practices identified through the benchmarking study. Establish forums for discussion and dissemination of best practices.





## **4 | UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT**

### **I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

The Admissions and Recruitment Working Group articulated four goals as its starting point:

- To ensure that the admissions process in New Brunswick/Piscataway serves the campus by attracting an excellent body of students prepared to use the resources of a research university
- To ensure that the diversity that is so central a hallmark of the campus is maintained
- To ensure that admissions materials reflect the evolving mission of the university, and reflect the experiences that undergraduates have when they come to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway—especially in research opportunities they share with faculty
- To link campus undergraduate initiatives to the admissions/recruitment process and to link recruitment initiatives in admissions to the ongoing life of Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

### **OVERVIEW OF ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT**

The current era in undergraduate recruitment and admissions began in 1996 with the replacement of the position of university director of undergraduate admissions with the new position of associate vice president for enrollment management, reporting directly to the vice president for university budgeting. Since then, the undergraduate admissions and recruitment operation has improved dramatically in professionalism, efficiency, responsiveness, and effectiveness. The admissions staff has markedly decreased turnaround time in processing applications, become much more responsive to inquiries from prospective applicants and their families, developed a state-of-the-art admissions web site that allows prospective students to apply online and easily track the status of their applications, produced an impressive array of high-quality recruitment materials, and greatly improved relations with high school guidance counselors, who have progressed from being largely hostile to Rutgers to being very supportive. During this period, the number of applications to the university has steadily increased, as have the average SAT scores of both admitted and enrolled students.

Despite this notable progress, there are currently several serious problems with recruitment and admissions on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus:

- There is a more than 100-point difference in average SAT scores of students in the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy and Rutgers College, on the one hand, and Douglass, Livingston, and Cook Colleges on the other hand. In addition, arts and sciences students with the highest admission indices are almost all at Rutgers College. These differences have led to the perception that Rutgers College is the only choice for high-achieving students; have attached a stigma to students at other

- colleges, even those who are outstanding by any criteria; and have resulted in good students refusing to attend the university because they were not admitted to Rutgers College.
- Over the past decade, the role of faculty in making admissions decisions and, more important, in setting admissions guidelines, policies, standards, and enrollment goals has decreased very sharply so that faculty (and, in a number of cases, college deans) now play little or no meaningful role in admissions on the policy-making level. This lack of faculty and sometimes decanal influence have contributed to what we believe is an unbalanced admissions system, with too much emphasis on meeting enrollment goals and too little emphasis on the effects of admissions policies on academic programs and student life.
  - There appears to be a lack of coherent standards and policies with regard to the admission of transfer students, who seem at times to be used to fill enrollment goals at the less “popular” colleges, without much consistency in standards and without adequate planning for meeting the needs of those transfer students as they make the transition to Rutgers.
  - As the Rutgers Constituency Research Project Report made clear, the university has not effectively communicated to prospective students, their families, or the general public the advantages of Rutgers as a major research university, as well as the particular character and strengths of the New Brunswick/Piscataway, Camden, and Newark campuses.

In the remainder of this report, we address these problems and make a number of recommendations for improving undergraduate admissions and recruitment on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus.

## **II. RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADMISSIONS**

### **ADMISSIONS STANDARDS**

The substantial differences in admissions criteria among the colleges in New Brunswick/Piscataway and the resulting misperception that Rutgers College is better than the other colleges probably constitute the most serious admissions problems we currently face. The belief that there is a hierarchy of colleges engenders confusion about what it means to be admitted to study arts and sciences in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Moreover, the perceived superiority of Rutgers College makes it difficult for Douglass, Livingston, and Cook Colleges to recruit the most highly accomplished students (and many students at Livingston, Douglass, and Cook feel like second-class members of the university community once they are here because of this admissions process). In addition, the competition among New Brunswick/Piscataway arts and sciences colleges to enroll students who have been admitted to more than one unit generates more confusion among applicants, duplicates yield efforts, and is costly and inefficient. From a recruiting perspective, Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway’s message in terms of how students can enroll and study arts and sciences is similarly complicated and too often not understood. These factors militate against our objective to enroll an increasingly competitive class.

The preference for Rutgers College in comparison to other New Brunswick/Piscataway colleges initially arose, it appears, from a combination of factors. Whatever its origins, however, the misperception of Rutgers College's superiority is now so well established that we believe the only way to correct it is to institute a common admissions standard for all arts and sciences students in New Brunswick/Piscataway. This leads to our first recommendation.

***Recommendation 1:*** Whatever the collegiate structure ultimately adopted, there should be a single admissions standard for all arts and sciences students applying to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, appropriately modified for transfer and nontraditional-age students, and a comparable standard for applicants to Cook College.

A single admissions standard for all arts and sciences applicants is also a major recommendation of the Working Group on Structure and would be a direct consequence of the establishment of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and the devolution of the present colleges into residential units. We wish to go even further, however, and assert that a single admissions standard is essential, no matter what structure is adopted. We believe, moreover, that in order for a uniform standard to work in any scenario, general education and graduation requirements and the available majors, minors, etc., need to be the same for all arts and sciences students in New Brunswick/Piscataway.

Even as we believe that a uniform admissions standard will address crucial issues of recruiting high-achieving students to New Brunswick/Piscataway, we also reaffirm our commitment to maintaining the diversity that has for so long distinguished our campus.

***Recommendation 2:*** While admissions standards for arts and sciences students should be uniform across colleges, there must be flexibility in applying those standards in order to ensure the access that has made Rutgers a richly diverse campus for all students: traditional-age students; adults entering or returning to higher education; members of all minority, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups; and students with special talents.

***Recommendation 3:*** As we seek to have an increasingly selective admissions process, without decreasing diversity, Rutgers must try to offer more merit-based scholarships in order to attract and enroll the best students.

Academic scholarships should be a major goal of any university fund-raising efforts. As the Outstanding Scholars Recruitment Program and the James Dickson Carr Scholarship program have clearly demonstrated, offering outstanding students significant academic scholarships has a direct impact on the number of students who decide to enroll here.

Based on a review of past admissions statistics and on modeling for the future that the admissions staff has undertaken (focusing on current yields and the expected increase in the number of applicants in the latter part of this decade), we are convinced that there is no inherent contradiction between seeking a student body that is excellent academically and richly diverse. We are confident that both the first and second goals can be achieved if the renewed attention to the quality of the undergraduate experience in New Brunswick/Piscataway that has begun with the work of this Task Force continues, if the improvements called for by the Task Force become

a reality, and if adequate funding for merit-based scholarships is available. Actions to achieve both ends should be taken with appropriate consideration of their fiscal impact.

## **FACULTY ROLE IN ADMISSIONS**

Faculty involvement in the admissions process varies across colleges and schools in New Brunswick/Piscataway. At one extreme, Mason Gross School of the Arts faculty members set artistic admissions standards and are actively involved in the selection of all admitted students via auditions or portfolio review. At the other extreme, in the arts and sciences colleges, Cook College, and School of Engineering, faculty members play no role in admissions decisions, even for borderline applicants. Throughout the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus, however, faculty play no substantive role in determining admissions policies and guidelines, setting enrollment goals, or evaluating the performance of the Office of University Undergraduate Admissions. In a number of cases, much the same can be said about the role of the dean of the college or school in determining admissions policies.

A number of factors have contributed to the decrease in the faculty role in admissions over the past decade, including the large increase in the number of applicants to be considered, the increased reluctance of faculty to get involved in undergraduate matters not involving majors in their department, and the general decline in faculty governance nationwide. However, we believe that the most important factor was the transition from “admissions” to “enrollment management,” with its primary emphasis on meeting enrollment goals. There has been little faculty input since this change. Indeed, when the Livingston College faculty fellows in 2000 and the New Brunswick Faculty Council in 1998 and 2002 recommended an increased role for faculty in admissions, their recommendations were not acted upon.

Whatever the precise origins of the current situation, we believe that an admissions system in which faculty members play a minimal role, at best, at the policy-making level is counterproductive, given that the faculty has the responsibility for setting the curriculum, teaching students, evaluating student performance, and setting graduation standards, and can provide very valuable feedback on the effects of admissions policies on classroom performance. We believe, therefore, that faculty members must take a major collaborative role with the campus and central administrations in establishing admissions policies, determining standards for admission, and setting enrollment goals at the college and campus levels. We make the following recommendations for how this could be accomplished.

**Recommendation 4:** There should be an active faculty admissions committee for the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and for each professional school in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Each of these committees, with the dean of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences or school as an ex officio member, should have the following powers and responsibilities, most of which come from University Regulations 2.1.2B(1):

- Establishing, with the consent of the faculty of the school or college, college- or school-specific admissions policies, standards, and priorities within the guidelines of the Rutgers University Undergraduate Admissions Policy, in order to guide the Admissions Office in making decisions about applicants.

- Assisting the Admissions Office in reviewing individual applications when the school or college policies do not result in a clear decision. In such cases, final responsibility for the admissions decision should rest with the school or college faculty admissions committee.
- Providing advice to the campuswide admissions committee (see below) concerning enrollment goals and priorities for the school or college.
- Reviewing the school or college admissions policies periodically, particularly the indicators used in the admissions process and the weights given to these indicators.
- Reporting annually to the faculty of the school or college on the extent to which admissions practices reflect the college or school admissions policies.
- Meeting on a regular basis with a representative of the Admissions Office to fine tune admissions criteria and enrollment goals, monitor the progress of admissions and recruitment efforts, ascertain that diversity is being maintained, and ensure that admissions practices are consonant with school admissions policies and priorities.

***Recommendation 5:*** A New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide, primarily faculty admissions committee, reporting to the proposed vice president for undergraduate education, should be established. This committee should have representatives from the college and school admissions committees, from the New Brunswick Faculty Council, from the Rutgers Writing Program, from the Department of Mathematics, from the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program, and from the executive dean of either the Faculty of Arts and Sciences or the proposed Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences. Its powers and responsibilities should include the following:

- Recommending campus enrollment goals and admissions policies and priorities with respect to both first-year and transfer students to the vice president for undergraduate education, based on the recommendations of the college or school admissions committees.
- Serving as a liaison to the college or school admissions committees, resolving any conflicts among the enrollment goals and admissions priorities of the individual colleges and schools, and discussing other admissions issues that cut across school and collegiate lines.
- Evaluating the efficacy of the university's admissions policies and procedures regularly and making recommendations concerning changes in those policies and procedures.
- Meeting periodically with a representative of the Admissions Office to monitor the progress of admissions and recruitment efforts and make certain that admissions practices are consonant with campus admissions policies and priorities, including the commitment of the campus to a diverse student population.

## **ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS**

The admission of transfer students is an important part of the admissions process at any state university. In New Brunswick/Piscataway, transfer students come from other Rutgers units in Camden and Newark, from the county colleges, and from other colleges and universities. Rutgers has special agreements with the county colleges that guarantee admission to students who fulfill a specified curriculum; but in fact, most transfers do not enter under this agreement. As we have reviewed the ways the campus admits transfer students, especially at Douglass College and Livingston College (where the transfer populations are currently between 30 percent and 45 percent of the student body), we have become convinced that all transfer students deserve much more attention: in information provided on the web site and in brochures; in the criteria used in admissions decisions; in specific introductions to areas where transferring into Rutgers may pose problems (see below, on Transfer Students and the Sciences); and in attention once they are admitted.

The large majority of transfer students are admitted to the arts and sciences colleges. The criteria for admission vary substantially from college to college and even from year to year. The result is a web of varying rules for admitting transfer students, leading to confusion on the part of the transfer student and the sending institution.

The available data (several years old) on the academic performance of transfer students suggests that many of them have a hard time in their first semester at Rutgers, but that their average grade point average at graduation is statistically indistinguishable from that of students who entered the university as freshmen. There is a good deal of anecdotal evidence, however, to suggest that the initial difficulties and lack of support experienced by transfer students make them less than enthusiastic ambassadors for Rutgers. Transfer students admitted for the spring semester confront particular difficulties because there is insufficient time for appropriate advising and orientation and nearly all the courses they need to take are closed. (Sequenced courses are especially a problem for spring admits.)

Our recommendations for reconfiguring the university's approach to undergraduate transfer students are derived from three principles: standardization, transparency, and individualization, all of which should guide the development of all programs, systems, and features designed for transfer students. The bold and systematic application of information technology to the transfer process at all stages will make achieving these three principles a practical possibility.

***Recommendation 6:*** Transfer students should be accepted into the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences under a uniform, standardized set of admissions criteria. The university should institute a single set of guidelines for:

- a minimally acceptable GPA to be earned at the sending school;
- a maximum number of credits that may be transferred from a two-year or a four-year institution; and
- a minimum number of credits required in residence at Rutgers before the Rutgers degree can be conferred.

**Recommendation 7:** No transfer students should be admitted for the spring term of the academic year. The university is not prepared to give spring admits the attention and advising they deserve, and the availability of courses for new students registering long after the spring term preregistration period is severely limited.

**Recommendation 8:** Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway should extend and elaborate on the computerized system of transfer credit evaluation now in use by University College to include all students transferring into Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

The current system, originally launched as ARTSYS and then expanded into NJ Transfer, permits students and advisers in the county colleges of New Jersey to get definitive information on transfer credit equivalencies for thousands of courses that are transferable to Rutgers. University College has worked closely with the Admissions Office to develop a fully electronic system of online credit evaluation called TECS (Transfer Evaluation and Communication System), and this system is now available for use by all colleges.

**Recommendation 9:** Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway should establish an Office of Transfer Student Affairs under the vice president for undergraduate education. This office would have as its key responsibility ensuring the smooth transition of transfer students from prospective applicants to graduating seniors.

The staff of this office would organize briefing sessions for county college advisers, work in cooperation with the Admissions Office to plan open houses for prospective transfer students, and run orientation programs for newly admitted transfer students. They would also provide transfer academic advising, oversee mentoring and tutoring programs for transfer students (including peer mentoring), and evaluate all courses for transfer credit (through the TECS program).

The University of Arizona offers a possible model for this kind of office. Its Transfer Center—staffed by four professional advisers—provides a wide range of support services to transfer students including pretransfer advising, assistance with the financial aid application process, new student orientation, and help with housing applications. Another model might be the Center for Transfer, Re-entry, and Student Parents at the University of California-Berkeley. This center offers a variety of services for the targeted populations, including academic advising, community-building social events, and mentoring programs.

### Transfer Students and the Sciences

Many curricula in a research university are cumulative. Universities arrange their course offerings so that students follow a natural progression through core material. But these course offerings may vary significantly in sequence. Material may be covered in introductory courses at one institution and treated as a prerequisite for its advanced courses, while other institutions break up the sequence differently. The curriculum guidelines for undergraduate computer science published by the Association for Computing Machinery illustrate this clearly. The guidelines propose “six different instantiations of the introductory curriculum [freshman level] and four thematic approaches to the intermediate courses [sophomore and junior level].”

Anyone of these different approaches may allow an undergraduate to choose a core set of topics across a whole career. But what a student learns early on in one model does not necessarily prepare for or complement what a student learns later in another model. While this problem exists in a number of disciplines, it is particularly serious in the sciences.

Science teaching at a large research university focuses on teaching skills as well as facts and theories. Much of what is taught at the introductory level aims at fostering students' practice of independent work, including the ability to read and critique scientific exposition, the ability to identify problems in one's own understanding and ask for help, and the ability to develop and discuss ideas in collaboration with peers. In advanced classes, these skills are exploited, not taught. This sequentially ordered curriculum reflects Rutgers' status as a research university, and may often not be taught at two-year colleges.

In addition, science curricula offer a broad range of fast-track programs that enable students to combine undergraduate study with professional and graduate training. Eligibility for these programs typically involves not only good standing, but also acquiring that standing early on in a college career through Rutgers course work. Transfer students thus may not be eligible for a number of these programs.

These considerations should shape our admissions and recruitment policies for transfer students in the sciences.

***Recommendation 10:*** Transfer students should, wherever possible, be eligible for the same majors and the same degree programs as other undergraduate students. At the same time, they should be fully informed about majors for which work in previous institutions may not have sufficiently prepared them. In particular, transfer students in the sciences should be informed that one or two semesters may be added to the time to graduation because of curricular mismatches, and that participation in some programs may be precluded.

***Recommendation 11:*** Because of special difficulties that transfer science majors confront and because of the added burden their difficulties often place on the university, the standards set for admission should ensure that transfer students in the sciences do at least as well, if not better, than the cohort who pursue their entire undergraduate career at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

If transfers continue to form a substantial portion of new students, they deserve special materials (including a transfer section on the admissions web site) explaining the realities and opportunities available to them. Ideally, transfer students should have access early on to existing equivalency judgments so that they would know before arriving what introductory work they should expect to have to make up or redo.



## **THE RUTGERS APPLICATION**

The amount of information and the effort to fill out a Rutgers undergraduate application has fluctuated in recent years. Several years ago, when current juniors and seniors applied to the university, the application did not, according to the students we interviewed, ask students to write an essay (even an optional one) or require them to list extracurricular activities. That version of the application reportedly could be completed in five to 10 minutes and gave a misleading impression of our academic standards. As one student in the Working Group noted: “a gut application sends the message that you’re a gut school.” The fall 2004 application, on the other hand, has a recommended essay and asks students to describe extracurricular activities, community service, and awards and honors received. We urge the university to continue requesting this information and to make the essay mandatory in order to send a cogent message about the quality of the academic environment at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway.

***Recommendation 12:*** The Rutgers undergraduate application must indicate the university’s expectations for its students: it should ask about special academic work (e.g., honors, advanced placement, etc.), it should ask about extracurricular participation, and it should require a writing sample.

