

TRANSFORMING UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

**President's Recommendations
to the Rutgers University Board of Governors
regarding Undergraduate Education
on the New Brunswick/Piscataway Campus**

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TRANSFORMING UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Today at Rutgers, we put forth a model for a new public research university – with robust faculty engagement in undergraduate education and the proper mix of learning, research, and service that gives our students a deeper sense of their role in the university and in the world. We envision a New Brunswick/Piscataway campus in which students are empowered, faculty are reconnected to undergraduates, and the public gains a much clearer understanding of a Rutgers education. We will bring the more than 26,000 undergraduate students in New Brunswick/Piscataway into full participation in the dynamic life of discovery and of service to society that characterizes Rutgers at its best. Together, we will complete the evolution that began with a bold reorganization in 1981 that led directly to Rutgers' emergence as one of the top public research universities in the nation. We have the vision, the means, and the will to create a Rutgers education that is truly worthy of a great public research university. In transforming the experience of every undergraduate on this campus, we will propel Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, to a new and higher level of excellence and achievement.

I have the privilege of presenting a plan that advances the goals enunciated by the Task Force on Undergraduate Education at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway in its July 2005 report, *Transforming Undergraduate Education* – goals that have been nearly unanimously endorsed by the university community throughout the conversations of the past eight months. It is important to restate these goals because they form the underpinning of all the recommendations that I will bring forth to the Board of Governors. The goals are to:

- Offer all undergraduates equal access to Rutgers' high-quality academic programs and to the distinctive educational experiences that characterize a research university.
- Engage students in the exciting intellectual work that characterizes our campuses, from the time of admission to the time of graduation and beyond.
- 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.
- 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.

THE NEW RUTGERS UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

Pursuing these goals will achieve the objective described in the original charge to the Task Force nearly two years ago: 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. But reinvigorating undergraduate education at Rutgers requires more than merely fixing problems and removing obstacles. Through the recommendations offered here and the fundamental re-engagement of our faculty and students that stands behind them, I seek to give shape to some of our highest aspirations for our university and for the next generation of New Jersey citizens who will pursue their education at Rutgers.

This vision offers the new Rutgers student the fullness of opportunities represented by the scope of the university to study almost anything, to explore almost every area of human endeavor. It gives our students self-determination, confidence, and the skills to succeed in a rapidly moving and technologically oriented world.

RELATING UNDERGRADUATES TO THE THREE PILLARS OF THE PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITY: TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE

Students arriving at our reimagined Rutgers will find a cohesive, welcoming environment that is no longer confusing. From Day One they will begin to interact with senior faculty and learn the nature of the research university and the role it has played in bringing our country to the forefront in access, opportunity, and economic development. Through a new first-year seminar, students will study with a faculty member to explore an area of mutual interest independent of school or intended major.

Thus introduced to intellectual activity and to addressing an issue through analysis and synthesis, the new Rutgers student will engage in a dynamic core of academically rich courses, horizontally and vertically integrated to provide both breadth of understanding within a broader intellectual context and depth of knowledge within a chosen discipline. This will occur through an integrated core curriculum and a major that reflects each student's passion and enables him or her to explore it in great depth.

Engaging with faculty throughout this academic journey, Rutgers students will become involved with the three pillars of a public research university: teaching, research, and service. They will see firsthand how knowledge is made in the arts, humanities, and sciences through undergraduate research in the Aresty Research Center, a model that we will expand. At the same time, successful programs such as Citizenship and Service Education (CASE), which we will make available to a larger number of students, will imbue them with a spirit of service to constituents, true to Rutgers' proud standing as New Jersey's state university.

The new Rutgers student will then be encouraged to complete his or her undergraduate career with a capstone experience – a senior thesis, a research project, a service learning experience – that puts in context and clarity everything he or she has learned at Rutgers.

These undergraduate experiences and opportunities will be the value added in coming to the Rutgers we are creating. It is a Rutgers education that is about intellectual complexity, about scope, and about understanding the world in its many dimensions and levels. It is the unique engagement of students and faculty in the dynamic life of a major public research university. It is the portal to opportunity. It is why the best and the brightest come to Rutgers.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

I am pleased to present for Board approval a blueprint for improving undergraduate education that closely follows the thoughtful and comprehensive recommendations that were proposed by the Task Force and reaffirmed in large measure throughout the discussion process of the past eight months. Where my recommendations diverge from the Task Force, they reflect ideas gleaned from the campuswide discussion and my own observations.

This is a plan that enriches the academic life of Rutgers undergraduates by providing the kind of educational experience that our students deserve today and will require in the future. It ensures that all our undergraduate students have full and equal access to the resources that only a great university provides. And it eliminates the complexity that often makes Rutgers a difficult and confusing place for our students to learn, our faculty to teach, and the public to understand.

THE NEW STRUCTURE

My first recommendation, upon which many others are based, and which speaks most directly to the challenges and problems that hinder undergraduate education at Rutgers, focuses on basic structure. The university will establish a single **School of Arts and Sciences** as the school responsible for setting admissions criteria, general education, general advising, scholastic standing expectations, honors program, and degree certification for all arts and sciences undergraduate students in New Brunswick/Piscataway. All New Brunswick/Piscataway arts and sciences students entering Rutgers in fall 2007 or later will matriculate in and will receive their degrees from this school. The current Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) will serve as its faculty, led by its executive dean.

