

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE
FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE PROPOSALS
OF THE TASK FORCE ON UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION
February 2006**

Introduction and General Comments

The Rutgers University Senate has been considering the report of the New Brunswick Task Force on Undergraduate Education (TFUE) since the beginning of the fall 2005 semester. The Senate standing committees were charged with considering and making recommendations on relevant aspects of the TFUE proposals (and of alternative proposals) in early September, and worked diligently on their respective charges throughout the fall semester and in January. In addition, in 2005 the Task Force report was discussed by the full Senate at two special meetings convened specifically for that purpose, on September 30 and December 9, and at the regular Senate meeting on November 18. At the January 20 Senate meeting, the Senate voted to approve nine recommendations concerning less complex/controversial aspects of the TFUE proposals. This report presents an additional 30 recommendations for consideration and action by the Senate on February 24. Thereafter, those recommendations approved will be transmitted to President McCormick as the collective advice of the University Senate.

The Senate chose to consider the TFUE report, despite the fact that it pertains only to the New Brunswick Campus, for several reasons. First of all, we were asked to do so by President McCormick. Second, the Task Force recommendations, at least those dealing with structure and with admissions, are clearly within the purview of the Senate according to its bylaws. The Senate has the power to “regulate formal relationships among academic units within the University” and to “establish minimum standards respecting admission, scholarship and honors.” In addition, it has the responsibility to advise the President concerning “the establishment or dissolution of colleges, schools, divisions, institutes, and similar educational units.”

Both the first-phase recommendations approved on January 20 and the present recommendations were prepared by a steering committee consisting of the Senate's Executive Committee and standing-committee chairs. This group, whose members are listed at the end of this report, has worked tirelessly to coordinate the efforts of the standing committees and to merge their recommendations into what we hope is a coherent set of recommendations for Senate consideration and action. The Senate wishes to commend the steering committee for its yeoman efforts.

The Senate also wishes to express its appreciation to the members of the Task Force on Undergraduate Education, led by Dean Barry Qualls, for the enormous time and effort devoted to preparing their report, which provides an insightful analysis of many of the issues that need to be addressed in order to transform undergraduate education in New Brunswick/Piscataway, as well as a compelling vision for the future.

The recommendations below are divided into seven categories: collegiate structure, administrative structure and responsibilities, admissions and recruitment, faculty incentives, advising and curriculum, the student experience, and implementation. The nine recommendations approved on January 20 are included to make this report complete. Each recommendation, or sometimes pair of recommendations, is followed by an explanatory paragraph or paragraphs intended to indicate why

the appropriate committee or committees arrived at that recommendation. Senate committees were unable to reach consensus on several major issues. In those cases, one of the competing viewpoints was selected to present as a recommendation, but the arguments on both sides of the issue are given in the explanatory paragraphs. We expect these issues to be decided on the Senate floor.

Recommendations

I. Recommendations Concerning Collegiate Structure

- I.1. *The current arts and sciences colleges should be merged into a single unit granting undergraduate degrees in the arts and sciences in New Brunswick/Piscataway. The new unit should be called a School of Arts and Sciences. (approved 1/20/06)***
- I.2. *The formal name of the new arts and sciences unit should be the Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences, New Brunswick/Piscataway.***

The Senate agrees that the current structure of four arts and sciences colleges with a single faculty but different minimum admissions standards, general education requirements, graduation requirements, and available majors and minors creates confusion among prospective students and their families and impedes efforts to recruit the best high school graduates to Rutgers-New Brunswick/Piscataway. We therefore strongly support the Task Force recommendation to form a single degree-granting arts and sciences undergraduate unit on the New Brunswick/Piscataway Campus.

Calling the new unit a School of Arts and Sciences is consistent with the terminology currently in use on the New Brunswick/Piscataway Campus, by which units with faculty who offer graduate as well as undergraduate degrees are called “schools.” The name Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences, New Brunswick/Piscataway, makes it clear that the new school will be the arts and sciences unit for the New Brunswick Campus only.