## **III. RECOMMENDATIONS ON RECRUITMENT**

### **RECRUITMENT MATERIALS**

#### Recruiting Brochures

Rutgers now produces an impressive array of recruiting publications. All are high quality, very professionally produced, and visually quite beautiful. Together they can only be described as “classy.” Moreover, they do a fine job of portraying the quality of the Rutgers faculty and the breadth of their research, the diversity of the Rutgers student body, and the wide array of programs and opportunities available to Rutgers students.

We applaud the high quality of these recruitment publications but believe there is still room for improvement. First and foremost, it is clear from the Rutgers Constituency Research Project Report that our recruitment materials need to convey more effectively to prospective students and their families the meaning of a public research university and the advantages it provides to undergraduate students. Clearly, it is not enough just to talk about the great research being done by Rutgers faculty members and to profile a few undergraduates engaged in cutting-edge research. Our recruitment materials also need to make clear the advantages that every Rutgers student derives from being at a major research university, whether or not the student actually does research. The university is currently developing a broad communication campaign to get the Rutgers message out to the citizens of New Jersey. We believe that conveying the advantages of Rutgers as a research university to prospective students and their families must continue to be a high priority in that campaign—and in our admissions and recruitment materials and web site.

Second, we suggest that our recruitment materials need to distinguish more effectively among Rutgers in Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick/Piscataway. In our recruiting pieces, images

of Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick/Piscataway are mixed together seemingly at random, as are profiles of students and faculty from the three campuses. While this approach does convey the idea that there are exciting opportunities for undergraduates and great teachers on all our campuses, it also makes Rutgers appear even more complicated and confusing than it actually is and does not give prospective students and their families a clear idea of the particular atmosphere and strengths of each campus. On the whole, we believe that the attempt to “blend” Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick/Piscataway and blur the distinctions among them does a disservice to all three campuses.

We also suggest that Rutgers’ recruitment materials would be improved by putting less emphasis on beautiful photographs of bucolic-looking campus scenes and more emphasis on noteworthy curricular, cocurricular, and student life programs such as first-year programs, honors programs, the Aresty Undergraduate Research Program, internships and externships, special disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs, the Study Abroad program, lecture series, student government opportunities, and cultural/ethnic programs and organizations. We need to draw on the full richness of experiences available to undergraduates at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, experiences not adequately conveyed by pictures of bucolic vistas, turning leaves, and stylishly dressed undergraduates.

Finally, we suggest that there should be more coordination and consistency among the various recruiting materials so that they do not inadvertently work at cross-purposes, as sometimes happens now. To cite just one example, the Liberal Arts and Sciences brochure and the Life and Environmental Sciences brochure together give the impression that the biological sciences are separate from the arts and sciences and that Cook College is the primary locus of the life sciences as well as the environmental sciences.

These suggestions for improvement are summarized in the following recommendation.

***Recommendation 13:*** While we applaud the high quality of Rutgers’ current undergraduate recruiting publications, we recommend that they be revised so that they more effectively do each of the following:

- Define “public research university” in simple, easily understood terms that make the connection between the research mission of the university and the undergraduate experience of all students.
- Clearly differentiate among the New Brunswick/Piscataway, Newark, and Camden campuses in a way that emphasizes the particular character and strengths of each. This means that recruitment publications, beyond the introductory brochure, should be campus-specific.
- Place more emphasis on specific, particularly noteworthy curricular, cocurricular, and student-life programs.
- Portray all campuses, schools, colleges, and programs in a fully coordinated manner, taking great care not to market one unit at the possible expense of others.

### The Rutgers Web Site

Because most prospective college students and their parents now seek information about colleges and universities from the Internet (and more than 90 percent of Rutgers' applicants apply online as well), it is clear that the Rutgers web site is at least as important as recruiting brochures as a vehicle for recruiting prospective students from New Jersey and surrounding states. It is even more important for recruiting students from other parts of the country, who are unlikely to consider Rutgers seriously or visit the campus unless attracted by our web image.

To assess the effectiveness of Rutgers' online recruitment, we compared our web site with the web sites of some highly ranked public universities in the Association of American Universities: Michigan, Michigan State, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Penn State, and Texas. We also looked at the web sites of the University of Delaware and the College of New Jersey, two regional schools to which many New Jersey students apply. All 10 web sites were compared with regard to four areas:

- The overall impression of the university and its mission produced by the web site.
- The way in which multiple campuses/branches/locations of the university are presented.
- The emphasis placed on research, teaching, honors programs, and other special opportunities.
- The user-friendliness of the site.

*Message/Mission:* The Rutgers web site, elegantly constructed and visually interesting, does not send an overarching message about the mission of the institution as a public research university or about the outstanding research and other opportunities for undergraduates in New Brunswick/Piscataway. In contrast, several of the other university web sites evaluated present a strong, consistent message. The Michigan site suggests a vibrant community of intellectually curious students; it emphasizes small classes in the first year; and it asks the applicant to imagine how it would be to study at the University of Michigan. Wisconsin presents itself as "the perfect choice for people who like choices" and emphasizes the vast variety of academic programs and campus activities and the beauty and vibrancy of the campus. Michigan State highlights its message, "Advancing Knowledge: Transforming Lives," on nearly every page of the site. Delaware focuses on its small size and its diversity (64 percent of its students are from outside the state); and claims to provide some of the best undergraduate research experiences in the nation. The College of New Jersey emphasizes its role as the "honors college" of New Jersey and the individual attention a faculty-centered (versus teaching assistant-provided) education offers students.

*Differentiation of Campuses:* Michigan, Michigan State, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Penn State, and Texas, like Rutgers, all have a large flagship campus and a number of smaller campuses. Rutgers is unique, however, in presenting all of its campuses on one web site. At all the other institutions, the main university web site focuses on the flagship campus and merely provides links to the smaller campuses. The Rutgers web site treats the three campuses as equals and tries, as much as possible, to blur the differences in size, facilities, and programs among them. As a result, the web site is unnecessarily confusing and difficult to navigate for prospective students without a clear understanding of the Rutgers structure.

*Research Opportunities, Teaching, Honors Programs, and Special Opportunities:* On the Rutgers home page, there is a research link, which takes you to a page providing a wealth of information on current research, research funding, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, etc. However, the emphasis is strongly on faculty and graduate research and there is no link to a page discussing undergraduate research opportunities. As for honors programs, it takes three clicks from the home page through the admissions page to get any information on honors programs and several more clicks to find any details about individual school or college honors programs. There is no link from either the Rutgers home page or the admissions page to any discussion of teaching or of other types of special programs such as internships and externships, learning communities and special interest housing, study abroad programs, leadership programs, community service opportunities, etc.

Several of the other web sites surveyed do a better job of highlighting the wealth and depth of academic and cocurricular opportunities for undergraduates. Michigan, Texas, Minnesota, North Carolina, and the College of New Jersey all have “recruiting pages” that very succinctly point out why a student should choose the particular institution. North Carolina has one of the best of these pages, one click away from the university home page, with direct links to honors programs, the Office of Undergraduate Research, study abroad opportunities, community service programs, and first-year seminars. Most of the web sites surveyed highlight their honors programs more effectively than does Rutgers.

*User-Friendliness:* None of the research university web sites evaluated provides a particularly impressive model of user-friendliness; this is not surprising, since the web sites of major research universities are designed to serve a variety of internal and external constituencies and are not optimized to serve as undergraduate recruiting vehicles. The Rutgers web site, however, is particularly difficult to navigate because it seems to assume that users are already familiar with the Rutgers structure and makes little effort to give an overview of that structure to prospective students or their families.

**Recommendation 14:** Given that many prospective students now get the bulk of their information about Rutgers and other colleges and universities online, the Rutgers web sites should be modified to be more effective as an undergraduate recruitment tool. In particular, we make the following specific recommendations.

- The Rutgers home page should convey a clear, compelling message about Rutgers’ mission and strengths as a public research university and should direct prospective students and their families to a page that clearly differentiates among the New Brunswick/ Piscataway, Newark, and Camden campuses, highlights the particular character and strengths of each campus, and provides a link to each of the campus home pages.
- The New Brunswick/Piscataway home page should convey a clear, compelling message about Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway as a major public research university of national distinction.
- There should be a New Brunswick/Piscataway undergraduate recruiting page providing an overview of the wealth of programs and opportunities available to undergraduates on this campus: special course work (e.g., student-designed majors),

special disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs, honors programs, the Aresty Undergraduate Research Program, internships and externships, the Study Abroad program, lecture series, student government opportunities, cultural/ethnic programs and organizations, sports programs, and student clubs. This page should also provide links to more detailed information about each type of program/activity. There should be a direct link, or at least a very clear path, to the New Brunswick/Piscataway recruiting page from both the New Brunswick/Piscataway home page and the undergraduate admissions home page.

- The web sites of schools, departments, centers, etc., should have pages devoted to research opportunities and other noteworthy discipline-specific programs for undergraduates. These pages should also highlight the teaching environment, special classroom learning features, and faculty scholarship and teaching interests, including notations about teaching awards earned by faculty.

## **FACULTY, STUDENT, AND ALUMNI ROLES IN RECRUITMENT**

The primary responsibility for undergraduate recruiting lies with the Office of University Undergraduate Admissions staff, who do an excellent job of getting out the word about Rutgers through recruitment materials and the admissions web site, visits to high schools and recruiting fairs, campus open houses and tours, and working with high school teachers and guidance counselors, etc. However, in order to achieve our goal of attracting students prepared to use the resources of a major research university, all groups in the Rutgers community—students, staff, faculty, and alumni—should be actively involved in recruiting. The academic and student life staffs at the various schools and colleges are all actively engaged in recruiting; and many members of the Rutgers community—staff members, faculty, and members of the governing boards—assist recruitment work by serving as Rutgers Ambassadors. We want to address the more specific recruitment roles of faculty, students, and alumni.

### Faculty Role

At present, a relatively small number of faculty voluntarily participate in recruiting undergraduates by giving talks on their research at high schools, participating in on-campus recruiting events, and/or contacting admitted students to urge them to attend Rutgers. There is, however, no general expectation that participation in undergraduate recruitment is part of faculty responsibilities. We believe that this situation needs to change.

***Recommendation 15:*** More faculty members should become involved in traditional preadmission and postadmission recruiting activities, and the university should incorporate participation in such activities into its reward structure. In particular, we urge more faculty to become involved in the Rutgers Speakers Program, which sends volunteer faculty members to speak on their research to high school students and community groups. We also urge faculty, whenever possible, to bring undergraduate student researchers with them when they speak before high school groups. Faculty participation in major on-campus recruitment events such as the Open House for admitted students and Discovery Days for potential scholars should also be encouraged.

We also believe that academic departments and interdisciplinary units need to become more involved in recruitment. While some departments now send letters and/or departmental undergraduate brochures to admitted students who have indicated an interest in their discipline, a more coordinated effort in collaboration with the Admissions Office should be encouraged. Even more important, we believe that departments and interdisciplinary academic units could make a major contribution to the recruitment of high-achieving students by sponsoring academic programs and activities that bring outstanding prospective students to Rutgers' campuses early in their high school careers.

***Recommendation 16:*** Departments throughout New Brunswick/Piscataway should be encouraged to participate in undergraduate recruitment by:

- Sending information about their major and about research and other opportunities for undergraduates to admitted students who have expressed an interest in their discipline.
- Developing summer programs and other activities that bring promising high school students to campus long before they start thinking about applying to college.

### Student Role

It is often said, quite correctly, that Rutgers students are our best recruiters. The ways in which the Office of University Undergraduate Admissions enlists currently enrolled students in recruitment can be summarized as follows.

*Scarlet Ambassadors:* A team of 50 to 60 students is selected from the New Brunswick/Piscataway schools and colleges and trained to participate in recruitment efforts in a number of ways. They serve as the backbone of the campus visit program, giving bus and walking tours of the campus to prospective students and their families. (Approximately 25,000 people came through this program last year.) The Scarlet Ambassadors also play a key role in planning and hosting open houses, making panel presentations for the Admissions Office as well as other offices, telephoning admitted students, and at times assisting with off-campus recruitment events such as receptions and college fairs.

*Students from Campus Organizations and Special Populations:* Admissions staff work closely with several student groups on campus, including Carr Scholars, EOF students (in partnership with EOF Director Muriel Grimmett and the college EOF Program directors), the NAACP student chapter, and the United Black Council. Students from these groups host prospective students on campus for weekend programs and participate in open houses and other on-campus events.

*Student Visits to Their High Schools:* For the past two years, a member of the admissions staff has met with the Rutgers College Governing Association to train students to visit their own high schools to spread their Rutgers pride to their former teachers and guidance counselors. Admissions hopes to expand this program for 2005–2006 by working through the other college governing associations.

*Out-of-State Student Organization:* The seeds have been planted to develop an organization for students from outside New Jersey. This organization will serve to help new students feel comfortable making Rutgers their new home, and also give the Admissions Office a group of students to train to return to their own high schools during breaks as well as to assist with on-campus recruitment activities. A pilot program took place in fall 2004 with students from Illinois, Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

*Transfer Students:* For the last four years, a member of the admissions staff has met with transfer students awarded the Phi Theta Kappa scholarship and enlisted their help in on-campus transfer recruitment efforts. The students share information on panels and help host students on campus.

In addition to these activities sponsored by the Admissions Office, individual schools and colleges use specially trained groups of students (e.g., the Red Pine Ambassadors at Douglass College) to give tours of the particular campus, to participate in open houses and other events for admitted students, and to telephone admitted students and urge them to attend their school or college. All the college honors programs also make very effective use of their students during Honors Days for students offered admission to the particular honors program.

We believe that current programs involving enrolled undergraduates in recruiting are very cost-effective and should be strengthened and expanded.

***Recommendation 17:*** Currently successful programs involving undergraduates as recruiters should be strengthened and expanded. In particular, we make the following recommendations:

- The program that sends Rutgers College students back to their high schools should be expanded to include students recruited via all the student governing associations plus other groups such as honors students, Carr Scholars, EOF students, members of various service organizations, etc.
- The out-of-state student organization should be expanded from the current small pilot program to a much larger program involving students from all states represented in substantial numbers on campus; members of the organization should be trained to recruit at their high schools when they go home for visits.
- A program should be set up, possibly as a joint activity of the Admissions Office and the Aresty Undergraduate Research Program, which would send undergraduates doing research, together with a faculty mentor, to talk about their research in appropriate high school classes. This program could be expanded to include undergraduates taking part in other types of special academic programs such as honors programs, Study Abroad, internships in Trenton and Washington, and the Eagleton Fellows Program.

### Alumni Role

The Admissions Office uses alumni to recruit out-of-state students via the Rutgers Alumni Volunteer Information Network (RAVIN), a trained volunteer recruitment team comprised of Rutgers alumni nationwide. Presently, there are over 250 RAVIN members making contact with prospective students in 15 states: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia, plus Washington, D.C. RAVIN recruiters attend college fairs, visit high schools,

contact admitted students by email or phone, sponsor Rutgers Book Awards (to give the university visibility at high school awards ceremonies), and host receptions for admitted students. They reach thousands of students each year who would otherwise not have the opportunity to meet with a Rutgers representative. In the 2004–2005 admissions cycle, for example, RAVIN recruiters ran 123 events in 12 states without admissions staff present.

The admissions staff believes that the RAVIN program is quite effective and would like to expand it. Their efforts to do so have been hampered by the difficulty in recruiting enough alumni volunteers. These difficulties seem to reflect more general problems with the structure and effectiveness of alumni organizations at Rutgers.

The Admissions Office does not have a program to use alumni in recruiting within New Jersey and does not believe that such a program would be cost-effective. However, some highly active alumni participate in recruiting for their particular school or college by contacting admitted students in their communities and by serving on alumni panels at school or college recruiting events. In addition, alumni of the professional schools have been particularly valuable in recruiting students interested in their professions.

***Recommendation 18:*** We recommend that the admissions staff continue their efforts to strengthen and expand the RAVIN program and that they consider ways to use selected alumni in in-state recruiting efforts. The alumni, like students, staff, and faculty participating in in-state recruitment, would complement and assist admissions staff, not replace them.

## **HONORS IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

The importance of honors programs to the recruitment of high-performing students is self-evident. In order to understand how we can most effectively use our honors programs to recruit the best students, we interviewed honors students at the four New Brunswick/Piscataway residential colleges about their experiences with the recruitment and admissions process and with their college honors programs. We found all the students excited about their programs, appreciative of the remarkable advising, mentoring, and support they get from staff who run the programs, and knowledgeable about the resources of this research university. These students are eager to talk about their experiences, and eager to share them with us and with students from their high schools. Almost all of these students have come to Rutgers even though they were accepted at other prestigious private and public colleges and universities. In the majority of cases, they reported, the affordability of a Rutgers education made the crucial difference.

At the same time, we found that once here these students experienced the same “reading” of the campus environment that students throughout New Brunswick/Piscataway share. Many who are not in the Rutgers College program feel themselves to be second-class, “not good enough for that program.” Some students noted that they chose Livingston or Douglass or Cook because they did not get into the Rutgers College program. Rutgers College students themselves tended to equate the perceived status of their college as synonymous with the superiority of their honors program. Clearly the prestige factor is important; students who see one program as (more) exclusive want to be a part of it. On the other hand, the Rutgers College students expressed little enthusiasm for



the RC “opportunities” model of honors, which provides opportunities but has no specific requirements. Honors students from the other colleges were more enthusiastic about the “requirements” model of their honors programs.

All the honors students we spoke with greatly appreciate being part of a relatively small learning community (“Honors makes things much smaller”), the individual attention they receive, and the opportunities the programs create for them to get to know peers and professors. All, too, would like more honors sections of large lecture courses and more introductory, campus-based honors courses. When asked about a single New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide honors program, students had varied responses, but even those who were interested wanted the smaller college-based honors communities to continue.

Finally, it is clear that most of the students we interviewed did not have a clear picture of all that our honors programs have to offer at the time they applied to Rutgers (mostly as a “safety” school). We need to do a much better job of telling all potential honors students that choosing honors in New Brunswick/Piscataway results in being connected with the best resources in research, teaching, and mentoring that this major university has to offer.