I strongly agree with the Task Force that Rutgers' fragmented, confusing structure has impeded our best efforts to improve undergraduate education, despite numerous attempts to do so in the years since the last major reorganization in New Brunswick/Piscataway. It is essential that we reunite the faculty of the FAS with the students they teach in a structure that makes clear the faculty's responsibility for vital aspects of the undergraduate experience, starting with standards for admission and extending through requirements for graduation. It is also essential that Rutgers bring all its arts and sciences undergraduates together into a system that eliminates any vestiges of unfair or unequal treatment, real or perceived, that may exist among the current undergraduate colleges – Cook, Douglass, Livingston, Rutgers, and University. Uniting these students with the faculty who teach them is the most important change we can make to improve undergraduate education on the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus.

Regarding nomenclature, I respectfully depart from the Task Force recommendation and concur with the New Brunswick Faculty Council and the University Senate that the name “School of Arts and Sciences” is most appropriate and consistent with the terminology employed elsewhere in New Brunswick/Piscataway that refers to degree-granting units as schools.

Integrally related to the creation of a single arts and sciences school is the establishment of a common admissions standard for arts and sciences students across the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus. The Task Force argues that the current disparity in admissions standards has created a belief that there is a hierarchy of colleges, engendering confusion among applicants and leading some to reject Rutgers University if they are not admitted to Rutgers College. The New Brunswick Faculty Council has described the disparate standards as “damaging, unstable, and misrepresentative since the same faculty teach the students in all of these colleges.”

I recommend that a **single admissions standard** be established for all traditional arts and sciences students, to be appropriately modified for transfer and nontraditional students. Transfer students will be accepted in the School of Arts and Sciences under a uniform set of admissions criteria. To ensure an ongoing focus on admissions standards and guidelines, as well as enrollment goals, there will be an active faculty admissions committee for the School of Arts and Sciences and for each professional school in New Brunswick/Piscataway. All admissions policies will enable us to maintain the diversity that is so important to the character of a Rutgers education, and I will monitor our progress by asking for regular reports on diversity from the Vice President for Enrollment Management, a new position.

Related to the creation of the School of Arts and Sciences is the structure of Cook College, which has both professional and pre-professional missions and a proud and vital role in Rutgers’ designation as a land-grant university. Informed by the thoughtful deliberations of Executive Dean Robert Goodman and the Cook faculty and student community, I recommend that what is today known as Cook College continue as a distinct professional school within Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway, to be designated the **School of Environmental and Biological Sciences**.

The faculty of the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences will offer both professional and pre-professional majors in its areas of scholarship. Students interested in professional majors will be admitted to the school as first-year students or at the time they declare a major. Those interested in the pre-professional majors offered by the faculty of the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences will be admitted to that major at the time they declare the major. Admissions requirements will be coordinated with those of the School of Arts and Sciences to ensure that a student admitted to the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences who later wishes to transfer to a major offered by the School of Arts and Sciences, or *vice versa*, can easily do so.

The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will appoint a committee of faculty drawn from both the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences to consider and make recommendations regarding ways in which to cooperate in areas of mutual curricular interest.

THE CURRICULUM

The Task Force has recommended an ambitious **core curriculum** that will define the common experiences and knowledge that make up the root of a Rutgers education. I recommend without qualification that Rutgers, as a great public research university, should offer a core curriculum, especially in its general education requirements, that urges our undergraduates to take full advantage of the academic resources of the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus. Decisions about the nature of this curriculum are the prerogative of the faculty, and I will charge the relevant deans with convening faculty to discuss a *Rutgers* curriculum that offers a distinctive vision of how undergraduate education is connected to the work of a major research university. This work will mainly be the task of the School of Arts and Sciences. However, I have heard the concerns of professional school faculty in the discussion and agree that core curriculum recommendations will need to be coordinated with the professional schools; this process should be carried out by means of the assembly structure that the New Brunswick Faculty Council has recommended. The Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences is now forming committees to focus on our curriculum, using the Task Force's model of a core curriculum as a starting point for discussion. That discussion, with its rethinking of what a "core" Rutgers education might be, presents a bold vision that our faculty can reshape and define specifically for all our students.

Clearly this discussion will require many hours of faculty work and cannot be ready for the entering class of fall 2007; nevertheless, a core curriculum should be in place for the following curriculum cycle, should be annually evaluated and, where needed, should be modified in the years to come. In the short term, I will ask the School of Arts and Sciences to develop interim general education requirements, applied uniformly to all our Arts and Sciences students. In order to serve our undergraduates effectively, we must present all who enter Rutgers in fall 2007 with a clear, coherent set of general education requirements that are applied uniformly.