- I.3. *The current liberal arts colleges in New Brunswick/Piscataway, with the exception of University College, should be designated as Residential Colleges, each headed by a dean. These colleges may have non-resident affiliate students. (approved 1/20/06)***
- I.4. *Input from a broad cross-section of faculty, students, staff, administrators, and alumni should be obtained before a final decision is made concerning the names of the individual residential colleges.***

The best designation for the successors to the current liberal arts colleges continues to be a topic of debate within the university community. Some argue that the successor units should be called “campuses,” because continuing to call them “colleges” could perpetuate the confusion caused by the current collegiate structure and make it difficult for external constituencies to realize that we are making a fundamental change. Others argue that “college,” which is used in a variety of ways at other universities, would be a more accurate designation than “campus” for the centers for student services, learning communities, and co-curricular and student-life programs that we wish the campus communities to be, and that the word “campus” -- already used in a confusing number of ways at Rutgers -- denotes a physical location, not a community.

While there is clearly no ideal name, we agree with the New Brunswick Faculty Council that “residential college” is the best choice since keeping the word “college” indicates the co-curricular and student-life aspects we wish to retain from the current colleges, while adding “residential” indicates that the units are no longer degree-granting academic entities. We also believe that the designation “residential college” will help the University maintain the support of alumni/ae of the liberal arts colleges and align Rutgers with a number of universities that have recently established residential colleges. We emphasize, however, that each residential college community should have commuter as well as resident affiliated students.

We have no particular objection to the names for the individual residential colleges proposed by the Task Force; namely, Busch, Cook, Douglass, Livingston, and Queens, but recommend that input from a wider group of students, staff, faculty, administrators, and alumni be sought before a final decision is made. Since University College will not have a residential component, we recommend that it continue to be called University College, which is a designation used by a number of peer institutions for a unit focused on non-traditional students.

- I.5. *The residential colleges should serve as extended learning communities providing students with a range of living-learning communities, non-residential learning communities, co-curricular and extra-curricular programming, and residence-life and commuter programs, as well as serving as centers for the local delivery of centralized student services. The residential colleges should be able to grant certificates or other recognition for completion of co-curricular programs. They should not, however, offer academic certificate programs on their own, but could work with the appropriate school to facilitate the offering of such a certificate program on the residential college campus by an academic department or group of departments. Any credit-bearing course associated with a residential college learning community or co-curricular program should have to be approved by the appropriate faculty body, offered under the auspices of an academic department, and be open to all qualified students.***
- I.6. *The Douglass Residential College should continue as an all-women’s community, with the students there served by the same policies and procedures as students affiliated with the other residential colleges.***

One of the central goals of the Task Force was to eliminate the problems, inequities, and confusion resulting from the present collegiate structure while preserving and strengthening what is best in the liberal arts colleges and Cook (i.e., the strong sense of connectedness and community that students so appreciate at the smaller colleges, and the excellent co-curricular and student-life programs offered by some of the colleges). To achieve this goal, successful learning communities and other co-curricular and extra-curricular programs currently offered by the colleges need to be sustained and made available, through increased funding, to larger numbers of students. Also, additional learning communities and co-curricular programs for both resident and commuter students should be established at each residential college. It is particularly important, in this regard, that the widely praised living-learning communities and women-centered residential and commuter programs offered by Douglass College be preserved and enhanced.

- I.7. *A task force should be charged with considering how best to meet the needs of transfer and nontraditional students.* (approved 1/20/06)
- I.8. *University College should no longer grant degree, and its affiliated students should be enrolled in the School of Arts and Sciences. However, other aspects of University College's structure and function should not be determined until the recommended task force on non-traditional and transfer students has submitted its recommendations.*

The Senate agrees with the TFUE recommendation that a "Task Force on Educating Nontraditional-Age Students" should be established and charged with "providing a comprehensive report on the structures and organization of services that will best support these students." In addition, we believe that the TFUE did not sufficiently and comprehensively consider the many issues concerning recruitment, admissions, and support of transfer students, and that further consideration is needed, including consideration of the problems of students who transfer from one Rutgers unit to another. Since there is a significant amount of overlap between transfer students and non-traditional students, we suggest that the Task Force to be appointed consider the needs of both student groups.