Based on our interviews with honors students and on interviews with honors program staff members at Cook, Douglass, Livingston, and Rutgers Colleges, we offer the following recommendations.

***Recommendation 19:*** In order to make New Brunswick/Piscataway honors programs more effective for recruiting a high-achieving and diverse body of honors students, we make the following recommendations:

- There should be a campuswide honors program that would set honors admissions criteria and requirements; would have primary responsibility (and resources) for recruiting honors students; would connect students from different honors communities; and would guarantee that all honors students in New Brunswick/Piscataway have equal access to a wide range of appropriate honors courses, disciplinary and interdisciplinary seminars, research opportunities, honors sections of regular courses, cocurricular activities, etc. (See Chapter 1 for a detailed discussion.)
- Smaller honors communities should continue to be located throughout the New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses to provide the local advising, mentoring, and co-curricular activities that students value so very highly in our current college honors programs.
- The New Brunswick/Piscataway honors program should adopt the “requirements model,” with a strong emphasis on research, with uniform requirements for all arts and sciences honors students, and modified requirements, as necessary, for professional school students.

***Recommendation 20:*** Faculty should be engaged in every aspect of the honors recruitment process and in the mentoring of students once they arrive. All honors students in New Brunswick/Piscataway should have a faculty mentor assigned soon after they indicate they will attend the university and this engagement should be highlighted in recruiting brochures, on the

Rutgers web site, and in discussions with applicants and parents when they are on campus for honors days, and with guidance counselors.

**Recommendation 21:** Honors program staff should establish connections with high school guidance counselors in targeted schools, asking them to nominate high-achieving students. Programs should also be started at regional public and private high schools that take faculty, honors students, and honors staff to schools for discussions with guidance counselors and students about honors and research programs for Rutgers undergraduates.

At present, admission to the Rutgers College honors program is automatic, based on SAT scores, GPA, and rank in class; and this automatic selection process paradoxically reinforces the perception that the program and its students are the best. The other honors programs base admission on a combination of SAT score, GPA, placement in the top 10 percent to 15 percent of one's graduating class, and sometimes a writing sample, letters of recommendation, and/or an interview. Of course, the Rutgers College honors class is much larger—200 students a year, compared to 52 at Douglass, 25 at Livingston, and 25 at Cook. While we understand why Rutgers College, with its large program and limited staff resources, selects students based solely on quantitative admissions criteria, we believe that a more flexible and comprehensive honors admissions policy is needed to recognize talent that may not be revealed by the automatic admit criteria.

**Recommendation 22:** Admission to the honors program in New Brunswick/Piscataway should be based on the usual standardized markers of excellence *plus* an essay and an interview (where necessary for a decision).

We believe that students should have to apply to the New Brunswick/Piscataway honors program and submit an essay indicating why they wish to join the honors program and what they think they will bring to the program and the campus. High-achieving students should be able to apply to the honors program when they apply for admission to the university and, whenever possible, should be informed of their admission to the honors program when they are offered admission to a New Brunswick/Piscataway school or college. Students for whom the honors admission decision is not clear-cut on the basis of standard quantitative indicators should be interviewed by faculty/honors staff.

Finally, in order to have an honors program that can effectively compete for the highest-achieving students, it is clear that substantial resources must be devoted to honors in New Brunswick/Piscataway.

**Recommendation 23:** The university must provide resources, in faculty time, staff time, and funding in order to establish and sustain a campuswide honors program of the kind students merit at this great public research university.

## **RECRUITMENT OF OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS**

Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway has a very diverse undergraduate student body in terms of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic level, and is committed to maintaining and enhancing that diversity. The campus community is not very diverse geographically, however. In fall 2003, enrolled freshmen on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus were 9.4 percent out-of-state in terms of residency, and many of the out-of-state students came from neighboring states. Our percentage of out-of-state first-year students (fall 2003) was well below the average of 21.5 percent among Association of American Universities public universities and below the percentages at some of the most highly rated public universities; e.g. Michigan-Ann Arbor (36.9 percent), Wisconsin-Madison (36.7 percent), Minnesota-Twin Cities (33.1 percent), Washington-Seattle (19.5 percent) and North Carolina-Chapel Hill (17.6 percent). We believe, therefore, that Rutgers needs to increase its geographic diversity by increasing the enrollment of out-of-state students, particularly students from parts of the country outside the Northeast and Middle-Atlantic states. Bringing students from around the nation to Rutgers exposes our students to worlds beyond New Jersey and nearby states.

Increasing the number of high-achieving, out-of-state students enrolled will also help to diminish the net out-migration of college students from New Jersey, which is one of the highest in the nation. There will always be outstanding New Jersey high school graduates who are determined (and can afford) to get away from home and go to college in another part of the country. We need to compensate for some of the resulting outflow of students by recruiting outstanding high school graduates from other parts of the country who would like to attend college in the Northeast. In addition, enrolling more out-of-state students would increase the national visibility of Rutgers and also be financially advantageous.

In recent years, the admissions staff has increased its efforts to recruit out-of-state students by establishing a small merit scholarship program for outstanding out-of-state students, by establishing the RAVIN program (see above), and by assigning individual admissions counselors as personalized contacts for high schools in target markets nationwide. As a result of intensified efforts, out-of-state applications have increased by 14.7 percent (over the previous year) for fall 2005, although it is too early to see if this will translate into increased out-of-state enrollment.

We applaud these efforts of the admissions staff and offer the following recommendation.

***Recommendation 24:*** The Admissions Office, working with faculty and staff in New Brunswick/Piscataway, should develop a comprehensive plan for recruiting more out-of-state students. Consideration should also be given to funding additional scholarships for this population in order to attract and enroll the best students.

Appendix 1

**About the Working Group on Admissions and Recruitment**

**Membership**

*Chairs:* Martha Cotter, Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Barry V. Qualls, Dean of Humanities; English, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

T. Corey Brennan, Classics, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Adam Cooper, Student, Rutgers College '05

David Cole, Student, Rutgers College '06

Deborah Harrison-Epting, Interim Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management

Dorothy Hodgson, Anthropology, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Michelle Jefferson, Assistant Dean for Transfer Students, Academic Affairs, Livingston College

Carl Kirschner, Dean, Rutgers College

Steven Lawson, History, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Richard Lockwood, French, Faculty of Arts and Sciences (deceased 3/3/05)

Richard Ludescher, Food Science, Cook College

Delia Pitts, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs

Matthew Stone, Computer Science, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Charles Weibel, Mathematics, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

The Working Group on Admissions and Recruitment met 14 times, beginning in August 2004, to discuss the role that admissions and recruitment play in bringing to Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway students eager to experience the resources of a research university, and to review admissions materials and web sites and compare these with materials and sites from other universities and colleges. We have interviewed many people who are involved in the admissions process: high school guidance counselors, members of the Office of University Undergraduate Admissions staff, the deans of the arts and sciences colleges and Cook, the staff advisers to honors students at the colleges, the vice president for budgetary management, and the executive vice president for academic affairs. We have spoken extensively with those who have experienced the Rutgers admissions process: student leaders, honors students, faculty and staff whose children applied to Rutgers, and faculty who themselves attended Rutgers.

## 5 | CAMPUS PLANNING AND FACILITIES

### I. INTRODUCTION

In considering the state of our classrooms and facilities at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway and what impact they have on our undergraduate educational mission, the Working Group accepted Rutgers as a complicated group of campuses rather than one contiguous campus. Rutgers' rich history should be reflected in all areas of the university. We encourage the use of architecture to express that rich history and foster a university atmosphere that is vital and lively. We would like to see the development of campuses to include public spaces for gathering and interaction among faculty, students and staff. The university is a learning community; as such, it must include friendly communal spaces that encourage people to linger and to participate in the life of the university. The best way to engage faculty, staff, and students in our undergraduate academic mission is to create an environment in which members of the Rutgers community feel connected to one another. Thus, the overarching principle that ties together our committee's recommendations is the following:

**PRINCIPLE: The university's physical design ought to reflect the values of the university community.**

All members of the Rutgers community benefit from working in environments that are conducive to productivity. The allocation of space and the quality of our buildings shapes undergraduate education, and we see improvements in classrooms and facilities as essential for the future of Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, a future in which we are all stakeholders.

This chapter divides the challenges facing the university into eight sections, with specific recommendations made when appropriate: Introduction, Governance Structures for Planning and Implementation of Physical Design, Public Spaces for Communal Interaction, Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway as a City of Commuters, Classrooms, Libraries and Information Technology, Learning and Living Environments, and Getting Around: Connecting the Campuses.

Attached to this chapter (Appendix 2) is a list of common problems with the physical plant that were gathered as part of our committee's interactions with members of the university community.

### II. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES FOR PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PHYSICAL DESIGN

Achieving our academic ambitions requires long-term planning; long-term planning is perhaps even more important in the realm of urban planning and architecture because major projects take decades to complete. The Rutgers administration is often forced to solve problems in the physical plant with short-term plans that do not support long-term visions and goals. Although

incremental funding and financial constraints partially explain the tendency toward short-term solutions, we believe that it is possible to improve the appearance and usefulness of the facilities. We argue that successful planning programs necessitate comprehensive planning initiatives that can be slowly adapted to evolving visions and goals.

We need a clear and consistent system by which students, faculty, and staff can participate in design processes. The university administration welcomes opinions of faculty, staff, and students in planning decisions, but, despite the best intentions of many, the process by which faculty, students, and staff are included in decisions is erratic and opaque. The administration's solicitation of feedback from the university community concerning Livingston's College Town and the president's vision for the College Avenue campus are good examples of significant consultation with the community, and similar steps should be taken in decisions that are more modest in scope. Capital improvements, historic renovations, and significant changes in landscape architecture especially deserve the attention of faculty, staff, and students. The designers (architects, landscape architects, planners and historic preservation professionals) must engage the university community in order to better connect the academic and research missions to the physical plant. End-users need to be involved in the earliest stages of design.

***Recommendation 1:*** We recommend that the university administration establish structures that guarantee more comprehensive involvement from the university community at every level of planning, from infrastructure to landscape to buildings and finishes.

***Recommendation 2:*** To do so, we recommend that one of the Task Force's implementation committees be given the charge to develop a governance structure for rationalizing how design decisions are made, how design decisions are carried out, and how maintenance is carried out on each of the campuses, so that they engage all stakeholders in our undergraduate education mission.

Cook College's Buildings and Grounds Committee, which includes faculty and students, merits study as a model for engaging the university community in decisions of these sorts.

### **III. PUBLIC SPACES FOR COMMUNAL INTERACTION**

#### ***A. Arrival on Campus***

We know that arriving on the campus is particularly important for students and their families and for all those who visit Rutgers. Yet the various entries to our campuses are disorienting. Arriving at each campus must be reconsidered as a well-designed arrival sequence, rather than the occasional sign. At present our university entrances do not project a positive image of the university, and they are thus a liability in recruiting top students. Although the proposed Gateway building will serve to direct visitors who arrive by train in downtown New Brunswick to the College Avenue campus, it is at present in the early stages of its planning; even after it is constructed, visitors may still find it difficult to get to the Busch, Livingston, and Cook/Douglass campuses.

The signs along Route 18 often prove confusing to visitors who arrive by car from the New Jersey Turnpike. The new signs near Busch and Livingston have improved the transportation situation, and we look forward to upgraded signs near Douglass, Cook and College Avenue. Still, as one Working Group member said, “A sign is the designer’s last resort,” and as one student pointed out, the entrance road to Livingston College from Cedar Lane forces the visitor past decrepit army warehouses, with no sense given of the historical importance of those warehouses. A prospective student, a visiting lecturer, or a returning alumnus/a should feel welcomed, not disoriented.<sup>1</sup>

**Recommendation 3:** We recommend that the university assign greater priority to the construction of enticing and coherent entrances on each campus to invite and inform students, employees, visitors, residents, neighbors, and prospective students.

### *B. Communal Spaces*

Like many members of the university community, we are concerned about the intellectual detachment of the faculty from the undergraduates. One of many possible ways to connect the faculty to the students is to make the physical environment more conducive to informal gatherings. Many faculty members come to campus as infrequently as possible, partly because the university facilities are meager. Students also find the facilities inadequate. Several committee members noticed students sitting in their cars in parking lots, reading, doing their homework, eating, or talking on the phone. Many of our classroom buildings lack lobbies, the usual spaces for students to sit for a moment, shuffle their papers, and read a few more paragraphs before a class begins. Murray Hall, Van Dyck Hall, Scott Hall, Tillett Hall, Hickman Hall, and Beck Hall lack usable lobbies. When students find a nook with a padded bench, such as, for example, in the basement of Voorhees Hall, they imagine themselves lucky to have discovered such a secret. The Graduate School of Education, on the other hand, has a successful and well-populated lobby. Many buildings have large open spaces that often serve as nothing more than places to wait for elevators or to pick up a *Targum*, whereas with the addition of suitable furniture they could equally well become places where students and faculty congregate and talk. We suggest creating lobbies in existing classroom buildings by adding moveable chairs, benches, and sofas. We know that these chairs will disappear in time; the cost of replacing chairs would be worth the benefits of improved social space.<sup>2</sup>

**Recommendation 4:** We recommend that all further construction and renovation of Rutgers academic facilities include consideration for how suitably equipped communal spaces, such as lobbies, can be part of the design. We also recommend that the university include as part of its future facilities planning the conversion of open spaces within existing buildings into lobbies.

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<sup>1</sup> A major criticism of hospitals is that the patients and families feel disoriented and confused. They feel as though “nobody told them anything.” This disorientation reinforces the sense of powerlessness, the sense that the hospital is managed as a “top-down” institution. Universities would do well to avoid these negative messages (Sloane and Conant Sloane, *Medicine Moves to the Mall*, 95).

<sup>2</sup> William Whyte, *Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org).

Disparity among the student centers must be addressed because this disparity reinforces perceived inequities. Livingston's student center is currently the least inviting, and we are eager to see the results of the renovation.

The university currently has a plan for a mixed-use, human-scaled development adjacent to the Livingston campus, tentatively called College Town. The committee generally supports the idea of enhancing the area around Livingston, which, in all of our canvassing, emerged as the most neglected of the campuses. We are concerned, however, that if too much energy is directed toward College Town, the actual housing stock on the campus at Livingston will become even more degraded. In conjunction with College Town, Rutgers needs to enhance the 1970s-era Livingston, making it a destination for students. One suggestion is to introduce a theater that is open to all Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway students, making up for the lack of available performance space throughout the campus (Mason Gross School of the Arts' spaces are overbooked for its own activities). Several students proposed an art house cinema at Livingston because this is currently lacking on campus.<sup>3</sup> Some students were enthusiastic about a history research center and museum devoted to Camp Kilmer.<sup>4</sup> In general, we believe that attention and funds need to be directed toward Livingston. The use of temporary buildings at Livingston (or anywhere else on the Rutgers campuses) should be rejected because they do not reflect the values our community places in undergraduate education.

**Recommendation 5:** We recommend that the university explicitly acknowledge the disparities between the Livingston campus and the other campuses in New Brunswick/Piscataway and assign high priority to those projects that can hasten its conversion into a campus with a richness of environment that competes with those of the other campuses.

Certain carefully chosen retail spaces, although not traditionally a part of college campuses, can also serve as places for interaction. The Busch campus could use a technical bookstore that would operate as an academic equivalent of the corner store. Livingston's College Town is planned to have corner stores and other retail shops around the village square; one of those shops might be another bookstore, designed to accommodate faculty as well as local residents. A main bookstore on the College Avenue campus could foster collegial interactions among members of the academic community on all the New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses. The addition of student-oriented shops promises to improve Easton Avenue.<sup>5</sup> The creation of cafes in our larger libraries, as is found in other universities, as well as the widespread establishment of "coffee carts" around our campuses, can also create gathering places for students, faculty, and staff.

**Recommendation 6:** We recommend renewed consideration of the establishment of community-building commercial enterprises on all campuses to create communal spaces for informal interaction.

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<sup>3</sup> Alex Kasavin, Student, March 31, 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Ideas for Livingston were generated by students in a class co-taught by Alison Isenberg, history, and Carla Yanni, art history, spring 2005. Papers from the class are available in Special Collections, Alexander Library.

<sup>5</sup> Sharon Waters, "RU Leader Envisions New Look for Campus," *Home News Tribune* (Sunday, Feb. 16, 2003).



We are not troubled by the replication of student centers, bookstores, dormitories, and classrooms on each of the campuses. In fact, in our discussions we began to think of the various areas of Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway as neighborhoods in a lively city. Each of these neighborhood areas (College Avenue campus, Cook, Douglass, downtown New Brunswick, Busch, and Livingston) would have its own services, recognizable streets and buildings, collegial character, and familiar faces. The Boyer Report asserted that “a research university is in many ways a city; it offers unlimited opportunities and attractions in terms of associations, activities, and enterprises. But, as in a city, the requirements of daily living may be taxing, and sorting out the opportunities and finding like-minded individuals may be difficult.”<sup>6</sup> This pertains to Rutgers in some ways, but we are so spread out that we might do well to think of ourselves as a city made manageable by distinct neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods often cohere around public space, and public space may take many forms. Rutgers is surprisingly lacking in public art, which enlivens the outdoor space and aids in helping people find their way around campus.<sup>7</sup> The court in front of the Mason Gross School of the Arts, although enhanced by sculpture, is not a fully developed urban space: without any place to sit, no one can use this centrally located urban site. Several committee members noticed the general shortage of green space at Rutgers, and others emphasized the importance of seating, especially moveable chairs.<sup>8</sup> Even when we have naturally occurring gathering spots, such as at the bus stop near the grease trucks, we do not support that communality with such simple amenities as seats. Given our dependence on buses, which is not likely to subside, we argue in favor of redesigning the bus stops to make them more pleasant and comfortable. Pushcarts selling coffee and a few more benches would humanize the bus stops.<sup>9</sup> We must accept the fact that bus stops are important, because students spend a lot of time at them. One student suggested putting a wireless hot spot at each bus stop. Currently Voorhees Mall is a pedestrian thoroughfare—people walk through it, but do not dwell there, even though it is one of the prettiest places at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. Both the Old Queen’s area and Voorhees Mall would benefit from flexible and plentiful outdoor seating, as would the plaza in front of the Civic Square Building.