As the faculties in New Brunswick/Piscataway take up discussion of a core curriculum and graduation requirements, I will encourage them to develop a series of formal, though not necessarily required, **capstone experiences** available to undergraduates in their final year. In many departments such opportunities already exist but may not be labeled as such. Ideally, by the time students entering Rutgers in 2007 become seniors, every department will have identified at least one if not a menu of capstone options, broadly defined to range from studio projects to honors theses to graduate-level seminars to research and service projects.

It is essential that Rutgers constantly works to enhance the overall academic experience of all our undergraduate students in New Brunswick/Piscataway, those in the professional schools as well as those in the School of Arts and Sciences. Consistent with the recommendations of the Task Force and the sentiment of the University Senate and the New Brunswick Faculty Council, we will, therefore, invest resources and responsibilities in a radically redefined Office of the **Vice President for Undergraduate Education**. The university will look to this individual for leadership and advocacy in addressing the academic needs of our students, engaging faculty in undergraduate education, and initiating exciting opportunities for intellectual growth campuswide.

ATTRACTING EXCELLENT STUDENTS

The Task Force working group on admissions articulated as one of its chief goals to ensure that Rutgers attracts “an excellent body of students prepared to use the resources of a research university.” Toward that end, I endorse the Task Force recommendation for a **New Brunswick-wide honors program** that will serve as a magnet for ambitious, high-achieving New Jersey and out-of-state students. In spring 2005, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences endorsed a similar program for all liberal arts college honors students. I will ask the Vice President for Undergraduate Education to work with the deans of the schools to consolidate this work and plan a full New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide program. It should be ready to recruit students for the class entering in fall 2007.

Furthermore, I propose the creation of a new **first-year seminar** available to all first-year students at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway and anticipate the faculty’s leadership in designing the program. We will offer each first-year student the opportunity to take an academically exciting, one-credit class on a topic of personal interest to him or her, in a small interactive setting and taught by a regular faculty member. The seminars will enroll no more than 20 students each and be taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty members who will be encouraged to choose a subject of particular interest to them. These faculty members will serve as academic mentors for those in their seminars until the students choose a major. Rutgers will offer several modes of recognition for this additional effort on the part of our faculty, including the provision of small research accounts. Funding to permanently support this initiative, which will be the most extensive of its kind in New Jersey, will be a featured objective of our next fund-raising campaign.

FOSTERING COMMUNITY IN NEW BRUNSWICK/PISCATAWAY

Under the transformation proposed here, Rutgers undergraduates will be served by **five residential campus communities** – to be known as Busch Campus, College Avenue Campus, Cook Campus, Douglass Campus, and Livingston Campus. (This reflects a slight departure from the Task Force recommendation to use Queen’s instead of College Avenue to name the campus.)

Each campus will be headed by a **campus dean** who will oversee and coordinate students’ academic, co-curricular, and cultural life and will have the staff and resources to do his or her job. Each campus will also be served by a local **office of student affairs**, which will report to the Vice President for Student Affairs and will be responsible for the coordination of housing, dining, student life, recreation, health services, counseling and psychiatric services, and other student affairs functions. Working together with the local office of student affairs and the various program staffs, the campus dean will build community among students associated with that campus.

Once a new Rutgers student is admitted as an undergraduate to the School of Arts and Sciences or one of the professional schools, he or she will be able to choose a campus on which to live, as available: Busch, College Avenue, Cook, Douglass (which will continue to provide a single-sex living environment for women), or Livingston. Those living off-campus will be given the option – and the encouragement – to affiliate with one of the campuses, which will make more readily accessible the rich array of curricular, co-curricular, cultural, and social activities available in New Brunswick/Piscataway.

At every stage, our structure, our curriculum, our co-curricular initiatives, and our campuses and facilities must be designed with both on- and off-campus students in mind. With more than half of our New Brunswick/Piscataway undergraduates living off-campus, we must ensure that they gain full access to the university's programs and resources. Toward that end, I will charge each of the campus deans with developing specific programs and services to address the unique needs of our off-campus students.

EQUAL ACCESS ACROSS CAMPUSES

Again and again during the Task Force process, in the discussion phase, and at the student-services retreats that preceded the Task Force's formation, students expressed frustration over the unequal distribution and provision of programs, services, and facilities across New Brunswick/Piscataway. The quality of a Rutgers undergraduate education must not depend on where one lives, either on- or off-campus. Through this transformation, we will ensure that our students gain the maximum benefit from their time at Rutgers by providing full and equal access to Rutgers resources and academic programs and by expanding opportunities for meaningful co-curricular experiences throughout our campuses. We will establish as a fundamental principle that all New Brunswick/Piscataway programs and opportunities will be open to all undergraduate students no matter where they live. We will ensure that every undergraduate student at Rutgers may move from one campus to another and be certain of receiving the same high level of service and the same quality of programs, and of working with staff who serve all of New Brunswick/Piscataway, not one campus only.

As Rutgers increases access, my administration is also committed to maintaining local campus communities. The most prominent concern I heard voiced in the campus forums was that students want a sense of community. They don't want to get lost in a giant bureaucratic structure. They want assurance that the educational opportunities and services currently available to them locally will remain locally delivered and well administered by men and women with whom they have a face-to-face relationship. As the Task Force noted, services provided locally "often encourage the kinds of personal connections our students value," with each other and with staff and administrators.

