

[OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT HOME](#) | [LETTERS TO THE RUTGERS COMMUNITY](#)**Making Hard Choices on Rutgers' Budget and Tuition**

July 14, 2006

Members of the Rutgers Community:

As promised, I am writing to update you regarding the ramifications of Rutgers' \$66.1 million funding shortfall in the newly enacted state budget. This inadequate level of state funding is exacerbated by unavoidable cost increases in areas such as utilities and insurance, leaving Rutgers with a total shortfall of \$80.4 million this year, the largest in our history. We are taking immediate steps and making hard and painful decisions to deal with this challenge.

Today the Board of Governors approved a universitywide budget for the 2006–07 academic year that cuts university spending by approximately \$50 million. (A detailed news release on the board's action is available at <http://ur.rutgers.edu/medrel/viewArticle.html?ArticleID=5251>.) While no unit is exempt, these reductions will be made strategically to maintain academic quality and protect our core missions. Administrative and support units on all campuses will bear a larger proportional share of the cuts than academic units.

We expect to save several million dollars through a wide range of efficiencies such as sharing services, replacing many print publications with web versions, and reducing travel. The bulk of this reduction, however, will come from the elimination of an estimated 750 positions, an action we take with great reluctance. Some of these were open positions but, regrettably, in other cases this means laying off or not reappointing many hard-working and diligent employees whose contributions to Rutgers will be sorely missed. University Human Resources is ready to help during this transition. Information for employees (<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/lr/layoffinformationforemployees.htm>) and managers (<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/lr/2006LayoffInformation.htm>) is available online, and UHR staff members can answer questions and provide advice.

To close the funding gap, we must also, unfortunately, increase tuition and fees. The Board of Governors today approved an 8 percent increase in tuition for all in-state undergraduates, and a 10 percent increase for out-of-state undergraduate students and most graduate students. I know these increases present a real hardship for many, and we will do our best to offset them with increased financial aid to our neediest students. Our fundamental commitment to keeping Rutgers accessible must remain strong.

Rutgers will also absorb the budget shortfall by cutting back on the number of courses offered in the coming year. We will eliminate as many as 800 courses and course sections while working hard so that as many students as possible can still get the classes they need to progress in their majors and to graduate in a timely manner.

In addition, the university will eliminate six intercollegiate varsity sports in New Brunswick/Piscataway: men's tennis, men's fencing, women's fencing, men's swimming and diving, men's heavyweight crew, and men's lightweight crew. Please know that we will maintain these sports at the varsity level for the coming academic year, and we expect that almost all will be offered as club sports in the future. Furthermore, we will honor all scholarships for affected student-athletes. In the same way, we will honor the scholarships of all students entering Rutgers this fall under the Outstanding Scholar Recruitment Program (OSRP), despite the Governor's line-item veto of state funding to support new OSRP scholarships.

No campus or part of the university was exempt as we sought ways to manage the shortfall. The Camden campus has reorganized its student services, including academic advising and financial aid, to increase efficiencies in those areas. Rutgers–Newark is closing programs in French and Korean. In New Brunswick/Piscataway, we are closing the Nichol Avenue career center. Library service hours will be reduced. And cuts in administrative areas will have far-reaching impacts on every support function, including our ability to monitor environmental compliance, maintain our computing and information technology infrastructure, and care for our buildings and grounds. These are just a few examples of ways Rutgers is coping with an unprecedented state funding cut. Vice presidents, provosts, deans, and directors will provide

more details in the days ahead. Please be aware that some of the figures I have included here may change, although not dramatically, as final target reductions are made. Information will be made available at [www.rutgers.edu/FY2007budget/](http://www.rutgers.edu/FY2007budget/).

This is a difficult period for the state and for Rutgers, but we should not lose sight of our primary goal: to educate students and to maintain and enhance the high quality of New Jersey's comprehensive public research university. The Committee on Efficiency and Entrepreneurship at Rutgers will shortly begin its work identifying long-term cost savings and new revenue sources. We must also persist in our efforts to make investment in public higher education and adequate state funding for Rutgers a clear priority with the people of New Jersey and state policy makers.

I want again to thank all the members of the university community who so eloquently brought Rutgers' message to Trenton during this tough budget season. As difficult as the final result is, your outreach helped mitigate an even deeper proposed reduction in state funding and laid the groundwork for future discussions with the Governor and legislators.

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