**Recommendation 7:** We recommend redesigning the bus stops to establish communal spaces in places in which students already congregate. More generally, we recommend identifying areas of campus where students currently gather in order to make those places (including the grease

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<sup>6</sup> Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America’s Research Universities* (1998).

<sup>7</sup> Large-scale art installations are used at airports and hospitals to assist in “wayfinding.”

<sup>8</sup> “Probably the best kind of seating is the moveable chair. Not perfect in every situation, it is nearly so in most. Why? Several reasons. First, chairs are more comfortable than benches. Second, they’re inexpensive. Costs vary, but you can provide roughly 10 moveable chairs for the price of one bench (or even less).” William Whyte, *Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org). The web site of the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) serves as a clearinghouse for ideas about creating lively outdoor spaces that encourage interaction.

<sup>9</sup> “If you want to seed a place with activity, put out food. Food attracts people who attract more people. . . . Set up a kiosk or a pushcart, spread the chairs out, put up the colored umbrellas, and the customers and the visual effect can be stunning. Instead of distributing the facilities over a large space, group the tables and chairs close together. As a consequence, people will be compressed into meeting one another easily; waiting in line or weaving their way through the tables. Very quickly, the space can become a great social interchange for pedestrians.” William Whyte, *Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org).

trucks and bus stops) more attractive, comfortable, and integrated into the fabric of Rutgers' campuses.

Ultimately, many of our recommendations can be summarized as follows:

**Recommendation 8:** We recommend that Rutgers focus on the creation of communal spaces for casual interaction.

#### **IV. RUTGERS–NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY AS A CITY OF COMMUTERS**

Everyone at Rutgers is a commuter. Whether we commute from Brooklyn to New Brunswick, or Princeton to Piscataway, or just back and forth (and back and forth again) between Busch and College Avenue, we are all in constant motion. The Working Group imagined Rutgers as a city of mobile learners, with every member of the community traveling easily from place to place.

Accepting that more than a third of New Brunswick/Piscataway undergraduates are commuters is essential in establishing better facilities. We need to welcome commuters and make the various campuses easier to enter and exit. One member of the Working Group suggested that Rutgers accommodate commuters by offering a place to go for a few hours during the day, a place to make a few phone calls, telecommute to their outside jobs, do a little homework, or check email. Rutgers could offer temporary offices on different campuses, possibly in the student centers, where faculty and students could meet when faculty are away from their regular offices. Students who commute would certainly appreciate places, perhaps located in the student centers, where they could telecommute. A room equipped for children—a place to stay for a few hours—would help students who have children. The efforts of University College in offering day care and a commuter lounge mark a beginning. Rutgers could take the lead in making physical improvements that acknowledge the fact that we are a community of mobile learners.

#### **V. CLASSROOMS**

To analyze the problems with classrooms was one of the key charges put before our Working Group. Simply put, there are too few classrooms, and the ones we have are not of high quality. There is a critical shortage of large (250-seat and more) classrooms, and although the large lecture format is not our preferred model of instruction, we accept that Rutgers is a research university that will probably always have large lecture classes. These lectures need to be supplemented with smaller recitation sections.

The shortage of teaching assistants is debilitating for both graduate and undergraduate education. (In 2004, one class in the Department of Classics had 270 students and not one teaching assistant.) Medium-sized classrooms (about 100 students) are also always in demand. The classroom shortage affects our students in countless ways. Departments cannot create flexible schedules because the classrooms are so seldom available. Each department jealously guards the few rooms it controls. Classrooms are in such short supply that we recommend including them in other building projects, such as laboratory buildings.

Crowded classrooms are linked to other basic shortfalls in undergraduate education. Students cannot take the classes they need because the classes are full. Classes close because department administrators are forced to schedule classes in rooms that they know are too small. As professors, we've all started a new semester with students sitting on the floor and in the aisles of our classrooms; as students, we hope some fellow student will drop the class and allow us to get a seat. Furthermore, classrooms are inflexible. A regrettable example of this is the room with its chairs bolted to the floor: the instructor cannot ask the students to work in small groups, because the students cannot move the chairs. While faculty members are encouraged to teach creatively by involving our students in our research projects, our classrooms discourage any mode of teaching other than traditional lecturing.

Not every classroom needs the fullest extent of technology, but most members of the Working Group were strongly in favor of wireless Internet connections for classrooms. We object to the current practice in which some particularly good lecture halls are controlled by research institutes and must be rented by departments. *There appears to be value in a significant increase in classroom space on the College Avenue campus, such as would be addressed by a new academic classroom building, and an additional large lecture-hall space on Busch campus.*

Although it is not a glamorous way to spend money, Rutgers needs to direct funds toward heating, ventilation, and air conditioning of our classrooms. Our students frequently complain about the heating (too much or too little), air conditioning (too much or too little) and ventilation (too little or an adequate amount accompanied by strange odors.) Ideally, each room should have a separate temperature control. Several faculty members on the Working Group told stories of having to cancel classes or move out-of-doors because they found the conditions in their classrooms to be unbearable. Students complain of uncomfortable chairs and crowded rooms. One student stated simply, "I just find it easier to learn when I'm comfortable."<sup>10</sup> Again, the poor-quality classrooms send a message to students that their education, comfort, and even health, are unimportant to the larger institution.<sup>11</sup> Spending money on maintenance, like spending money on parking and heating, is not glamorous, but the rundown appearance of the College Avenue campus and Livingston came up in many of our conversations. Busch seems to be better maintained, which made us question the equality of maintenance on various campuses.

In summary:

**Recommendation 10:** We recommend that the future design of all classroom facilities incorporate configurations that are flexible, allow for collaboration, and facilitate a wide range of teaching methods.

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<sup>10</sup> Stephen Mirra, Student interview, October 21, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Although improving indoor air quality is far more important in a hospital than a university, well-designed ventilation systems and air filters prevent infection. Maintaining good air quality involves careful design and vigilant control of the architectural environment. "Evidence-Based Hospital Design Improves Healthcare Outcomes for Patients, Families and Staff," Press Release, June 7, 2004, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, [www.rwjf.org/newsroom](http://www.rwjf.org/newsroom).

**Recommendation 11:** We recommend that the design of all new facilities—whether academic or research—should consider the larger educational needs of Rutgers, including addressing the classroom needs.

**Recommendation 12:** We recommend that the university conduct a thorough analysis of the need for new classroom space.

**Recommendation 13:** We recommend that the university assign top priority to repairing and upgrading, where necessary, the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning of university classrooms. The university should set minimum standards for all classrooms, with facilities and maintenance giving top priority for maintaining these standards.

## **VI. LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

We were pleased to learn that the Office of Information Technology is in the midst of a strategic planning process, and that long-term planning for the Rutgers Libraries is already structured around multiyear strategic planning efforts. Both organizations' strategic planning processes embody the principle that service organizations should not be making academic decisions, and that priorities must thus be set through an assessment of the university's goals that involves discussion and collaboration with members of the university community. We applaud both organizations for their work on engaging the university community in their strategic planning efforts.

In the case of information technology (IT), we are particularly intrigued by the role that IT can play in creating learning environments that best support our undergraduate mission. IT can help in managing large classes (such as by providing course-support technology, supplying instructors with student-photo rosters, etc.), in supporting commuters (such as by providing Internet access to services to avoid in-person visits, facilitating use of the campus bus system through [whereismybus.com](http://whereismybus.com), etc.), in helping students make course decisions (such as making teacher evaluations, syllabi, and other resources available online), and so on. We look forward to the recommendations of the Information Technology Strategic Planning Committee's subcommittee on instruction, which is explicitly assessing the roles that IT can play in Rutgers' educational mission. We also strongly believe that the university's Advisory Committee on Instructional Computing process was exemplary in how it used faculty to assess IT funding priorities, and we encourage the university to use this process as a model for faculty participation in other administrative decision-making.<sup>12</sup> The Information Technology Strategic Planning Committee's subcommittee on governance is considering structural and procedural mechanisms that can support broad participation by the university community in decisions concerning IT and its impact on our university's missions, and we thus look forward to their recommendations as well.

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<sup>12</sup> Students have participated for the last 10 years on the Advisory Committee on Instructional Computing (ACIC). This committee has had responsibility for allocating student computer fee money. We understand that the ACIC process has been terminated with the move to All Funds Budgeting.

The main concerns articulated by the Rutgers University Libraries focus on the broader role that they have taken on as IT has changed the nature of university libraries. The libraries identified the need for more video-equipped classrooms, classrooms equipped with computers on each desk, and greater support for students with laptops—all of them services that they provide in far more limited capacity than demand warrants.<sup>13</sup> They point out that after the Douglass Library was renovated, its use doubled; yet many of their other facilities remain shabby. Clearly the libraries can provide communal spaces if they are in better shape and more attractive to our students. Extended hours are also desirable, although security can then become an issue, in addition to the increased staff requirements. As is the case with classrooms, some library facilities suffer from poorly functioning heating and air conditioning. Finally, on a grander scale, they conjecture that centralization of the science libraries on Busch might create greater communal spaces, and perhaps save costs through economies of scale. The leaders of the Rutgers University Libraries have thought hard about their role in supporting the university's educational mission, and we encourage the administration to consider carefully the recommendations of their ongoing strategic planning efforts.

## **VII. LEARNING AND LIVING ENVIRONMENTS**

Learning communities focus on specific themes (e.g., international studies; arts; business, society and the economy; environmental studies; women in science) and offer courses and experiences that relate to these themes. The individual communities are small (generally under 100 students per topic) and participating students may take some classes together and may live together in selected residence halls. Some of the faculty teaching in individual communities may also live in residence halls.

Learning communities are designed to stimulate active learning and increase student involvement, strengthen interaction between students and faculty, and encourage students to integrate ideas across multiple disciplines. The model, which has been used by research universities, liberal arts colleges, and community colleges, has been shown to increase student retention and success. It also can be a way of attracting academically gifted students, especially those looking for a smaller campus experience.

Some of the research universities utilizing the learning and living community model include University of Maryland-College Park, University of Michigan, Duke University, Syracuse University, University of Illinois, University of Washington and University of Wisconsin. Currently special-interest houses on Douglass campus, the themed halls in Demarest residence hall on the College Avenue campus, and the fellow-in-residence on the Livingston campus are examples of learning and living environments. Although different research universities have more or less structured approaches to learning and living communities, the themes that most of the universities seem to highlight include:

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<sup>13</sup> One member of the Working Group felt that the proliferation of computer labs was unnecessarily expensive, and that a computer kiosks or hot spots for wireless access could be added to lobbies, libraries, and student centers, for students who do not need the full resources of a lab to check their email.

- Having a small, liberal arts college experience while being able to draw upon all the resources of a large research university.
- Interacting with a select community of like-minded, often academically talented, students.
- Having access to small courses, often limited to learning and living community members, taught by faculty with a commitment to the themes of the individual communities.
- Being able to interact with faculty, both in classroom and informal settings.
- Having a supportive living and learning environment, particularly for the transition from high school to college.
- Focusing on active learning, including service activities, student-led programs, and field trips.

Although many Working Group members find the diversity of campuses an advantage, some believe that the university should work toward unifying the campuses by better organizing residential and instructional functions in order to give students greater choice regarding where they live and enable them to travel less in between classes.

***Recommendation 14:*** We recommend that an implementation committee of the Task Force study the feasibility of establishing several learning and living communities at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway; this committee would also encourage and expand the already existing programs in themed living environments and special-interest housing within the residence halls.

## **VIII. GETTING AROUND: CONNECTING THE CAMPUSES**

### *A. Connecting the Campuses*

The disorientation and lack of community we notice at a small scale also exist at a larger scale. We found that the difficult connections among campuses cause much stress; but these troubled connections are not just physical. The lack of connection among campuses is symbolic of a lack of connection among people. The current New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses are suffering from a kind of suburban sprawl. We find ourselves driving the five miles from the end of Busch campus to the edge of Cook, when many of us would prefer a quick form of public transport. Students cannot take full advantage of all that Rutgers offers if it remains so challenging to get from place to place. Students are constantly frustrated by the traffic congestion, the erratic buses, and the parking shortage. They make decisions about what courses to take based not on educational needs, but on the bus schedule. The situation communicates to students that the university does not care about their needs.

The Raritan River is frequently seen as an obstacle. But seeing the river as a geographic obstacle does not help us understand it or overcome it. Two Working Group members argued that the river is really an asset; it offers expanses of greenery, a vista, and a public park on the Highland Park side; it once played an important part in the undergraduate imagination. Another Working Group member pointed out that Route 18, not the river, prevents easy travel from the College Avenue campus to Busch and Livingston. Several members suggested ways of reclaiming the

river. Cafés as in San Antonio, houseboats as in Seattle and Amsterdam, embankments with benches and picnic areas as in Paris, and pedestrian bridges like those in London and Barcelona were introduced into our discussions. Although we readily admit these suggestions are less than pragmatic, it is still worth emphasizing that the river is not our enemy; indeed, the Raritan could be celebrated in our planning. If there are no serious plans to build an additional bridge or put in a light rail system, then dedicated bus lanes must be considered as a means of improving traffic problems.

### *B. Bicycling*

The Working Group returned frequently to the topic of bicycling. At many universities, the bicycle is the preferred means of transport. It is cheap and does not pollute. But biking has to be easy, or students will not do it. There needs to be safe, well-lit, bike paths, secure places to store bikes, and even places to shower and change upon arrival. The Working Group applauds the addition of a bicycle lane on the new bridge that is part of Route 18; however it must be connected in a safe and easy way to the College Avenue campus through Buccleuch Park.

***Recommendation 15:*** We recommend that the university establish as a priority the creation of a complete system of bike paths that connect the five campuses in New Brunswick/Piscataway.

### *C. Signs and Navigation*

The current signs for pedestrians and the faded maps in kiosks (few and far between) are not sufficient. Even in an urban campus, the university should project itself positively through its architecture. We agreed that one should know when one has stepped into a college campus. We understand that the architect's office is in the process of hiring a firm to establish design standards for the university, and this will include signs, sidewalks, and so on. This appears to the Working Group to be long overdue. The chaotic different railings, the unmatched lampposts, and the dozens of different paving materials may not be the most important issue facing the university, but with a little effort in this area, the appearance of the university could be greatly enhanced. These improvements are connected to undergraduate education insofar as a clean and comprehensible campus expresses the university's values.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The continued health and success of Rutgers depends upon the quality of life on our campus and in the surrounding cities and towns; attention to the architecture of Rutgers, especially facilities such as classrooms, will enhance undergraduate education. The New Brunswick/Piscataway campus—its architecture, pathways, landscape, and public spaces—can be put to use in the project of connecting faculty to undergraduates.

Appendix 1

**About the Working Group on Campus Planning and Facilities**

**Membership**

*Chairs:* Carla Yanni, Art History, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Haym Hirsh, Computer Science, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Ann Fabian, American Studies, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Jean Marie Hartman, Landscape Architecture, Cook College

Martha Helfer, Germanic, Russian, and East European Languages and Literatures, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Alison Isenberg, History, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Aleksey Kasavin, Student, Rutgers College '07

Frederick Kauffman, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

David Madigan, Statistics, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Daniel O'Connor, Library and Information Science, School of Communication, Information and Library Studies

Angela O'Donnell, Educational Psychology, Graduate School of Education

Marie Pasquariello, Student, School of Engineering '07

Julia Sass Rubin, Public Policy, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

The Working Group on Campus Planning and Facilities included faculty and students from the following schools and departments: history, art history, landscape architecture, German, pharmacy, statistics, computer science, and education. We discussed a range of issues, from the difficult connections between campuses, to the shortage of classrooms, to the confusing process by which facilities decisions are made. We met with the university architect and landscape architect, representatives from the library and the IT divisions, administrators, faculty, and students.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> These people included Marianne Gaunt, university librarian; Charles Hedrick, university director of instructional and research computing and CTO; Karen Kavanagh, executive vice president for administrative affairs; Kim Manning-Lewis, vice president for university relations; Richard L. McCormick, president; Michael McKay, vice president for information technology; Françoise Puniello, associate New Brunswick library director; Frank Wong, executive director, facilities planning and development; Lawrence Porter, senior landscape architect.



Appendix 2

**Problems with the Physical Plant**

Traffic makes it difficult to get from campus to campus  
Buses not reliable, especially to Livingston  
Bus stops dirty  
Bus stops lack seating  
Not enough classrooms  
Not enough large classrooms  
Classroom HVAC does not work  
Signs on Route 18 near Douglass/Cook confusing  
Signs on campuses confusing  
Buildings run-down  
Maintenance not equivalent across all locations  
Student centers not equivalent across all campuses  
Not enough parking  
Bicycle paths not complete  
Lack of lobbies  
Lack of green space  
Lack of seating in present outdoor areas  
No technical book store at Busch  
No architectural coherence within campuses  
No theater for those students not in Mason Gross  
Temporary buildings still in use; more temporary buildings planned  
Garbage not picked up on College Avenue  
Not enough wireless access points  
Insufficient video-equipped classrooms  
Not enough graduate student carrels



## 6 | THE STRUCTURE OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

### *Observations*

The Working Group on Structure focused on the current organization of the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus as it affects the education and campus lives of our undergraduates. In the following pages, we describe our assessment of that organizational structure and propose changes which we believe will better serve our students and faculty.