Thus, the Rutgers administration is committed to **providing locally on each of the campuses an array of unified services, available New Brunswick/Piscataway-wide,** which includes pre-major advising, residence life, academic support, health services, career counseling, mental health services, student centers, and recreation centers. Among the responsibilities of the campus deans will be to ensure the quality and availability of these local services.

To further enhance these local communities and students' connections to them, a full complement of all campus services will be available to students on the Busch campus for the first time, coordinated by a newly appointed Busch campus dean. In addition, I will direct the Vice Presidents for Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs to establish and coordinate central advising offices on each campus that will serve on-campus, off-campus, and transfer students; that will bridge the gaps between pre-major and major advising; and that will include career services as a component of their work.

Current students have raised important questions about how these changes – and the transition to full implementation while they are at Rutgers – will affect them. While current students (and those entering in fall 2006) will continue to follow the curricular requirements of the undergraduate system now in place and graduate with degrees from their colleges, they will immediately share in all the benefits of full access to student life programs, student services, facilities, and co-curricular programs across the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

The Task Force has given considerable attention to the concept of learning communities of students, and I applaud the work in this area as a further way to create a sense of place within the larger Rutgers community. I support learning communities as a vital complement to the academic life of our students, and we will empower faculties and campus deans, in coordination with students and the Vice President for Undergraduate Education, to develop such communities where appropriate, ensuring that they will be open to any undergraduate and not be a requirement of living on a particular campus.

In addition, in order to emphasize the academic nature of our campuses, and to foster strongly focused intellectual learning communities there, I am proposing that the term “**residential college**” be used to denote a portion of a campus that has a clearly defined mission and purpose involving most of the students who live and/or study there.

Connecting classroom learning with students’ living experience, residential colleges can provide a supportive community that enriches the intellectual, social, and personal growth of undergraduate students with such elements as increased faculty participation, enhanced academic, cultural, and co-curricular programs, faculty mentoring, and on-site classes. Along with co-curricular programs developed under the leadership of the campus dean, residential colleges may also contain curricular elements if deemed appropriate and approved by the faculty of the relevant schools. Such entities by their nature will be larger and more intensely focused than other learning communities and will include residential requirements. As stated in the appendix, the creation of a residential college will require formal approval by the Board of Governors.

The first of these is proposed for the Douglass campus. I concur with the eloquent appeals I have heard from Douglass students and alumnae for a unique, women-focused experience within a public research university, and also the recommendations of the New Brunswick Faculty Council for such an experience. It is clear that there is value both to our students and to Rutgers in upholding the tradition and spirit of the New Jersey College for Women and Douglass College even as we establish a single degree-granting School of Arts and Sciences.

Therefore, upon approval by the Board of Governors on March 10, we will establish the **Mabel Smith Douglass Residential College**, to be located on the Douglass campus and led by the Douglass campus dean. We will provide interested women with single-sex living opportunities, an environment of innovative co-curricular programs, and, should the School of Arts and Sciences faculty approve, curricular opportunities as well. Such curricular components could become part of the optional four-year women-centered curricular, co-curricular, and student-life educational experience that has been recommended by the New

Brunswick Faculty Council and the University Senate. It must be emphasized that all such programs, curricular and otherwise, must be open to all New Brunswick/Piscataway undergraduates, even if an undergraduate chooses not to become part of the residential college.

In making this recommendation, I recognize the tremendous concern our alumni have expressed for the opportunities that Rutgers makes available to students. Therefore, I invite the participation of our graduates in developing the Mabel Smith Douglass Residential College program and other such initiatives, and I charge the Douglass dean to enlist and coordinate their participation.

Based on Rutgers' long tradition of providing educational opportunities for women in all fields, the Mabel Smith Douglass Residential College offers one model for learning communities and more specifically for other residential colleges that may develop in New Brunswick/Piscataway. For instance, the faculty of the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences is empowered to develop programs that may become a residential college on the George H. Cook campus.

Having described one particular residential option, let me emphasize that Rutgers provides a wide variety of housing and living-learning options for students at multiple locations across its several campuses in New Brunswick and Piscataway. We will continue to ensure that comparable and varied housing options are made available to students of both genders in terms of quantity, quality, and cost.

IMPROVING FACILITIES AND CAMPUSES

The Task Force has fittingly described New Brunswick/Piscataway as “a complicated group of campuses rather than one contiguous campus.” Given the challenges that our physical layout presents, Rutgers must make every effort to make each campus an inviting space for the students, faculty, and staff who will spend their time there each day, as we are doing through the College Avenue campus design competition. I agree with the overall recommendations made by the Task Force regarding campus planning and facilities and will direct the university administration to increase student and faculty involvement at every level of facilities planning, including buildings and furnishings, infrastructure, and landscape. The report speaks forcefully about the need for more and better classrooms, and we must and will make this a priority in capital planning.