- I.9. *A hybrid model similar to that currently in place at the Mason Gross School of the Arts should be adopted for the organization of the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (or other name to be determined). In such a model:*
- *The professional school faculty would designate some of its majors as professional majors and others as arts and sciences majors. Students interested in the professional majors would be admitted into the School as first-year students; students interested in the arts and sciences majors offered by the School's faculty would be admitted into those programs at the time they declare a major.*
 - *Mechanisms would be put in place to make it easy for students to transfer between the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. This would require that admission standards for the two Schools be roughly the same.*
 - *A joint committee from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Cook Faculty would be set up to consider the possible joint offering of majors by the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.*
 - *Cook College, as a residential and commuter unit, would become one of the residential colleges, with priority in housing given to students majoring in one of the disciplines offered by the faculty of the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.*

There appears to be widespread agreement that, of the three possible models proposed by the TFUE for Cook College/School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, some version of the hybrid model is the most appropriate. There remains, however, some disagreement about what should be the precise relationship between the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences and the Division of Life Sciences of the School of Arts and Sciences and about the desirability of some majors being available to both arts and sciences students and professional students in the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. The Senate is not in a position to resolve these issues; therefore we recommend that a committee of FAS and Cook faculty and administrators be set up to look for a mutually agreeable resolution of outstanding issues. As a general rule, however, we believe that professional majors should be available only to students in professional schools, and that arts and sciences majors should be available only to

students in the School of Arts and Sciences. In addition, we believe that the current internal competition between Cook and the arts and sciences colleges for students interested in the biological sciences is confusing and counter-productive, and that similar competition should not take place between the new School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

I.10. *All schools on the New Brunswick/Piscataway Campus should enroll both full-time and part-time students.*

At present, the Schools and Colleges in New Brunswick/Piscataway have differing policies with regard to part-time undergraduate students. Most of them, however, do not enroll part-time first-year students. A student who was initially full-time but needs to become part-time is required to transfer to University College if the part-time status will last for more than a semester. We agree with the TFUE that this policy does not serve the best interests of our student body and should be changed. We recommend, therefore, that the School of Arts and Sciences and each of the professional schools permit enrollment of part-time as well as full-time students. While we acknowledge that completion of some professional programs (such as those in Engineering) on a part-time basis may be difficult, we believe that students who meet admission standards and are able to arrange their schedules to take all the courses required for a particular professional program should be able to enroll in the professional school, even if their employment or family obligations prevent them from attending full-time.

I.11. *There should be a general honors program for arts and sciences students.* (approved 1/20/06)

I.12. *A single general honors program for all qualified undergraduate students at Rutgers- New Brunswick/Piscataway should be established. More specifically, we recommend that:*

- *The general honors program should have uniform requirements for arts and sciences students, and modified requirements, as necessary, for professional school students.*
- *Local honors communities should continue to exist on our various campuses to provide the local advising, mentoring, and co-curricular activities that students value so very highly in our current college and school honors programs.*
- *The Vice President for Undergraduate Education should be responsible for, and should administer, the general honors program. Targeted funding should be provided to the VPUE for recruitment and support of honors students, for funding additional honors offerings, for encouraging faculty members to participate in teaching honors courses and mentoring honors students, and for compensating academic departments for such faculty participation.*

We wholeheartedly agree with the TFUE that the quality and visibility of our honors programs are crucial to efforts to attract the highest-achieving students to Rutgers-New Brunswick/Piscataway. At present, each of the arts and sciences colleges and almost all of the professional schools have their own honors programs, with disparate requirements, philosophies, funding, opportunities for research, etc. These college- and school-based honors programs have attracted many outstanding students, and current honors students seem happy with their programs, particularly with the sense of community, excellent advising, and opportunities for faculty contact they provide. However, the fragmentation and lack of

coherence have given our honors programs less than optimal visibility, and have made it difficult to advertise honors in New Brunswick/Piscataway in a way that allows us to compete as effectively as we should with the honors programs at a number of peer institutions. We therefore support the Task Force recommendation for a single New Brunswick-wide honors program, with local honors communities on each campus, in order to ensure that the full range of honors opportunities on the New Brunswick Campus are available to all honors students, and to give our honors offerings the visibility and coherence they currently lack. We wish to note, however, that for our honors programs to reach the next level of excellence, structural changes alone are not sufficient; additional funding for the general honors program must be provided.

Finally, it should be noted that this recommendation deals only with the general honors program, which is the program used to recruit very high-achieving students and to provide them with special mentoring, honors seminars and courses, research opportunities, etc. It does not deal with departmental honors programs, which we believe should be strengthened, or senior thesis scholars programs (e.g., Henry Rutgers, Mabel Smith Douglass, George H. Cook). The fate of the senior thesis programs, and their relationship to the general honors program, is clearly something for the New Brunswick faculty to decide.