We begin with a student's perspective. Potential first-year undergraduates and transfer students in New Brunswick/Piscataway are admitted to one or more of four arts and sciences colleges (Douglass College, Livingston College, Rutgers College, or University College–New Brunswick) and/or four professional schools (Cook College, the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, the Mason Gross School of the Arts, or the School of Engineering). Students make their choices based on the academic programs or major fields of study available in the schools or colleges. For example, a student who wants to major in pharmacy can only do so in the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy; a mechanical engineering major is available only to students in the School of Engineering; and a dance student can only pursue a professional bachelor of fine arts (B.F.A.) degree in the Mason Gross School of the Arts.

Intellectual choices are less clear in the colleges. Cook students, for example, can major in some arts and sciences disciplines, but not in others; arts and sciences students can major in some Cook disciplines, but not in others. In general, the majors available to students of the arts and sciences are common across the four arts and sciences colleges; they include all those majors offered by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, as well as majors offered by the School of Communication, Information and Library Studies, the Rutgers Business School: Undergraduate–New Brunswick, the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, the School of Social Work, the School of Management and Labor Relations, and the liberal arts majors that lead to bachelor of arts (B.A.) degrees of the Mason Gross School of the Arts.

The choice of a college for students in the arts and sciences is often based on a combination of academic and student-life factors. Ideally, students would match their particular general academic interests and outside-the-classroom interests with the choice of college. Although the general education requirements of the four arts and sciences colleges are similar, there are significant differences among them in the details. College-sponsored activities outside the classroom also vary, frequently reflecting the focus of the college. The physical settings of the four colleges also differ.

Traditional students (applying directly from high school) interested in arts and sciences are automatically considered for admission to Livingston and Rutgers Colleges and, for women, to Douglass College. Nontraditional students are considered for University College. (Douglass College also has a program for nontraditional students, and University College admits many traditional students as well.) Students admitted as first-year or transfer students to the professional schools other than Cook College choose a college of residential affiliation—Douglass, Livingston, or Rutgers. Offices at that college provide the student life services to all

affiliated students—those who have transferred, those who are enrolled in professional schools, and those they have admitted to the college as first-year students.

Although there are some administrative advantages, we have found that in practice the current structure sometimes closes academic opportunities for students. They make choices with academic consequences for reasons having little to do with scholarly interests. But the consequences of all of these choices include academic ones. A student's ability to enroll in certain courses or pursue certain majors is determined by accidents of geography or by the number of beds available on a campus. Students find themselves subject to differences in general education requirements whose intricacies are mysterious to them and, all too often, to many faculty who would advise them.

Consequences of their choices follow students throughout their college careers. Two students, one at Rutgers College and one at Douglass College, who have tried to follow the rules as best they can and who (as is often the case) have made reasonable choices of courses based on their own interpretations of the rules, with the advice of their friends, can find themselves at the beginning of the senior year having completed exactly the same courses, with exactly the same major. Yet one student finds that he or she can complete his or her degree in the remaining two semesters, while the other learns that it is not possible. A Cook College student can decide after several years that none of the majors accepted by Cook is the ideal major for him, and succeed in transferring to Livingston College, only to find that Livingston will not accept the transfer credits from outside institutions that Cook readily accepted. A Douglass student may have funds available for senior-level research, while a Livingston student with a similar research project has no source of funding.

Understandably, many students choose a college based on overall reputation. Since reorganization in 1980, students have preferred Rutgers College. It has had the highest rate of acceptance of offers of admission and consequently the highest academic profile for incoming students. Many students do not “choose” Livingston College, Douglass College, or Cook College because of the college's particular academic emphasis, but rather because they were closed out of Rutgers College. Many students do not “choose” Rutgers College because of its particular academic requirements (including completion of a minor), but because it has a better academic reputation. Some admitted students go elsewhere because they did not get into Rutgers College.

Even with the best of academic intentions, we have created a situation that unnecessarily limits options available to the students we have admitted. We have also unintentionally fostered hierarchies among programs, colleges, and campuses, which have helped create unnecessary inequalities among our admitted students. While differences among the colleges are valuable, perceived and real differences among the academic programs colleges offer to students have had negative consequences for the university as a whole as it works to ensure that all students have ready access to its resources.

From a faculty perspective, the current academic structure also separates students and faculty unnecessarily, burying the benefits of our smaller organizations with unnecessary bureaucratic complexities, and provides extremely few opportunities for the general faculty to participate in undergraduate academic affairs and issues outside of their departments. For example, general education requirements are set by the faculty fellows of the individual colleges—self-identified tiny subsets of faculty members from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the professional schools—while the major requirements are set by the faculty offering the major. It is important

to provide appropriate avenues for all faculty members to participate in cross-disciplinary issues of undergraduate education.

Furthermore, these separate processes in the colleges lead to much confusion among the faculty. For example, because of colleges and their differing requirements, there is no “chemistry” degree that chemistry faculty can discuss with students. There are the particulars of the major requirements, but the remaining requirements for the degree lead to five different degrees—those of Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, and University Colleges. These differences make it difficult for a chemistry faculty member to say which courses outside the chemistry department may be particularly useful and appropriate for an individual student. Faculty members often avoid advising students on overall programs because they often do not understand the mix of courses we require of the students in our different colleges. Faculty members have not been instructed in the general education requirements established by college faculty fellows, and we too often leave student advising to the able administrative staffs of colleges and departments. The academic advising staffs report to the deans of the colleges; the faculty and staff engaged in major advising report to the deans of the faculties; and the administrative structure discourages the cross-communication that would best serve the students.

On the other hand, we recognize that college structure has substantial advantages. Certain things are best provided at the college level. Services organized to be delivered at the college level, rather than NewBrunswick/Piscataway-wide, encourage the kinds of personal connections our students value. Students often develop important relationships with members of the college staffs. Local coordination allows variations in the delivery of services appropriate to the interests of the local community. Not every facility on every campus has to have the same hours, or the same look and feel, and students appreciate the opportunity to use facilities when it suits them best and in surroundings they appreciate. Student government, too, belongs in the colleges. Representatives are closer to the students they represent. Opportunities for leadership are multiplied.

Administrators also recognize the advantages of the local organization of the colleges. In many areas, campus teams, which cut across functional areas, develop working relationships that are essential for addressing nonacademic problem solving. For example, a single event can have consequences for a student in the areas of health, residence life, financial affairs, and academic affairs, and the staff involved in these areas need to work together regularly in a coordinated fashion.

But even in nonacademic areas of campus services and student life, variations among the colleges have had certain negative effects, which must be addressed. Students notice that policies and practices differ among the campuses and point out the inequities that sometimes arise. Individual student clubs are chartered and funded through the individual colleges, which have differing resources to support them, while the clubs themselves typically enlist students from all of the colleges. Student fees are set and paid by the students of the individual colleges, but go to organizations that serve students of all of the colleges. Physical and financial resources vary among the colleges; and interested, enthusiastic, and otherwise well-qualified students are sometimes excluded from the programs that attract them purely on the basis of their college of matriculation.

## ***Recommendations***

We propose a structure that will preserve the advantages of our current system of colleges and schools and correct some of the problems that limit the educational opportunities we offer our undergraduates.

We recognize that several variations may be possible on the particulars that fit within the general framework. Our aim is to provide a structure based on:

- communicating the high academic expectations of the university from the moment a student applies to after graduation, rather than sending a variety of overlapping and sometimes contradictory messages;
- opening equitable academic and cocurricular opportunities to all interested and qualified students, rather than artificially obstructing such opportunities;
- integrating cocurricular activities with the general intellectual goals of the campus, rather than separating them from our mission of research;
- enhancing opportunities for interaction among students, faculty, and staff, rather than isolating the academic sphere that is at the heart of our undergraduate mission;
- supporting smaller communities that personalize the educational experience while keeping opportunities open to all, rather than restricting those opportunities; and
- highlighting an environment supportive of academic work across the campus, rather than allowing an attitude of disrespect for academic work and the students engaged in it.

The primary officers involved with undergraduate affairs in New Brunswick/Piscataway will be:

### **Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs**

#### **Vice Presidents:**

Undergraduate Education  
Student Affairs

#### **School Deans:**

Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences  
School of Engineering  
Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy  
Mason Gross School of the Arts  
School of Communication, Information  
and Library Studies  
Rutgers Business School:  
Undergraduate–New Brunswick  
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning  
and Public Policy  
School of Social Work  
School of Management and Labor  
Relations  
School of Agricultural and  
Environmental Science  
Graduate School of Education

**Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs**

*Undergraduate Responsibilities*

**Schools admitting first-year students:**

Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences  
Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy  
School of Engineering  
Mason Gross School of the Arts  
School of Agricultural and Environmental  
Science

**Professional schools admitting arts and sciences  
students into majors and minors:**

School of Communication, Information and  
Library Studies  
Rutgers Business School: Undergraduate–  
New Brunswick  
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and  
Public Policy  
School of Social Work  
School of Management and Labor Relations  
Graduate School of Education  
Mason Gross School of the Arts  
(liberal arts majors)  
School of Agricultural and Environmental  
Science

**Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate  
Education**

Campus Communities  
Busch Campus  
Cook Campus  
Douglass Campus  
Livingston Campus  
Queen's Campus  
UCNB  
Cross-School Councils and Committees  
Undergraduate Academic Council of  
Deans of the Schools and Colleges  
Council of Associate Deans for  
Undergraduate Studies  
Admissions Committee  
Curriculum Committee  
Student Life Committee  
Cross-School Academic Areas  
Center for the Advancement of  
Teaching  
Academic Support Programs  
Academic Integrity  
Honors Programs  
Undergraduate Research  
Transfer Student Affairs  
Fellowship and Postgraduate Guidance  
Career Services  
Academic Administrative Units  
Undergraduate Admissions  
Financial Aid  
Registrar  
Scheduling  
Summer and Winter Session

**Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs**

Cross-Campus and Cross-School Facilities and  
Services  
Housing  
Dining  
Recreation  
Student Centers  
Health Services  
Mental Health Services  
Financial Services  
Disabilities Services  
Residence Life  
Student Life Policies  
Disciplinary Affairs (nonacademic)

Note that in the terminology we use here for new or changed units, we want to clarify the distinction between academic functions and student community functions:

- *Schools* will denote all degree-granting academic units composed of faculty and students; schools will set all academic requirements, from admissions to graduation.
- *Campuses* will denote student communities (geographical or virtual) cutting across the schools.

### **Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and Professional Schools**

The Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences will be a *school* headed by an executive dean (currently the executive dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences), and its faculty will be what is currently the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. All arts and sciences students will be admitted as first-year or transfer students to this school, and bachelor's degrees will be conferred by this school (jointly with the professional school, in the case of arts and sciences students with majors in one of those schools). Admissions standards for the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences will be set for first-year students, and appropriately modified for all transfer students and for all nontraditional students.

The School of Agricultural and Environmental Science will be headed by its executive dean (currently the executive dean of Cook College), and its faculty will be what is currently the faculty of Cook College. The school will offer only its own majors (not arts and sciences majors or School of Communication, Information and Library Studies majors). The present Cook faculty will engage in a discussion leading to a recommendation to the university administration as to its position along the continuum represented by the following models: 1) its students will be those admitted in the first year to the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences, and then admitted to a School of Agricultural and Environmental Science major at the time of major declaration (e.g., as is the case for the School of Communication, Information and Library Studies); 2) its students will be admitted in the first year as professional students in the School of Agricultural and Environmental Science (e.g., as is the case for School of Engineering); or 3) the school will distinguish and choose which of its majors are professional majors and which are to be considered liberal arts majors (as is the case for the Mason Gross School of the Arts); students interested in its professional majors will be admitted to the School of Agricultural and Environmental Science in the first year, while students interested in the school's liberal arts majors will be admitted to the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences in the first year and then admitted to the school's liberal arts majors at the time of major declaration.

First-year and transfer students then will apply to and be admitted to the following New Brunswick/Piscataway schools:

Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences  
Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy  
School of Engineering  
Mason Gross School of the Arts  
School of Agricultural and Environmental Science (if the second or third option applies)



Qualified students in the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences will have available to them all majors and minors provided by the faculty of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences (currently the Faculty of Arts and Sciences), as well as those of the following professional schools:

School of Communication, Information and Library Studies  
Rutgers Business School: Undergraduate–New Brunswick  
Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy  
School of Social Work  
School of Management and Labor Relations  
Graduate School of Education  
Mason Gross School of the Arts (liberal arts majors)  
School of Agricultural and Environmental Science (if the first or third option is chosen)

In addition, joint degree programs (bachelor's and master's) will remain available, so that arts and sciences students will, for example, be able to apply for admission to the five-year program with the Graduate School of Education.

If school arrangements for the admission of undergraduate students change, the categorization will be modified accordingly.

Academic authority over admissions criteria, general education, scholastic standing, honors curricula, and degree certification will reside with the faculties of the respective schools admitting first-year students. In the case of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences, whose students have major and minor choices included among the majors and minors offered by some of the professional schools, academic authority over admissions criteria, general education, scholastic standing, honors curricula, and degree certification will reside with an undergraduate faculty body consisting of the faculty of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and faculty from the professional schools offering those majors and minors. This undergraduate faculty body will be convened by the executive dean of the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences in consultation with the deans of those schools. Differences which may arise among the deans will be addressed in the Undergraduate Academic Council of Deans of the Schools and Campuses, chaired by the vice president for undergraduate education (see below). Academic authority over major requirements will reside with the faculties of the respective schools offering the majors.

Deans of the respective schools admitting first-year students will be responsible for premajor academic advising, which will be conducted through their offices. The staff positions in these areas of academic affairs currently reporting to the deans of Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, and University Colleges will be transferred to the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences, but will retain a "dotted-line" relation to the respective campus deans. Deans of the schools offering majors will be responsible for academic advising in the major, which will typically be done at the department level.

We believe that these changes in academic areas will clarify the academic paths for students applying for admission, and enable students to better understand their academic programs as they are engaged in them. The academic advising process will be improved. The schools will be responsible for all aspects of a student's academic program, giving their faculty direct

engagement with the undergraduate education experience. Authority in such academic policy areas as advising, honors curricula, and graduation requirements will rest in the schools, which have the corresponding budgetary responsibility necessary to properly implement many of these policies.

### **Campuses and Learning Communities**

Undergraduate campuses will be the local campus communities which will continue to serve as vital centers for the integration of the academic and cocurricular aspects of undergraduate education. The campuses will be headed by deans, who will report to the vice president for undergraduate education. Undergraduate students in the schools will affiliate with one of six such campuses proposed for now:

- Busch Campus
- Cook Campus
- Douglass Campus
- Livingston Campus
- Queen's Campus (on College Avenue)
- UCNB (a nonresidential/virtual campus for the current nontraditional-age students of University College–New Brunswick)

Students will indicate ordered preferences for an affiliation after they have accepted admission to their school. Initial affiliation will determine residence, but subsequent residence will be flexible: just as a student can choose to live off campus now, a student will be eligible to apply for living space on a campus different from the initial choice, subject to availability.

Douglass Campus will be reserved for women. The focus of Cook Campus will remain that associated with its land-grant heritage, and students interested in agriculture and environmental science majors will have first priority of affiliation. Students in engineering and pharmacy will have first priority in affiliation with Busch Campus. UCNB (nonresidential) will be reserved primarily for nontraditional-age students.

The campus deans will be responsible for setting the focus of intellectual life for their students outside the classroom and for working with the school deans to bring faculty into connection with the ongoing intellectual life of their campuses. In particular, the campuses will organize learning communities (say of size no larger than 600 students). These communities will be focused on particular intellectual or other areas, possibly linked to the primary academic focus of the campus (e.g., Cook), or linked to complementary areas (e.g., the arts could be the focus of a community on Busch). These learning communities will involve all interested students—those living off campus as well as on campus. Many students may not choose to affiliate with any such learning community, but this concept is intended to expand the idea of special-interest housing (e.g., floors in dormitories, etc.) to a larger group, and to involve faculty significantly in the cocurricular programming of these groups.

More generally, the vice president for undergraduate education and the campus deans will foster all such programmatic activities designed to integrate cocurricular activities with academic life. Students will be encouraged to take advantage of talks and performances across New Brunswick/Piscataway (independent of their campus), and to follow their particular interests wherever they lead. Such activities will include lectures, programs, arts events, service events, public affairs events, and others. Campus deans will identify programs, events, and mentoring opportunities to foster student-faculty interaction outside the classroom.

The campus deans will coordinate local teams of staff that cut across areas that will report to the schools, the vice president for undergraduate education, and the vice president for student affairs (see below), e.g., residence life, health, academic advising, and financial aid. As these services will continue to be provided in the local communities, local coordination will remain essential, and campus deans will promote the coordination between academic and service functions.

The campus communities will continue to work to foster a sense of connection and identity among students, faculty, and staff, reflecting the local interests of these groups. Campus-specific organizations, such as student government and those related to particular learning communities, will be a part of the campuses. Locally delivered events, which might range from orientation programs to intracampus competitions to graduation ceremonies, could be designed and overseen by the campuses and their deans.

Essential to the success of this vision of the campuses as student communities for all is that uniformly high standards of programs and facilities must be made available to all. In particular, the resources available to the campuses must be provided equitably, through the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Moreover, when it comes to physical facilities, the Livingston Campus is the single highest priority for improvement and for further development.

We believe that the proposed change in structure provides the campuses with the opportunity to expand upon the best features of what they have provided students since the campus reorganization in 1980—the local communities for students that help to personalize a large, geographically extensive campus. They are key ingredients in the local delivery of services that are to be unified across New Brunswick/Piscataway. The campuses will have the opportunity to provide a greater variety of learning opportunities to the students who want them, and those with traditional missions will have the opportunity to adapt them to the research university we have become.