In pursuit of such improvements, I will ask Professor Carla Yanni to chair a **campuswide facilities and planning committee** that will work with Executive Vice President for Administrative Affairs Karen Kavanagh to advance the facilities goals of the Task Force report. Of particular urgency is the recommendation that the university address the disparities between the **Livingston campus** and the other campuses in New Brunswick/Piscataway. If this new plan is going to succeed fully, all five of our New Brunswick/Piscataway campuses will need to be attractive to students. Through the discussion and my own observations, it is obvious that the Livingston campus has been neglected over the years. There is an absence of a feeling of community, characterized by the nameless streets and the clearly inadequate student center on the Livingston campus.

Livingston's current and future students deserve a focused effort by the university to improve the campus's facilities and sense of place, in addition to and more immediate than our plans for College Town.

While costs are a major consideration in making renovations or committing to new construction, there are also likely to be many smaller-scale, short-term opportunities to promote a greater sense of community, including the suggestion to rename the nameless roadways on the Livingston campus. And because the Livingston Student Center has for too long been a source of student frustration, we will make an immediate commitment to a significant expansion of that facility, for which we will break ground by fall 2007. I commend the leadership of the Livingston College Governing Association for its advocacy on this issue.

Throughout the Task Force process, the **student government** organizations in New Brunswick/Piscataway have contributed thoughtful comments, provided forums for student input, and offered effective advocacy for their constituents. Their constructive participation is a source of pride for the university. The new structure, with the establishment of a deanship at Busch, presents new opportunities for student government and for student leadership on our multiple campuses. I will look to the student leadership to determine for itself how student government should work under a new structure, and my administration will offer any assistance they may need.

EXPANDING RUTGERS' COMMITMENT TO WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Of great concern throughout the work of the Task Force and the subsequent discussion has been the university's future commitment to providing **educational opportunities for women**, who now represent a majority of Rutgers undergraduates and are engaged in learning and leadership in every school and on every campus. Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway has one of the most distinguished traditions of serving women in higher education of any college or university in the nation. The New Jersey College for Women that became Douglass College; the Institute for Women's Leadership that brings together our many centers and institutes focusing on women and women's issues in a global context; the Department of History's nationally acclaimed faculty working in women's history; the undergraduate and graduate programs in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies that now constitute the premier women's studies group in the nation; the editing project that is producing the papers of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton; the Institute for Research on Women that has for more than 25 years served as a pioneer in producing and disseminating research on women's work, education, and living conditions in a global context; the coming of the women's academic journal *Signs* to our campus in 2005 – the list of our support for both women's educational opportunities and research on women is long, the accomplishments significant.

In reimagining the education of undergraduate women at Rutgers in the 21st century, we honor our history and provide it with new directions and resources. Building on a strong foundation, we want women across the university to achieve at levels beyond what they already have achieved. Women's development – as professionals, as leaders, and as scholars – now happens in a world that is much different from the past. We must in particular address

the need to increase the number of women going into the sciences and engineering, where women make up only about one-fourth of all employed doctorate holders.

Thus, I have asked Dr. Joan Bennett, a highly distinguished microbiologist, to join the Rutgers faculty and to serve as an **associate vice president** responsible for advancing the entry of women in the science, technology, engineering, and math professions; mentoring and helping advance women faculty in these areas; and developing new programs for attracting and retaining women in these professions. Dr. Bennett, a member of the National Academy of Sciences and former president of the American Society for Microbiology, is nationally and internationally known for her work fostering the careers of women. Dr. Bennett, who will continue her research and teaching, will work with the Douglass Project for Rutgers Women in Math, Science, and Engineering to expand the recruitment and support of undergraduate women and to prepare them for graduate and professional careers in the sciences, math, engineering, and medicine.

In addition to initiatives in the sciences, we will continue to enhance the university's considerable and growing strength in the study of women in the arts. With support from the university's Academic Excellence Fund, we are establishing an **Institute for Women and Art**, which will bring together faculty, curators, researchers, and artists to promote dialogue and interdisciplinary projects related to this key area. The Institute will be led by Professor Emerita Judith K. Brodsky of the Department of Visual Arts and Dr. Ferris Olin, head of the Margery Somers Foster Center of the University Libraries. This initiative complements the arrival this year at Rutgers of the *Women's Art Journal* under Professor Joan Marter's co-editorship. Our emergence as a center of excellence for women and art will yield benefits not only for undergraduates but also for the entire campus and the community at large.

SERVING NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS

Rutgers' commitment to educational opportunities for women is matched by its proud history of serving adult learners – those of nontraditional age who are coming to higher education at various stages of their lives and careers. Since 1934, Rutgers has consistently sought to provide academically rich opportunities for these students, who currently number more than 2,000 in New Brunswick/Piscataway and are predominantly students of University College. While arts and sciences students of all ages will be enrolled at the School of Arts and Sciences, the Task Force was prudent in recognizing the necessity for special focus on the needs of nontraditional students in the proposed new structure.

Consistent with the Task Force recommendations, and in consultation with the dean, students, and alumni of University College, I intend to establish a new **Committee on Nontraditional Students**, made up of appropriate students, faculty, and staff, to develop recommendations for the best structures and programs to serve this unique and vital Rutgers population.