### **Vice President for Undergraduate Education**

The vice president for undergraduate education will be an academic officer reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and will serve as the principal advocate internally and externally for undergraduate education in New Brunswick/Piscataway. The vice president for undergraduate education will sit in the President's Cabinet, the Deans Council, and the Promotion Review Committee (PRC), serving a function relative to undergraduate education similar to that served by the vice president for research and graduate education relative to those

areas. In addition, this officer will sit ex officio on the New Brunswick Faculty Council.

The vice president for undergraduate education will have primary responsibility for academic matters related to undergraduate education that cut across the schools. This vice president will, as needed, convene all faculty in New Brunswick/Piscataway, from the Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences and the professional schools, into a forum for discussion of academic issues focusing on undergraduates. The Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education will have two standing bodies that will meet regularly for academic coordination among the schools:

- Undergraduate Academic Council of Deans of the Schools and Campuses
- Council of Associate Deans for Undergraduate Studies

In addition, the office will have at least three standing committees (with both appointed faculty members and faculty members elected by the New Brunswick Faculty Council):

- Admissions
- Curriculum
- Student Life

The task of these committees and councils will be to ensure ongoing discussion of these central matters in undergraduate education in New Brunswick/Piscataway as they cut across schools. Examples of the kinds of issues to be addressed include the difficulties of students entering a professional school in the first year and then deciding to switch to arts and sciences, restrictive requirements of some professional schools for the entry of arts and sciences students into their majors, and considerations of requirements of particular courses (as is now the case with Expository Writing) and additional curricular elements for students of all the schools. The New Brunswick Faculty Council will also serve in an advisory role to the vice president for undergraduate education in such campuswide matters.

The vice president for undergraduate education will have administrative responsibilities in key academic areas of undergraduate education that cut across the schools. In particular, these areas will include:

- New Brunswick/Piscataway Honors Programs (programmatic responsibility, and academic responsibility across the Schools)
- Undergraduate Research (promotion and financial support)
- A new Office of Fellowship and Postgraduate Guidance (support for students applying for major fellowships, and to graduate and professional schools)

The vice president for undergraduate education will also have responsibility for the campus and learning communities. The campus deans will report to this vice president.

The Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education will have administrative responsibilities for academic service areas for undergraduate education that cut across the schools:

- Undergraduate Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, and Scheduling
- Summer and Winter Sessions and other credit-bearing undergraduate programs
- Career Services
- Center for the Advancement of Teaching
- Cross-School Academic Support Programs, such as EOF and Academic Support for Student Athletes
- Academic Integrity Area of Student Judicial Affairs

We believe that this new position (very different from its predecessor with the same title) and office will significantly impact undergraduate education on campus. The importance of undergraduate education will be highlighted to the faculty in the promotion process in the same way as the importance of research and graduate education, with the corresponding vice presidents both serving on the Promotion Review Committee. Campuswide discussions and decisions about fundamental issues regarding undergraduate education will have an institutionalized home. The visibility of Honors Programs and of Undergraduate Research will be enhanced, and resources to support them will be made available to students across the campus on the basis of merit. Advising for students aspiring to graduate school and to major fellowships will be made a priority. Cross-school service areas essential to the academic enterprise will have a common administrative home.

### **Vice President for Student Affairs**

The vice president for student affairs sits in the President's Cabinet and will report to the vice president for undergraduate education. The vice president for student affairs will also sit *ex officio* on the New Brunswick Faculty Council, which will serve in an advisory role on campuswide student affairs matters.

The vice president for student affairs will have primary responsibility for undergraduate student life matters that cut across the campuses. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will have administrative responsibility for service areas and facilities that have, or will have, unified campuswide organization:

- Housing, Dining, and Residence Life
- Health Services and Mental Health Services
- Recreation Centers
- Student Centers
- Student Clubs
- Student Financial Services
- Student Disabilities Services
- Disciplinary Affairs (other than academic integrity)

The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will be responsible for developing New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide student life policies, and for working with campus deans in ensuring the equity of services across the campuses. Undergraduate student fees will be set on a New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide basis.

## *Transforming Undergraduate Education*

The key objectives, both for functional areas already unified (e.g., Housing, Health Services) and for those currently separated but proposed for unification (e.g., Student Centers, Recreation Centers, Mental Health Services), will be to provide uniformly high services, not necessarily identical (given the physical facilities and the needs and desires of the local campus communities), but equitable. Unified organization allows for common policies, simplified and better business operations, and better mobilization of resources. Unified organization can be invisible to student users in one sense, e.g., Student Centers are still locally situated and the programs they house will reflect the concerns and desires of the local student communities using them; and Recreation Centers can offer a variety of programs that are comprehensive when viewed across New Brunswick/ Piscataway, but are tailored to the facilities and students in the local communities. But unified organization can also be highly visible to students, e.g., in removing the complications of different booking systems and inequitably distributed resources, and in providing staff trained to meet uniform professional standards.

We believe that the unification of services, coupled with the continued (and expanded) delivery of such services at the local community level, will best serve the students as part of the campus as a whole and as members of their local communities. The staff in these service areas, who are an essential part of the human face that our large institution presents to students, are already in many cases accustomed to working with their colleagues in the same functional areas from across the colleges. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will enhance that coordination within functional areas, just as the campuses will focus on the local coordination across the functional areas.

Appendix 1

**About the Working Group on Structure**

**Membership**

*Chairs:* Michael Beals, Dean for Educational Initiatives; Mathematics, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Linda Stamato, Codirector, Center for Negotiation and Conflict Resolution, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

Ann Fabian, American Studies, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Haym Hirsh, Computer Science, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Paul Leath, Physics and Astronomy, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Lenore Neigeborn, Associate Dean and Director of Academic Services, Rutgers College

Lea Stewart, Communication, School of Communication, Information and Library Studies

The structure subcommittee has met fourteen times since its formation (6/28, 7/16, 7/23, 8/13, 8/31, 9/14, 9/28, 10/12, 10/13, 10/26, 11/2, 11/16, 12/10/04, and 1/26/05). It has considered a variety of aspects of the undergraduate educational experience in New Brunswick/Piscataway. It has reviewed prior reports, especially the “Pomper Report” of 1996 (*Building a Learning Community: Report of the Committee on the Delivery of Undergraduate Education*). It has considered aspects of the administrative structure for undergraduate education at other research universities. It has met with deans or their representatives from most of the professional schools in New Brunswick/Piscataway which have undergraduate responsibilities, the deans of the four arts and sciences colleges, the executive dean and vice dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, undergraduate student leaders from across the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus (hosted by the vice president for student affairs) and a large group of staff members in academic support and student service areas from the residential colleges. In addition, it has considered preliminary information provided by other working groups of the Task Force. Its discussions have given the Working Group on Structure a sense of the university’s current structure, as well as a sense of the range of opinions about that structure.

Appendix 2

***Majors, Schools, and Colleges in New Brunswick/Piscataway:  
Current and Proposed***

In order to consider the scope of the academic choices that students make under current and proposed structures, we consider majors, the faculties offering them, and the schools or colleges in which students can matriculate and pursue that as their primary major. The first list is based on what appears in the current catalog (certain majors are open to students from more colleges than those listed, but are less generally available than those listed in the catalog). The second list indicates how those majors would align under the proposed new structure.

**The Current List**

<b>Major</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>School or college to which first-year students apply</b>
Agricultural Science	Cook	Cook
Animal Science	Cook	Cook
Ecology and Natural Resources	Cook	Cook
Environmental and Business Economics	Cook	Cook
Environmental Planning and Design	Cook	Cook
Natural Resource Management	Cook	Cook
Biotechnology	Cook	Cook, Douglass
Environmental Policy, Institutions, and Behavior	Cook	Cook, Douglass
Environmental Sciences	Cook	Cook, Douglass
Meteorology	Cook	Cook, Douglass
Plant Science	Cook	Cook, Douglass
Biological Sciences	FAS	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Chemistry	FAS	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Exercise Science and Sport Studies	FAS	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Geography	FAS	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Geological Sciences	FAS	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Independent/Individualized Major	FAS, Cook	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Public Health	Bloustein	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Marine Sciences	Cook	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Communication	SCILS	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Journalism and Media Studies	SCILS	Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Biochemistry	Cook	Cook, Douglass, Rutgers, University
Food Science	Cook	Cook, Douglass, University
Nutritional Sciences	Cook	Cook, Douglass, University
Africana Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
American Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Anthropology	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Art History	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Astrophysics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Biomathematics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Cell Biology and Neuroscience	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Chinese	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Classics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Comparative Literature	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University



Computer Science	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Criminal Justice	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
East Asian Languages and Area Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Economics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
English	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
European Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Evolutionary Anthropology	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
French	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Genetics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
German	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
History	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
History/French	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
History/Political Science	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Italian	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Jewish Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Latin American Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Linguistics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Mathematics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Medieval Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Middle Eastern Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Molecular Biology and Biochemistry	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Philosophy	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Physics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Political Science	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Portuguese	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Psychology	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Puerto Rican and Hispanic Caribbean Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Religion	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Russian	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Sociology	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Spanish	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Statistics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Statistics/Mathematics	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Women's and Gender Studies	FAS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Urban Studies	Bloustein	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Dance (BA)	MGSA	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Music (BA)	MGSA	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Theater Arts (BA)	MGSA	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Visual Arts (BA)	MGSA	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Information Technology and Informatics	SCILS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Labor Studies and Employment Relations	SMLR	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Accounting	RBS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Finance	RBS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Management	RBS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Management Science and Information Systems	RBS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Marketing	RBS	Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, University
Medical Technology		Douglass, Livingston, University
Applied Sciences in Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Biomedical Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Bioresource Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Materials Science and Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Chemical Engineering	Engineering	Engineering

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Civil Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Electrical and Computer Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Industrial Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Mechanical Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Social Work	SSW	Livingston
Dance (BFA)	MGSA	MGSA
Music (BMus)	MGSA	MGSA
Theater Arts (BFA)	MGSA	MGSA
Visual Arts (BFA)	MGSA	MGSA
Pharmacy	Pharmacy	Pharmacy

### **Key**

BA:	Bachelor of Arts
BFA:	Bachelor of Fine Arts
Bloustein:	Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
BMus:	Bachelor of Music
Cook:	Cook College
Douglass:	Douglass College
Engineering:	School of Engineering
FAS:	Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Livingston:	Livingston College
MGSA:	Mason Gross School of the Arts
Pharmacy:	Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy
RBS:	Rutgers Business School: Undergraduate–New Brunswick
Rutgers:	Rutgers College
SCILS:	School of Communication, Information and Library Studies
SMLR:	School of Management and Labor Relations
SSW:	School of Social Work
University:	University College–New Brunswick

## The Proposed List

<b>Major</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>School to which first-year students apply</b>
Africana Studies	RCAS	RCAS
American Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Anthropology	RCAS	RCAS
Art History	RCAS	RCAS
Astrophysics	RCAS	RCAS
Biological Sciences	RCAS	RCAS
Biomathematics	RCAS	RCAS
Cell Biology and Neuroscience	RCAS	RCAS
Chemistry	RCAS	RCAS
Chinese	RCAS	RCAS
Classics	RCAS	RCAS
Comparative Literature	RCAS	RCAS
Computer Science	RCAS	RCAS
Criminal Justice	RCAS	RCAS
East Asian Languages and Area Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Economics	RCAS	RCAS
English	RCAS	RCAS
European Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Evolutionary Anthropology	RCAS	RCAS
Exercise Science and Sport Studies	RCAS	RCAS
French	RCAS	RCAS
Genetics	RCAS	RCAS
Geography	RCAS	RCAS
Geological Sciences	RCAS	RCAS
German	RCAS	RCAS
History	RCAS	RCAS
History/French	RCAS	RCAS
History/Political Science	RCAS	RCAS
Italian	RCAS	RCAS
Jewish Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Latin American Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Linguistics	RCAS	RCAS
Mathematics	RCAS	RCAS
Medieval Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Middle Eastern Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Molecular Biology and Biochemistry	RCAS	RCAS
Philosophy	RCAS	RCAS
Physics	RCAS	RCAS
Political Science	RCAS	RCAS
Portuguese	RCAS	RCAS
Psychology	RCAS	RCAS
Puerto Rican and Hispanic Caribbean Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Religion	RCAS	RCAS
Russian	RCAS	RCAS
Sociology	RCAS	RCAS
Spanish	RCAS	RCAS
Statistics	RCAS	RCAS
Statistics/Mathematics	RCAS	RCAS
Women's and Gender Studies	RCAS	RCAS
Public Health	Bloustein	RCAS
Urban Studies	Bloustein	RCAS
Dance (BA)	MGSA	RCAS
Music (BA)	MGSA	RCAS
Theater Arts (BA)	MGSA	RCAS
Visual Arts (BA)	MGSA	RCAS

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Communication	SCILS	RCAS
Information Technology and Informatics	SCILS	RCAS
Journalism and Media Studies	SCILS	RCAS
Labor Studies and Employment Relations	SMLR	RCAS
Accounting	RBS	RCAS
Finance	RBS	RCAS
Management	RBS	RCAS
Management Science and Information Systems	RBS	RCAS
Marketing	RBS	RCAS
Social Work	SSW	RCAS
Medical Technology		RCAS
Independent/Individualized Major	RCAS, SAES	RCAS, SAES
Agricultural Science	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Animal Science	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Biochemistry	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Biotechnology	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Ecology and Natural Resources	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Environmental and Business Economics	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Environmental Planning and Design	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Environmental Policy, Institutions, and Behavior	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Environmental Sciences	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Food Science	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Marine Sciences	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Meteorology	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Natural Resource Management	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Nutritional Sciences	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Plant Science	SAES	SAES, or RCAS
Applied Sciences in Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Biomedical Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Bioresource Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Materials Science and Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Chemical Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Civil Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Electrical and Computer Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Industrial Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Mechanical Engineering	Engineering	Engineering
Dance (BFA)	MGSA	MGSA
Music (BMus)	MGSA	MGSA
Theater Arts (BFA)	MGSA	MGSA
Visual Arts (BFA)	MGSA	MGSA
Pharmacy	Pharmacy	Pharmacy

### **Key**

Bloustein:	Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
Engineering:	School of Engineering
MGSA:	Mason Gross School of the Arts
Pharmacy:	Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy
RBS:	Rutgers Business School: Undergraduate–New Brunswick
RCAS:	Rutgers College of Arts and Sciences
SAES:	School of Agricultural and Environmental Science
SCILS:	School of Communication, Information and Library Studies
SMLR:	School of Management and Labor Relations
SSW:	School of Social Work

## 7 | STUDENT AND FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

This report requires major changes at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, both structural and cultural. Indeed, cultural change may be the most fundamental change if undergraduate education is to become the campus priority that this report envisions. We need to design a learning environment in which students, from the time they come to New Brunswick/Piscataway for first-year or transfer orientation, discover a campus committed to their full participation in a community of inquiry and questioning, a community that asks them to do more than take courses in order to earn a degree. Only a critical mass of faculty and undergraduates working together can produce this change. A campus fully committed to the participation of undergraduates in a community of inquiry will need faculty who are deeply involved with undergraduates, whether in teaching or advising or supervising undergraduate projects or engaging students in on-campus activities. Such a campus will also need students who are prepared to do more than complete their course assignments—students who are eager to seek out faculty advisers, to become involved in the rich array of research experiences available, and to take advantage of the cultural opportunities offered at the university and its surrounding communities.

At the outset of this report, we articulated as our fundamental principle the fact that our undergraduates seek their education in a research university whose faculty are discovering new knowledge. Our goals in delineating faculty and student responsibilities for undergraduate education derive from this principle:

### Goals

- Students should have firsthand encounters with the research environment of the university, starting from their arrival at Rutgers, whether as first-year or as transfer students. Their degrees should reflect their understanding of, and participation in, the creation of new knowledge.
- Tenured and tenure-track faculty, the group most heavily engaged in research and scholarship, should constitute the primary instructors in introductory courses, where they can expose students to the latest research findings and techniques, and they should serve as mentors to students both before and after the choice of major.
- Faculty should ensure that course offerings, beginning at the introductory level, are designed to convey not just information about a field, but also how research is conducted in the discipline and how new ideas are discovered and tested.
- Faculty should find ways of engaging students in the conduct of research and the discovery of new ideas, both in classroom settings wherever possible, and in out-of-classroom individual or group projects and experiences.

## **Students**

We realize that students have many expectations of the university. In addition to strong academic programs, students expect a vibrant social life beyond the classroom during their years at Rutgers. At the same time, we believe that exploration of worlds beyond the classrooms, laboratories, and offices, and beyond socializing is a crucial aspect of the richness available at a research university. Concerts, lectures, readings, and theater presentations are vital to a student's development. But all too often these events are sparsely attended by undergraduates.

The learning communities proposed in this report are one way of addressing this matter. These communities are predicated on the belief that there is a connection between course work, whether in the major or in the core areas, and the wider life of the university community. The Rutgers Core program, through its experiential learning requirement, will also help to integrate classroom and nonclassroom learning. But not every student will choose to become involved in the learning communities. In addition, the fact that many of our students work and that many of them leave campus on weekends militates against active involvement in the life of the campus.

Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway has vital student governments at its colleges, actively involved in campus discussions. But rarely do these discussions focus on academic expectations or on expanding students' roles in the intellectual and cultural life of the community. Thus, we need to ask students to take responsibility and become actively involved in the discussions of this report, together with the faculty, and to articulate what they want from their education and experiences at Rutgers.

***Recommendation 1:*** A convention of student government leaders from each of our campuses should be assembled to discuss student aspirations for their university lives beyond classrooms and offices. The convention should bring into the discussion students from the arts and sciences and the professional schools, students living on campus and off, transfer students and international students, and faculty and staff.

***Recommendation 2:*** A Student-Faculty Forum should become a permanent advisory group in the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education, charged to discuss, and to help facilitate, student-faculty interactions in the learning communities and throughout the campus community.

## **Faculty**

The faculty share responsibility with students, staff, and administrators for the quality of undergraduate education. Indeed, the central responsibility is theirs, and that responsibility is remarkably broad. This report argues for a faculty responsible collectively for setting admissions guidelines and priorities, devising a vigorous and coherent curriculum, shaping (if not solely providing) academic advising, and taking ownership of the teaching infrastructure, including classrooms, libraries, and computing facilities.

Faculty members, of course, have individual obligations to undergraduate education as well. We expect them to master and implement effective teaching methods that engage and excite students in their classrooms, laboratories, and studios. We count on them to establish and maintain respect and civility in their relationships with students through such means as creating syllabi that delineate clear course objectives, assignments, and expectations. We expect them to schedule and keep regular office hours. We rely on them to identify their students who are at risk academically and to steer them to academic support services. We hope that they will acquire and dispense information about out-of-class opportunities, such as internships and study abroad. We ask that they involve themselves in the design and teaching of introductory courses so that our students from their first year here will be drawn by the university's best minds into the intellectual challenges and opportunities of the campus.

It is commonplace for faculty at Rutgers and at other research universities to remark that research accomplishments loom larger than teaching at promotion and merit-raise time. They are doubtless correct, and the situation is unlikely soon to change significantly, for at least two reasons. First, Rutgers has chosen to be a research university, competing with the country's great public universities for faculty and students. Second, money is tight; we cannot in our current fiscal environment create an expensive system of subsidies to encourage additional involvement in teaching and campus life. Ernest Boyer and other commentators have attempted to broaden definitions of scholarship for purposes of compensation and promotion and tenure, construing "scholarship" to include four interconnected aspects: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Such efforts to enhance the recognition of and rewards for teaching have not been wholly embraced here and elsewhere. (O'Meara and Braskamp report a 2001 survey of chief academic officers showing that most such officers believed that publication productivity counts *more* than it did 10 years earlier in faculty evaluation.<sup>1</sup>)

We do not think it useful to recommend major changes to the tenure and promotion guidelines. This is a research university; and faculty and students choose Rutgers because of the richness of resources a research university offers, chief among them a faculty creating new knowledge. At the same time, we believe that we can do more, through our reward structures and through the ways we establish "cultural" expectations for new faculty, to create an environment where faculty expect and look forward to participating in the work of undergraduate education beyond the classroom.

At Rutgers, decanal units and academic departments have long been the center of undergraduate education. Since the reorganization begun in 1980, the liberal arts colleges have moved farther and farther from any crucial role in connecting faculty and students. At the same time, colleges and their staffs have initiated programs to bridge the gaps between academic life and cocurricular activities. This has been especially true in the honors programs organized by each college. Livingston College has a unique relationship with the Department of Philosophy in which one of the department's faculty members serves as a scholar-in-residence each year. Rutgers College has a faculty mentor program in which professors volunteer as mentors to incoming honors students; there are budget allocations to each mentor for dinners, cultural activities, and off-campus programs for students (e.g., trips to New York City museums, theaters, operas, etc.). The

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<sup>1</sup> Kerry Ann O'Meara and Larry Braskamp, "Aligning Faculty Reward Systems and Development to Promote Faculty and Student Growth," *NASPA Journal*, Vol. 42, no. 2, Winter 2005, pp. 223-240.

new Aresty Undergraduate Research Program supports opportunities for undergraduates to participate in faculty research; students work throughout the year with professors on special academic projects. We would like to see these programs expanded, where practicable, to other interested students.

We also want to see faculty involvement recognized as a responsibility of the academic units. While it will be the responsibility of the vice president for undergraduate education and the campus deans to identify and fund appropriate opportunities for the faculty to contribute, it will be the school deans who have the primary responsibility for identifying and enabling appropriate faculty to make those contributions. Deans should ask their departments to give more attention to the work of faculty outside the classroom—as mentors, directors of honors theses, directors of learning communities, developers of new introductory courses for first- and second-year students, etc. Sending signals that the campus values and rewards faculty who work with undergraduate students outside regular courses will have broad implications for cultural change.

This report has taken undergraduate education in a research university as a context for all its discussions and recommendations. As a research university, Rutgers offers its students intellectual resources never to be found in other kinds of colleges and universities. If our students are to be fully aware of how their education derives from the faculty's work as researchers, they need exposure to the research process. The Rutgers Core requirements speak to this need. But our departments, especially the larger ones, need to do more to involve students in understanding research in their chosen disciplines. Ideally, undergraduates should be involved with faculty mentors in the discovery of new knowledge. But even if not all majors will choose to do honors work or independent studies, they should encounter in their courses, both introductory and upper-level, discussions of research in the discipline and demonstrations of how discovery is accomplished. Capstone courses in majors are an especially productive environment for these discussions.

**Recommendation 3:** Each decanal unit enrolling undergraduate students should form a Committee on Faculty-Student Engagement in Research Experiences; the chairs of these committees should come together as an advisory group reporting to the vice president for undergraduate education. These committees should define and illustrate substantive and concrete ways of exposing students to research experiences, even if students do not plan careers in research. The committees would assist deans in developing, along with department chairs, plans for making the research work of the discipline and the university a more visible component of the Rutgers Core and of each major. The committees should also focus on ways to increase interaction between faculty and students through the research experience.

**Recommendation 4:** Deans of academic units, working with the executive vice president for academic affairs and the vice president for undergraduate education, should develop a comprehensive plan of support for undergraduate intellectual life.

- Deans need to make a specific commitment each year to providing faculty to the General Honors Program, to learning communities, to mentor programs, etc. Departments should expect, as part of their regular work in undergraduate education, to provide a specific number of faculty each year.



- Deans should ask from chairs, as part of their annual reports, a cataloging and discussion of their department's and faculty's outside-the-classroom work with undergraduates.

***Recommendation 5:*** In the reward structure, we recommend that:

- Deans and their chairs should set aside a portion of merit funds for use in acknowledging departments' and their faculty members' strong and ongoing contributions to undergraduate education, in both classroom and nonteaching work. (Departments might consider revising their merit pay guidelines so that attention to undergraduates assumes substantial status.)
- Form 1-a of the promotion and tenure instructions should be revised so that work with students outside classrooms, in learning communities and other activities, has weight alongside classroom teaching.
- Deans and their faculties should revise their standards for teaching excellence so that outstanding achievement in undergraduate education involves both excellence in classroom teaching and evidence of strong commitment to undergraduates' intellectual lives beyond the classroom and laboratory.

***Recommendation 6:*** Deans should provide expanded support to departments, programs, and individual faculty members for curricular and teaching enhancements.

This is a propitious time for a rededication of faculty attention to high-level advising and mentoring. Many of the questions about prerequisites, requirements for the minor, and the like will either not arise with the coming unification of requirements or be answerable through the new automated degree-audit system.

***Recommendation 7:*** Efforts should be made to involve faculty more widely in academic advising and mentoring—that is, advising focused on selection of the major(s), on graduate school and career choices, potential scholarship and fellowship opportunities, etc.

***Recommendation 8:*** Deans should encourage departments to establish close working relationships with the central advising offices that we have recommended for each campus. These offices may assist faculty in discussing with their majors possible vocations to pursue after graduation.

Though we believe that Rutgers students receive a generally high level of teaching from the faculty, we can and should encourage efforts to elevate the visibility and prestige of teaching and to underscore for undergraduates the complementarities between teaching and research.

***Recommendation 9:*** To involve faculty more centrally in discussions of undergraduate education:

- The president should convene a set of prestigious scholars from a wide range of disciplines and secure their commitment to participate in significant ways in their department's introductory courses and in the proposed learning communities.

- All departments should be expected to mount careful and vigorous faculty mentoring and teaching evaluation programs.
- The resulting evaluations should become a more standard element in appointment and promotion dossiers. As teaching credentials become more detailed, comparable, and “portable” between universities, faculty will have greater incentive to “invest” in these credentials in ways that parallel their investments in research credentials and accomplishments.
- Deans and department chairs should devote more attention to the cultivation and preparation of nominations for university and school teaching awards.
- The president should mount a more visible campaign of publicity each year to celebrate the winners of the university teaching awards. The handling of the new awards for service to New Jersey may offer an appropriate model.
- Schools and departments should be encouraged to establish awards or other recognition programs to celebrate their outstanding teachers.

A signally rich aspect of the diversity that a research university makes available to its undergraduates is not only the opportunity to live and study with people of diverse backgrounds, races, and ethnicities, but the opportunity to encounter worlds of the aesthetic (to adopt the language of the Rutgers Core) that are not necessarily a part of the popular culture around us—that is, exposure to the world of theater, painting, classical music, dance performances, museums, etc. It is the responsibility of faculty and staff to do some of the foundational work that introduces undergraduates to the aesthetically rich world around us. Similarly, we have an obligation to cultivate in our students the habits of broad intellectual curiosity about issues and problems that extend well beyond the exigencies of the current semester’s course requirements.

**Recommendation 10:** To involve faculty in campus events outside the classroom:

- Departments should regularly schedule lectures especially aimed at undergraduates, both majors and generalists. There might also be a similarly targeted presidential lecture series (e.g., like that at Syracuse; see <http://provost.syr/lectures>).
- Free tickets to campus events for faculty-student groups—concerts, sports, theatrical performances—should be readily available from a central location.
- Dining halls should be easily accessible for faculty; and faculty should be provided vouchers for meals with students.
- A daily web listing of all campus lectures should be a featured part of the campus’s web site. Faculty should be encouraged to announce lectures to students, to use their class listservs for such announcements, and to make campus lectures and colloquia a part of course expectations whenever possible.
- A campus task force should be formed by the vice president for undergraduate education to consider ways of making the cultural richness of the campus and of the New Jersey-New York area a part of the education of undergraduates at Rutgers. (See the web page of the Reinvention Center at Stony Brook, a center focused on “reinventing undergraduate education”: [www.sunysb.edu/Reinventioncenter](http://www.sunysb.edu/Reinventioncenter).)

**Recommendation 11:** To illuminate the research work of our campus for a wider constituency, we urge that our centers and institutes, where practicable:

- Take responsibility for at least one campus learning community, planning interactions with students and center faculty; bringing center faculty into the residence halls and/or other campus spaces for discussions; and involving undergraduates in colloquia and lectures of the center.
- Schedule yearly events for New Jersey high school teachers—seminars, workshops—that encourage teachers to keep current in their disciplines and make them more able ambassadors for students seeking the benefits of this public research university. (The Teaching Institute of the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis provides an example of a successful model.)

***Recommendation 12:*** To assess the usefulness and long-term value of the education offered to majors, we urge decanal units and departments to develop ways to assess the effectiveness of their current programs; to establish and maintain close contacts with past graduates; to develop surveys asking about alumni's work at the university; and to include alumni in advisory groups for deans and chairs. Only thoroughgoing assessment can help us chart our successes and challenges.



## 8 | IMPLEMENTATION

The transformation of undergraduate education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway will require the determined commitment of faculty, students, and staff if the reconnections and reengagements envisioned in the previous pages are to take effect. We are not seeking vast new infusions of funding, nor do we imagine that the proposals for change, either in structure or in student life, will result in cost savings.

What is crucial is the change in the culture in which undergraduate education is engaged—indeed imagined—at Rutgers. We envision a Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway in which undergraduate education assumes the same priority in faculty’s professional work as does graduate education. We envision a Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway in which students expect to experience the academic resources of the university outside, as well as inside, the classroom, and join faculty and staff in designing and participating in the rich intellectual life of the campus. To make this vision a reality, we have designed a new admissions process, a new core curriculum, a new general honors program, a new approach to student life, and a new structure to support these changes.

But first, we call on faculty, students, and staff to join vigorously in the discussions that will take place throughout the fall 2005 semester about the proposals in this report. President Richard L. McCormick and Executive Vice President Philip Furmanski built these discussions into their planning for this Task Force. In fall 2005, the New Brunswick Faculty Council, the University Senate, student governments, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the faculties of the professional schools will all, we trust, offer forums that consider the ideas here, propose additional ideas and recommendations, and in the process bring the campus community together in establishing this new culture where undergraduate issues are central to what we all do.

### **Implementation**

At the same time, if changes in the curriculum, in admissions, and in student life are to occur in a timely fashion, Executive Vice President Furmanski should form implementation groups early in the fall 2005 semester that listen carefully and respond fully to the campuswide discussions. Four implementation committees are necessary:

- Core Curriculum
- Learning Communities/Student Life
- Admissions
- Structure

These groups should be assembled early in the fall term, charged to take the report’s recommendations, listen to the campuswide discussions of them, modify and improve the proposals in the context of these discussions, and formulate a plan for implementation and

action. Ideally, the entering class of 2007 should encounter the new admissions system, the new curriculum, the new campus structure, and a new engagement between faculty and students.

This report recommends a newly empowered position, the vice president for undergraduate education, and new committees, all with strong faculty involvement:

- Committee for Coordination and Improvement of Counseling
- Committees in each decanal unit on Faculty–Student Engagement in Research Experiences
- Coordinating Council on Academic Support/EOF Faculty Support Committee
- Core Curriculum Implementation Committee
- Council of Associate Deans for Undergraduate Studies
- Forum on Faculty-Student Interactions
- New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide Faculty Admissions Committee  
(Faculty admissions committees for each school in New Brunswick/Piscataway)
- New Brunswick/Piscataway General Honors Program Committee
- New Brunswick/Piscataway Learning Communities Coordinating Committee
- Undergraduate Academic Council of Deans of Schools and Campuses

The vice president for undergraduate education—or an interim vice president—should be appointed in early 2006. This vice president should work with the implementation groups in the coordination and oversight of the changes and should convene the permanent committees that will advise her or his office on all aspects of undergraduate education.

### **Assessment**

At the outset of this report, we asked: What kind of experiences should a student have while pursuing a degree at this research university? What are the special features of a Rutgers education? What does it mean to be a Rutgers graduate? If these questions are to be convincingly answered for our wider constituencies, the campus will need to develop ways of assessing what it does, perhaps using models from other universities, our professional schools, and from the Council on Higher Education. These assessments will help us formulate the questions we should be asking about the knowledge and skills we want our students to achieve and about the effectiveness of our curricula and of our learning communities in supporting our students' goals. Thus we urge that a Committee on Assessment be appointed as part of the implementation process; this will be especially timely in view of the forthcoming reaccreditation review by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

### **Recommended Task Forces**

The report also recommends three new task forces to deal with important issues that were beyond the scope (and time) of the Task Force on Undergraduate Education:

- Task Force on Design and Maintenance
- Task Force on Adult and Nontraditional Learners in New Brunswick/Piscataway
- Task Force of Mental Health Professionals
- Task Force on Undergraduates and Cultural Enrichment

These groups should begin work in spring 2006, once the campuswide discussions have taken place.

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As we noted at the outset of this report, our work has been to reimagine undergraduate education at this public research university—to define what it means for students to study and for faculty to teach and work at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. Our report on the curriculum, on the student experience, on admissions and recruitment, on campus planning and facilities, and on the structure of undergraduate education is intended to provide a stimulus to campuswide discussions and, in the process, to reconnect us all—faculty, students, staff—to the ongoing work of undergraduate education.





## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

**PRESIDENT RICHARD L. MCCORMICK'S AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC  
AFFAIRS PHILIP FURMAN'S CHARGE TO THE TASK FORCE  
FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION**

April 12, 2004

Dear Colleagues:

Over the past academic year, we have had numerous conversations with faculty, staff, and students across the New Brunswick campuses. What emerged from these discussions is a powerful consensus that the single area that requires sustained discussion and action is the academic and co-curricular lives of our undergraduates. The largest component of our educational program is the instruction of undergraduates. Their experiences at the State University's flagship campus often constitute the litmus test by which the State's citizens judge us and our contributions to New Jersey.

While recognizing the many excellent achievements of our academic programs and our student service offices, we must begin to reinvigorate the undergraduate experience at Rutgers, to create a more satisfying, more coherent, less frustrating, less confusing, and more rational academic environment for all students. Effecting significant, positive changes in this area will bring widespread and meaningful changes to the entire fabric of the University.

We have already begun a comprehensive review of undergraduate life at Rutgers under the general rubric, the "Initiative on Undergraduate Learning and Life." This initiative will focus on (1) student services, (2) student affairs, and (3) undergraduate academic life. In December 2003, we held a one-day retreat with student leaders from all of the colleges and with administrators and staff members from critical student service areas. (A follow-up meeting occurred on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.) We learned first-hand of the difficulties and frustrations that students face in dealing with University offices and functions, both academic and non-academic. We challenged those attending these retreats to evaluate the systems that serve our students and faculty and to determine a configuration that will ensure the most responsive and effective organization of basic services.

Concurrent with this review of student services, we began a search for a new Vice President for Student Affairs, one of whose mandates will be to ensure that our academic values are integrated into all aspects of a student's life at Rutgers.

The third part of this initiative will be the Task Force on Undergraduate Education. Professor Barry V. Qualls, Humanities Dean of FAS, who chaired two previous committees exploring undergraduate issues at Rutgers, has agreed to chair this group. We are writing to ask you to serve as a member of this important Task Force.

In reviewing the excellent reports on undergraduate education at Rutgers that were prepared during the 1990s, we find that the problems and issues encountered a decade ago continue to hinder the work of our faculty and students, and that the thoughtful recommendations contained in these reports were never implemented in a fully effective way. We are determined that undergraduate education is, and will be, a priority of discussion every year at Rutgers, not just when a committee has produced a report. Thus the recommendations of this Task Force on Undergraduate Education will receive the support required to produce concrete, positive changes in undergraduate education at Rutgers-New Brunswick. Furthermore, the recommendations will provide the foundation for continuing examination of undergraduate issues at the University, thus ensuring that programs remain vital, energetic, and properly organized.

The Task Force is charged to consider all areas of the undergraduate experience that concern the academic lives of our undergraduates.