ENSURING DIVERSITY AND ACCESS

The Task Force working group on admissions and recruitment set diversity as one of its four goals and called for competitive yet broad-based admissions standards “to ensure the access that has made Rutgers a richly diverse campus for all students.” The New Brunswick Faculty Council and others have echoed this goal.

As New Jersey's premier public research university, Rutgers values educational diversity and promotes it through its admissions programs. A diverse undergraduate community provides our students with the intellectual stimulation and vibrant educational experience that come uniquely from interacting with people of widely varied backgrounds, life experiences, beliefs, and ideas. Learning in this type of environment prepares our students to fully participate in an increasingly diverse society by fostering the development of respect and understanding among its members.

The university's long and proud history of providing access for students from all backgrounds ensures that each has sufficient opportunities to reap the benefits of higher education. Our mission is to enroll students who will contribute to and benefit from the broad socio-economic, racial, ethnic, gender, and geographic composition of the Rutgers community. Once enrolled, the university is committed to preparing such students to compete in a global economy and to live in a diverse democracy.

Under the direction of a new Vice President for Enrollment Management, University Undergraduate Admissions will continue aggressively to recruit and enroll an entering class that is both academically well prepared and diverse in composition. University Undergraduate Admissions will continue to reach out to first-generation college-bound students and those in New Jersey's distressed municipalities to ensure an undergraduate class inclusive of a wide variety of experiences and backgrounds. The admissions application evaluation process will continue to incorporate talents, leadership, and the cultural, community, and volunteer experiences of applicants in shaping each entering class.

Intentions must be backed by action and accountability. University Undergraduate Admissions, under the Vice President for Enrollment Management, will be accountable to the President on this issue, and if there are problems we will address them.

ENGAGING FACULTY IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Throughout this document I have emphasized the value of bringing students into the exciting work of a major research university. It is also crucial that Rutgers actively seek to increase the presence and impact of faculty in undergraduate education, not only in setting academic policy but also in direct engagement with our students. Fulfilling our highest aspirations for Rutgers demands regular and significant faculty interaction with undergraduates in carrying out the exciting work of a public research university and its three pillars of teaching, research, and service.

The first-year seminars will provide an excellent opportunity for interaction, as will our encouragement of faculty involvement in learning communities. I will ask the Vice President for Undergraduate Education to expand the Aresty undergraduate research program model to provide incentives for faculty to involve undergraduate students in their research and to match students and faculty. Similarly, the Vice President will work to expand the CASE program to increase opportunities for faculty-guided service learning. Working with the academic deans, we will encourage departments to use the Faculty Academic Service Increment Program (FASIP) and promotion processes to reward faculty work with students such as advising on honors theses and independent studies.

Other approaches to increasing faculty engagement that will be considered during and beyond the implementation process include asking academic departments to develop plans for advising first- and second-year prospective majors as well as for advising declared majors; recruiting faculty members to function as student mentors, complementing the more structured role of a student's primary academic advisor; and providing a privately funded pool on which faculty can draw to take small groups of students to lunch or dinner, an outside lecture, or a cultural event.

My recommendations to the Board of Governors are not meant to be exhaustive of all the wise suggestions put forth by the Task Force. Indeed, a multitude of specific recommendations in the Task Force report are not mentioned or described here, many of which require decisions by Rutgers faculty, not the Rutgers administration. The school deans and their faculties have already begun a process that will result in the consideration of those proposals and their appropriate and timely implementation. Other recommendations made by the Task Force and by key constituencies such as the University Senate and New Brunswick Faculty Council will be shared with the appropriate implementation committees for consideration.

INVESTING IN THE TRANSFORMATION

What I am recommending is a significant change for Rutgers that will have budgetary implications and will require a community united behind the vision. In accomplishing this transformation, we will prudently marshal existing university resources and will make this effort a feature of our capital campaign to ensure its viability in perpetuity. Doing so will enable Rutgers to make **strategic investments** such as initial funding of first-year seminars, program support for the new associate vice president charged with addressing women's advancement in the sciences, and seed money that campus deans can use to invest in their co-curricular programs and that faculty can use to develop initiatives that might lead to the development of learning communities.

Making this commitment during a period of constrained financial resources will be difficult, but these changes cannot wait. We cannot walk away from our commitment to our students.

ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

In presenting recommendations to the Board of Governors, it is important to describe the administrative appointments and assignments necessary under the new structure envisioned here, and to outline a phased plan of implementation.

Rutgers will vest much of the responsibility for advancing the goals set forth by the Task Force in a newly conceived office of the **Vice President for Undergraduate Education**. As proposed by the Task Force, this position will have primary responsibility for academic matters related to undergraduate education that cut across the schools. He or she will have oversight of campus deans, Undergraduate Research, Honors Program, Disability Services, and other cross-cutting areas. The Vice President for Undergraduate Education will report directly to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and will be a member of the Cabinet and the Promotion Review Committee.

The **Vice President for Student Affairs** also will play a significant role in implementing these recommendations. This vice president's portfolio will include oversight of Housing, Dining, Residence Life, Health Services, Mental Health Services, Student Centers, Recreation Centers, Student Financial Services, Disciplinary Affairs, and Student Life policies. The Vice President for Student Affairs will continue to report to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and serve in the Cabinet.

As Rutgers heightens its commitment to the admissions and recruitment of undergraduates, we are creating an elevated position of **Vice President for Enrollment Management**, who will be responsible for overseeing Undergraduate Admissions, Financial Aid, and the Registrar and will report directly to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Obviously, close cooperation and collaboration among these individuals will be essential in ensuring the success of these transformative changes. To make certain that this occurs, I am establishing a **continuing task force on undergraduate education**, chaired by the Vice President for Undergraduate Education, whose membership will include the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Vice President for Enrollment Management, and other key members of the administration, staff, and faculty to provide ongoing evaluation of our progress in achieving the goals articulated in this report.

Contingent on the Board's approval of the recommendations set forth in this document, I will execute an ambitious **plan of implementation**, including the appointment of a steering committee led by a **Director of Implementation** and served by 14 subcommittees to address various areas such as organization, admissions and recruitment, student life, campus programming, faculty engagement, and learning communities. These groups will benefit from the widest participation of staff, faculty, and students, particularly from those people with direct experience in the relevant areas. The full list of subcommittees and the broad topics on which they will focus is attached as an appendix.

While it will take several years to fully realize this plan and the benefits it provides, we will set an aggressive **timetable for completion of significant steps**, understanding that the structure I am proposing will be substantially in place in time for first-year students

arriving in fall 2007. While a more detailed timeline will be developed early in the implementation process, we will take the necessary steps to achieve urgent deadlines, including those listed here:

- The admissions process, including recruitment materials and a single admissions standard, will be in place in time to recruit, admit, and enroll first-year students in the School of Arts and Sciences in fall 2007.
- Unified policies for housing, residence life, student centers, and recreation centers will be determined by fall 2006 for implementation in spring 2007.
- Committees of faculty, students, and staff for New Brunswick/Piscataway Facilities and New Brunswick/Piscataway Planning will be in operation by fall 2006.
- Information to appear in the new (2007-2009) campus undergraduate catalog will be prepared by fall 2006 to appear in spring 2007.
- Curricular and Scholastic Standing issues will be determined in 2006 for fall 2007 implementation.
- Academic programs and co-curricular programs for the New Brunswick/Piscataway Honors Program will be decided upon by spring 2007 for implementation in fall 2007.

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Such a significant transformation calls for clear **accountability measures**. We will monitor our success or failure in implementing this plan in a timely fashion in areas such as admissions, advising, co-curricular programming, faculty engagement, and student life. Through an implementation subcommittee on Assessment and Accountability, we will identify means by which to measure whether the Rutgers undergraduate experience – academic and co-curricular – has improved in meaningful ways. We intend to track and report publicly on such measures as:

- Graduation rates and post-graduation placements;
- Use of advising opportunities;
- Faculty/student participation in first-year seminars and undergraduate research and service;
- Use of student centers, recreation centers, and residence life programs; and
- Strength and diversity of entering classes.

As stated in the Task Force report, this effort will be especially timely in light of the upcoming reaccreditation review by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Aligned with the subcommittee's work, I will charge the Vice President for Student Affairs with defining baselines against which we can regularly measure overall student satisfaction. The Vice President will report to me on a regular basis, and I will report publicly on student satisfaction and the university's progress on other key measures of success.

CONCLUSION

It is time to transform the undergraduate experience at Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway. We envision a university in which students are empowered, faculty are reconnected to undergraduates, barriers to opportunities are eliminated, and the public gains a much clearer understanding of a Rutgers education. All of these recommendations are designed to move Rutgers forward in a genuinely new direction for undergraduate education – one that intensifies our commitment to preparing all students for life and leadership through wide access to the outstanding faculty and programs uniquely available at New Jersey’s public research university. While it is exciting to contemplate the future under these recommendations, I recognize that making a dramatic transformation will be difficult. Not everyone will be willing to take the bold steps outlined here. Some well-intentioned people may disagree with these recommendations and may actively resist altering the status quo. But our current structure and policies are not nearly good enough for our students; they present far too many impediments and perpetuate an inequality of opportunity and access. For the sake of our undergraduates, we need to change. We cannot and should not hold Rutgers back. It is time to move Rutgers forward.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are a fortunate university, a community of women and men deeply committed to ensuring the best possible undergraduate experience for our students. We have held an extraordinary and lively discussion over the past eight months. Many dozens of meetings and forums have taken place, more than 3,000 concerned individuals have written e-mail and letters, and every major body of faculty, students, and alumni, including the University Senate, the New Brunswick Faculty Council, and the Rutgers Board of Trustees, has offered comments and resolutions on the Task Force report.

The conversation has been enlightening and important and has revealed some valuable insights that are not fully captured or expressed in the Task Force report. Those insights are reflected in the several areas in which my recommendations have amplified, transcended, or in some cases differed from the Task Force report, including issues of nomenclature, the establishment of residential colleges, the creation of first-year seminars, and the appointment of an associate vice president responsible for women's advancement in the sciences.