- It will review general education requirements, focusing on the relationships between these and work in the major and in our professional schools.
- It will survey best practices, not only at Rutgers but also at our peer institutions, in areas such as mentoring, advising, admissions, enrollment planning, marketing, and all other functions that affect the college careers of our undergraduates.
- It will discuss the roles of the residential colleges, considering their traditional strengths in the context of a 21<sup>st</sup> century research university.
- It will review our honors programs, asking if they are organized effectively to provide the research resources of the University to our most intellectually adventurous students.
- It will review co-curricular activities, discussing the ways they are informed by the academic values of Rutgers.
- It will engage in a dialogue with faculty and students about their expectations of the faculty's role in University life beyond the classroom and lab.

Essential to this undertaking is defining what it should mean to be a Rutgers graduate. What are the expectations of the faculty, the students and their parents, and the people of the State? What expectations should we have of a Rutgers graduate? What level of academic achievement should we demand? What is the nature of the educational experience that is most effective in ensuring a life-long commitment to learning? What administrative arrangements will enable Rutgers most effectively to commit the resources of a great public research university to our undergraduates? Which residential life/non-academic functions are best performed by colleges or by centralized services? What are the roles of the colleges, the professional schools,

and FAS in making decisions affecting undergraduate education in curricular and co-curricular areas and in research areas?

The starting point for this consideration will be the Task Force's review of the previous reports on undergraduate education and a re-evaluation of their recommendations within the context of the University today. Once this review has occurred, the Task Force will divide into sub-committees, each charged to make recommendations for consideration by the Task Force on the questions and issues outlined above.

The first meeting of this Task Force will be on April 22, 2004, at 11:00 a.m. in the Assembly Room at Winants Hall, College Avenue Campus. We will be there to discuss the work of the task force and answer any questions you may have. Please contact Kathy Jo Cotterill (732-932-8793 or Cotterill@oldqueens.rutgers.edu) to let us know if you will be able to participate in this task force and attend this initial meeting. Thank you. We hope to see you on April 22.

Sincerely Yours,

Richard L. McCormick

Philip Furmanski

Appendix B

**UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING/UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC LIFE**

**AT RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY**

**QUESTIONS FOR WORKING GROUPS**

**The questions:** What kind of experiences should an undergraduate have while pursuing a degree at this research university? What are the special features of a Rutgers education? What does it mean to be a Rutgers graduate?

**RUTGERS - NEW BRUNSWICK STRUCTURES**

Identify the elements of university structures that most effectively support an undergraduate educational experience at a public research university as characterized by the committee's Principle of Undergraduate Education and its corollaries. Generate several structural models that will enable Rutgers to achieve greater excellence in all facets of the undergraduate student experience. The following questions may be helpful in considering issues to address.

- How do we define the faculty's role in undergraduate education: in curriculum, in teaching, in mentoring, in advising? What structures should we have to ensure maximum faculty involvement in undergraduate education? What structure encourages full faculty oversight of, and participation in curricular and admissions discussions and decisions?
- What is the most effective administrative structure for ensuring the full use of university resources in undergraduate education at Rutgers-New Brunswick? What structures encourage full student use of these resources?
- What can we learn from other AAU public universities about the structuring and delivery of undergraduate education?
- How are residential life/non-academic functions most effectively delivered?
- What are the most appropriate roles of the colleges, the professional schools, and FAS in making decisions affecting undergraduate education in curricular and co-curricular areas? In research areas?
- How do we ensure that the academic mission and priorities of the university influence system-wide administrative decisions?

**Rutgers - New Brunswick Curriculum/A Variety of Curricula**

Identify the curricular elements of an undergraduate educational experience at a public research university as characterized by the committee's Principle of Undergraduate Education and its corollaries. Generate several models that would represent what undergraduate education at

Rutgers might be that at once takes advantage of our history and acknowledges our geography. The following questions may be helpful in considering issues to address.

- What level of academic achievement should we expect of graduates?
- What core requirements and major requirements identify the degree?
- What is the relation between the core (general education) requirements and the major?
- What is the relation between faculty research work and students seeking research experience and work in honors programs?
- How do different college general education requirements “work” for students? for the campus?
- How does the first-year experience of New Brunswick students introduce them to the resources of a research university? How do they understand these resources? How do they make use of them? When?
- What kinds of capstone experiences offer students perspectives on their undergraduate education?
- What is the role of campus resources—libraries, computing, lectures, art galleries, performances—in undergraduate education? How do faculty perceive the value of these to instruction? How do faculty use these resources? How do students use these resources?
- How are we using the new technologies to enhance undergraduate education? What issues have these technologies posed for teaching? for learning?
- How should an education at Rutgers differ from that of other institutions of higher education? How do we ensure that students understand, and take advantages of, the differences?
- How should undergraduate liberal arts education be informed by the work of the faculty in professional schools? How should undergraduates in professional schools use the resources available in the liberal arts units?
- What kind of curriculum in science and math best educates non-science majors? What kind of curriculum in the humanities and social sciences best educates science, math, and engineering majors?
- How do the curricular choices available to students indicate the global contexts of learning, research, and future civic and professional life?
- What roles should our research bureaus and institutes play in undergraduate education?
- How do our students experience the ideals/ideas of interdisciplinary work in their curricular experiences?
- Assessment: How do we measure the effectiveness of students’ education?

### **Rutgers - New Brunswick Student Experience**

Identify the elements of an undergraduate student life experience at a public research university as characterized by the committee's Principle of Undergraduate Education and its corollaries. Generate several models that would represent what student life at Rutgers might be that at once takes advantage of our history and acknowledges our geography. The following questions may be helpful in considering issues to address.

## *Transforming Undergraduate Education*

- Which residential life/non-academic functions are best performed by colleges? by centralized services? by ... ?
- What kind of mentoring programs for students are in place at the college level? at the department level? How do they work? How effective do students find them?
- How do students think about academic integrity? How do faculty define for their students issues of academic integrity? How does the campus environment encourage academic integrity?
- What are students' expectations: in advising? in co-curricular work? in support services? What do students expect of themselves (e.g., in class attendance, performance, etc.)?
- What makes the student experience at Rutgers distinct?
- How are computing resources being utilized to enhance the student experience?
- What are the characteristics of public safety and security that would ensure the best learning environment for our students?

### *Advising*

- What is the ideal situation for student advising throughout her/his years at the University?
- What advising programs/situations offered by the colleges and by departments are most effective?
- How are advising programs in the colleges and in the colleges coordinated? interconnected?
- What do students want from advising? What are they receiving in the process now?
- What programs/structures do we need to ensure that students receive adequate supportive advising from their freshman orientation through their graduation?
- What advising structure do we need to promote the success of our transfer students?

### *Co-curricular work*

- What is the co-curricular vision/structure of the New Brunswick campus?
- How does co-curricular work contribute to the intellectual life of the campus?
- How do the Colleges' programs serve the wider goals of the curriculum?
- How do the Colleges' co-curricular programs complement each other?
- What attracts students to co-curricular programs and opportunities?
- How do co-curricular programs connect to/amplify the experiences offered by the curriculum? How do students evaluate the relationship between academic work and co-curricular work (e.g., involvement in student organization)?
- What is the relationship between students' non-academic work needs and their participation in the life of the campus outside the classroom?

### *Academic support*

- What are the relationships between academic support units and the departments/schools?
- What is the most effective structure to ensure students ready access to academic support?
- How co-ordinated are the counseling services available to students?
- How effective are the programs for special populations (e.g., EOF, athletics, artists) in connecting students to the intellectual opportunities of the campus?
- How are the resources of the libraries contributing to student learning?

### **Rutgers University: Admissions, Recruitment, and After (Outreach)**

Identify the elements of a recruitment and admissions process, the structure of alumni relations, and other outreach programs that realize the committee's Principle of Undergraduate Education and its corollaries. The following questions may be helpful in considering issues to address.

- What expectations should we have of a student admitted to Rutgers? How can we best communicate those expectations to entering students?
- What perceptions of the University—of its learning environment and learning goals—are created by the recruitment and admissions processes?
- How does the university communicate with the state school system regarding its academic expectations and their students performances? How does the university work with the state's public school teachers to ensure shared academic expectations?
- How do we evaluate the preparation of transfer students for the educational opportunities of the campus? How do we communicate our expectations to the NJ community colleges? What kinds of academic support programs do we offer new transfer students? How do we measure the subsequent success of transfer students?
- What are the appropriate roles of faculty in recruitment, admissions, and outreach?
- What are the appropriate roles of college deans and of FAS in recruitment, admissions, and outreach?
- How does the New Brunswick college structure currently impact the recruitment and admissions process and *vice versa*? How would proposed changes in the college structure impact recruitment and admissions?
- Are admissions and recruitment practices effective in bringing to New Brunswick students who can best take advantage of the educational opportunities of the campus? How are high-achieving high-school students best recruited to Rutgers?
- How effective are our college honors programs in attracting outstanding students to Rutgers, New Brunswick? How are our honors programs perceived by our current honors students, recent graduates, high school teachers and guidance counselors, and prospective honors students? How do the opportunities we provide honors students compare with those provided to students at other leading public research universities?
- How do the admissions and recruitment programs attract out-of-state and international students?
- How do we assess the effectiveness of the recruitment and admissions process?
- How do we measure the effectiveness of students' education?
- What kinds of programs most effectively connect alumni to the academic mission and work of the university?
- How can alumni be used most effectively in the recruitment process?
- What kinds of life-long learning opportunities do our graduates seek? What kinds are sought by other citizens of the state's communities?

## **Rutgers - New Brunswick Campus Planning and Facilities**

Identify the characteristics of the built environment that contribute to supporting the committee's Principle of Undergraduate Education and its corollaries. The following questions may be helpful in considering issues to address.

- How can the built environment contribute to creating a sense of place for Rutgers undergraduates? (By using the term “built environment,” we mean to call attention to the widest possible range of topics, including streets, bridges, buildings, parks, sidewalks, bike paths, bus stops, signs, the river, and so on.)
- How can the physical spaces of the campus help to create an atmosphere conducive to learning, both formal and informal?
- How do public spaces and informal gathering areas promote, or inhibit, the interaction between faculty and students?
- How can we better plan our buildings for support of student learning and the campus’ intellectual environment?
- How can the distances between campuses be better understood?
- How do “master” plans for new construction reflect understanding of the University’s goals for its students? Of new pedagogies?
- How are classrooms, laboratories, and other learning environments configured to support the principles and goals of the undergraduate curriculum in New Brunswick?
- How are our classrooms equipped for 21<sup>st</sup> Century teaching and learning?
- How do our learning spaces promote, or inhibit, collaborative learning?
- How do the dormitories contribute the undergraduates’ sense of belonging to Rutgers? How does the off-campus housing situation contribute to the atmosphere of the campus?
- How can the campus and the city of New Brunswick be integrated to create a supportive urban atmosphere for the undergraduates?
- How are computing centers being utilized to enhance the student experience?
- How are the resources of the libraries contributing to student learning?
- How do we ensure that the academic mission of the university is influential in the design decisions?

22 July 2004



## Appendix C

**RELEVANT READING AND WEB SITES*****Rutgers Reports***

- \**Committee on Delivery of Undergraduate Education, Building a Learning Community* (1996).
- \**Rutgers Dialogues: A Curriculum for Critical Awareness* (1992).
- \**Report of the Provost's Committee on Undergraduate Education in the Context of a Research University* (1989).
- Mary Hartman, *Report of the Committee on the Liberal Arts Foundation of the Bachelor's Curriculum in the Multipurpose Colleges* (1988).
- Rutgers Constituency Research Project Report* (2004).

***Reports from Other Universities***

- \*Harvard University: *A Report on the Harvard College Curricular Review* (2004).
- \*Yale University: *Report on Yale College Education* (2003).
- \*University of Michigan: *The Second Chapter of Change: Renewing Undergraduate Education at the University of Michigan* (2002).
- \*University of California-Berkeley: *Final Report of the Commission on Undergraduate Education* (2000).
- \*University of North Carolina: *Report of the Chancellor's Task Force on Intellectual Climate* (1997).

***National Reports***

- American Council of Trustees and Alumni, *The Hollow Core: Failure of the General Education Curriculum* (2004).
- \*National Research Council, *Transforming Undergraduate Education in Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology* (1999).
- \*The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1998).

***Rutgers History***

- \*Richard P. McCormick, *Academic Reorganization in New Brunswick, 1962–1978: The Federated College Plan*. (November 1978).
- \*Richard P. McCormick, "Thoughts on Academic Reorganization" (January 28, 1981).
- Richard P. McCormick, *Rutgers: A Bicentennial History*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1966.

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\* Available on Task Force Web Site: <http://ur.rutgers.edu/ugtaskforce>

## *Transforming Undergraduate Education*

### ***Other Reading***

Ernest L. Boyer, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1987).

Ernest L. Boyer and Arthur Levine, *A Quest for Common Learning: The Aims of General Education*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1981).

Lisa W. Foderado, "Learning Communities; Under One Roof," *New York Times*, April 24, 2005.

Sharon Waters, "RU Leader Envisions New Look for Campus," *Home News Tribune*, February 16, 2003.

### ***Web Sites on Learning Communities***

Bibliography on Learning Communities:

<http://www.acuho.ohio-state.edu/resource%20center/Living-Learning.html>

Michigan Learning Communities: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/mlc/overview.asp>

National Learning Communities Project:

[http://learningcommons.evergreen.edu/03\\_start\\_entry.asp](http://learningcommons.evergreen.edu/03_start_entry.asp)

Distinguished Teachers Program, University of Texas, Austin:

<http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/academy>

Appendix D

**FACULTY, STUDENTS, STAFF, ORGANIZATIONS, AND DOCUMENTS CONSULTED  
BY TASK FORCE WORKING GROUPS**

***Curriculum***

*Documents Consulted*

Prior Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway reports on undergraduate education  
Reports on undergraduate curriculum from other Association of American Universities (AAU)  
institutions: Harvard, Michigan, University of North Carolina, University of  
California-Berkeley, Yale  
Boyer Report  
Distribution requirements of over 60 AAU institutions

***The Student Experience***

*Interviews*

Vice President for Student Affairs' Leadership Council (student government leaders)  
College Deans: Douglass College, Livingston College, Rutgers College, University College  
Staff in Career Services  
Director, Residence Life, Rutgers College

*Focus Groups*

Students from Cook College, Douglass College, Rutgers College, University College,  
School of Engineering, Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

*Documents Consulted*

Rutgers Constituency Research Project Report  
University Senate's Recommendations on Advising  
Information from Rutgers College Governing Association Leadership Roundtable and Office of  
Institutional Research

***Admissions and Recruitment***

*Interviews*

Vice President for Student Affairs' Leadership Council  
Student members of the University Senate  
Honors students from Cook College, Douglass College, Livingston College, Rutgers College  
High School Guidance Counselors Advisory Group (for University Undergraduate Admissions)  
Office of University Undergraduate Admissions: Deborah Harrison-Epting, Interim Associate  
Vice President for Enrollment Management; Nancy Pullen, Director of Undergraduate  
Admissions; Paul Johnson, Director, Information Technology, Undergraduate  
Admissions; and staff

## *Transforming Undergraduate Education*

Faculty and staff whose children applied to Rutgers

Faculty who attended Rutgers

College Deans: Douglass College, Livingston College, Rutgers College, University College

Timothy Casey, Dean, Academic and Student Programs, Cook College

Philip Furmanski, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Nancy Winterbauer, Vice President for University Budgeting

College Honors Program Directors: Barbara Goff, Cook College; Muffin Lord and Justine

Hernandez-Levine, Rutgers College; Julio Nazario, Livingston College; Marc

Manganaro, Douglass College

### *Documents Consulted*

Admissions web sites of the University of Michigan, University of North Carolina, the College of New Jersey, University of Delaware, University of Maryland, University of

Minnesota, Pennsylvania State University

Rutgers Constituency Research Project Report

University Senate and the New Brunswick Faculty Council Reports on Admissions

### *Campus Planning and Facilities*

#### *Interviews*

Vice President for Student Affairs' Leadership Council

Marianne Gaunt, University Librarian

Charles Hedrick, University Director of Instructional and Research Computing and Chief Technology Officer

Karen Kavanagh, Executive Vice President for Administrative Affairs

Kim Manning-Lewis, Vice President for University Relations

Richard L. McCormick, President

Michael McKay, Vice President for Information Technology

Lawrence Porter, Senior Landscape Architect

Françoise Puniello, Director, New Brunswick Library

Frank Wong, Executive Director, Facilities Planning and Development

#### *Documents/Readings Consulted*

William Whyte, *Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org) (web site of Project for Public Spaces).

“Evidence-Based Hospital Design Improves Healthcare Outcomes For Patients, Families and Staff,” Press Release, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (June 7, 2004).

[www.rwjf.org/newsroom](http://www.rwjf.org/newsroom).

***Structure***

*Interviews*

Vice President for Student Affairs' Leadership Council

Deans of the professional schools with undergraduate responsibilities

College Staffs: Academic support programs, student services, residence life

College Deans: Douglass College, Livingston College, Rutgers College, University College

Holly M. Smith, Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Douglas Blair, Executive Vice Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences

*Documents Consulted*

Pomper Report: *Committee on Delivery of Undergraduate Education, Building a Learning Community* (1996).

Charts of administrative structures for undergraduate education at other research universities

Appendix E

**CAMPUS DISCUSSIONS OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION  
AND THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE**

The New Brunswick Faculty Council Conference on Undergraduate Education  
(October 6, 2004)

Academic Leadership Program breakfast discussions with chairs, deans, President  
Richard L. McCormick and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Philip  
Furmanski (April 22, 2004, and November 9, 2004)

Faculty of Arts and Sciences Meeting (May 3, 2004)

Meetings through the spring 2005 term with members of the Board of Governors and the Board  
of Trustees