It is my pleasure to thank all the students, faculty, staff, and alumni who have offered comments and suggestions, to those who proposed alternative models, and to all the university bodies that issued reports and resolutions expressing the consensus opinion of their membership on the Task Force recommendations. I thank each of the deans who hosted campus forums and provided opportunity for dialogue. Many citizens of New Jersey have taken time to offer comments, and I am grateful to the many legislators who have shared their opinions while respecting the deliberative process here at Rutgers.

The leadership and members of the University Senate and the New Brunswick Faculty Council deserve special applause for their extensive discussions and thorough analysis of the Task Force report over the past several months and the thoughtful and cogent reports and recommendations they have issued.

Most important, the university owes a deep debt of gratitude to Chairperson Barry Qualls and all the members of the Task Force who worked so hard to produce a thoughtful and visionary document, the vast majority of which has been affirmed by the university community and forms the basis of my recommendations to the Board of Governors. Their bold ideas have energized a debate that has gone beyond the narrower issues of reporting lines and structural inequities to focus on the meaning and purpose of a liberal education in the 21st century and the fundamental connection between student and professor that is at the heart of any great university.

APPENDICES

- Implementation Subcommittees and Topics
- Residential Colleges
- Rutgers–New Brunswick/Piscataway Organizational Chart by Function

Transforming Undergraduate Education Implementation Subcommittees and Topics

Academic Issues

- Honors Academic Program Requirements
- Interim Core Curriculum
- Academic Policies and Procedures, including grandfathering
- Academic Advising
- Transfer Students
- Convocations and Commencement

Admissions, Recruitment and External Communications

- Admissions and Recruitment materials, message
- Transfer Students Admissions

Assessment and Accountability

- Areas – admissions, academic, advising, co-curricular, faculty, student activities, student life, student satisfaction
- Information Collection
- Establishment of Expectations

Cross-Area Communications and Processes

- Internal Communication and Processes cutting across/among VPUE, VPSA, Schools

Early Implementation Issues

- Catalog
- Issues of Registration, Computing, etc.
- Campus Selection and Affiliation
- Orientation
- Web Info, including FAQs on the Transition
- Appointment of Task Force on Nontraditional Students

Facilities, Policies, and Programming

- Student Centers
- Recreation
- Student Clubs and Organizations
- Student Life Policies
- Residence Life
- Housing, including selection

Faculty Engagement

- First-Year Seminars
- Mentoring
- Advising
- Curriculum
- Undergraduate Research
- Incentives

Honors and High-Achieving Students

Recruitment
Programming
Undergraduate Research
Fellowships and Graduate School Advising
Scholarships and Stewardship

Legal and Financial

General External
State
Foundation

Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs**Organization, Services, and Management**

Psychological Counseling
Student Disciplinary Code (non-academic)
Business and Management Affairs – Office of the VPSA

Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education**Organization, Services, and Management**

Educational Opportunity Fund
Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences
Teaching and Learning Support Services
Citizenship and Service Education Program
Career Counseling
Academic Integrity
Business and Management Affairs – VPUE and Campuses

Organization

VPUE, VPSA, Schools

Overall and Individual Campus Programming

Campuses, Learning Communities, and Residential Colleges
Programming
Cultural Enrichment
Off-Campus Students

Space

Initial - Unified Office Locations and Campus Office Locations
Long Term – Facilities and Planning, Faculty and Students

VPSA - Vice President for Student Affairs

VPUE - Vice President for Undergraduate Education

Residential Colleges

It is the mission of a residential college to promote the intellectual, social, and personal growth of undergraduate students by strengthening the relationship between the classroom instruction they receive and their lives outside the classroom. This mission is realized in the following ways:

- Building a supportive and inclusive residential community, supported by faculty, in which students can further their scientific, professional, liberal arts, artistic, or other intellectual interests;
- Offering programs that instill in students a commitment to and habit of learning; promote self-determination, integrity, independent thought, self-discipline, and tolerance and support for diverse cultures and beliefs; and promote the common good;
- Providing common experiences that help students form a sense of community and mutual support;
- Enriching their experiences through programs, seminars, lectures, and field experiences that increase opportunities for students to learn together, enhance communication skills, and grow academically, professionally, and personally; and
- Furthering the university's mission of creating an informed and responsible citizenry through civic engagement, community service, and public dialogue.

Proposals to create a residential college require approval by the Board of Governors. They must demonstrate careful planning and adhere to institutional guidelines for the creation of residential colleges. Among other elements, proposals must include the following:

- A clear statement of mission and purpose including programmatic elements such as programs, seminars, lectures, travel experiences, service learning, civic engagement, field trips, speakers, faculty-approved common academic experiences, intern and extern experiences, and self-government available to students;
- An admissions policy that conforms to university policy and requires a commitment by students to participate in the programs that are part of the residential college; and
- Plans for faculty involvement, administrative and staff support, and a budget that includes private sources of support where appropriate.

Rutgers-New Brunswick/Piscataway Organizational Chart By Function