II. Recommendations Concerning Administrative Structure and Responsibilities

- II.1. *There should be a new Vice President for Undergraduate Education, who should be a member of the President's Cabinet. This office should be funded appropriately to support its broadly based mission.*** (approved 1/20/06)
- II.2. *The Vice President for Undergraduate Education should be a member of the Promotion Review Committee (PRC). An additional faculty member should be added to the PRC to maintain an appropriate balance between faculty and administrators on the Committee.***

The Senate agrees that there should be a strong Vice President for Undergraduate Education (VPUE), reporting to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, to serve as powerful advocate, both internally and externally, for undergraduate education in New Brunswick/Piscataway and that the Office of the VPUE should have the staff and funding to carry out the substantial responsibilities outlined in the Task Force Report.

We also strongly agree that the VPUE should be a member of the President's cabinet in order to ensure that undergraduate education will have a "seat at the table" when priorities are set, policies are developed, and decisions are made at the highest levels. On the other hand, we find the case for having the VPUE serve on the PRC less compelling. While having a voice for undergraduate education on the PRC would have symbolic value, we are skeptical that it would have much effect on promotion decisions. On the other hand, we think that it is appropriate for the VPUE to serve on the PRC since the Vice President for Research and Graduate and Professional Education serves on the PRC. On balance, therefore, we support the TFUE recommendation that the VPUE serve on the PRC, but recommend that another faculty member be added to the PRC to help maintain an appropriate balance between faculty and administrators.

II.3. *The Vice President for Student Affairs should report to the Vice President for Undergraduate Education, but a mechanism should be established to ensure that the Vice President for Student Affairs serves the needs of graduate and professional students in housing, dining, career services, health services, etc., as well as the needs of undergraduates.*

Whether the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA) should report directly to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (EVPAA) or through the VPUE is a question on which there is not consensus among the Senate standing committees that considered it. The Structure and Governance Committee agrees with the TFUE that the VPSA should report to the VPUE so that a single senior administrator will have oversight of all aspects of undergraduate learning and life, and to assure appropriate cooperation and coordination between staff reporting to the VPSA and to the VPUE. On the other hand, the Senate's Faculty Affairs and Personnel Committee agrees with the New Brunswick Faculty Council and the Graduate School - New Brunswick that the VPSA should report directly to the EVPAA to ensure that the VPSA serves the needs of graduate and professional students in such areas as housing, dining, career services, and health services. Our compromise is to recommend that the VPSA report to the VPUE, but that the EVPAA set up a mechanism to ensure that the needs of graduate and professional students in the above areas are met.

II.4. *The residential college deans should report to the Vice President for Undergraduate Education. However, the VPUE should set up a mechanism, perhaps through the Undergraduate Academic Assembly and/or the proposed Undergraduate Academic Council of Deans of the Schools and Colleges, to ensure that participation of faculty members from the various schools, particularly the School of Arts and Sciences, in learning communities and other co-curricular programs on the residential college campuses is appropriately facilitated and rewarded.*

Whether the residential college deans should report to the VPUE or to the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences is another issue on which there is little consensus. The majority of members of the Senate committees that considered this question think that the residential college deans should report to the VPUE because the deans will provide co-curricular and student-life programs for professional school students as well as for arts and sciences students, and because the VPUE's sole responsibility is for undergraduate education, while the arts and sciences dean has a number of other priorities, most notably faculty development and support of academic departments. A sizeable and passionate minority, however, thinks that having the deans report to the VPUE is inconsistent with the central Task Force goal of "re-connecting" arts and sciences faculty and students outside of the classroom, since it absolves the School of Arts and Sciences of any responsibility for its students beyond classroom teaching and setting academic requirements. It is argued that, as a result, faculty members would have little incentive to take part in learning communities or other programs or activities organized by the residential colleges. Our majority recommendation is that the deans should report to the VPUE; however, those on both sides of this issue agree that some mechanism needs to be set up by the VPUE, with the backing of the EVPAA, to ensure that faculty members from the undergraduate schools, particularly the School of Arts and Sciences, which has a substantial majority of the faculty in New Brunswick/Piscataway, participate in learning communities and other suitable co-curricular programs and activities at the residential colleges.

II.5 *The residential college deans should have the funding from the VPUE, as well as the staff and authority needed to carry out effectively their primary responsibilities to:*

- *develop and oversee co-curricular programs and activities, including learning communities, for both resident and commuter students affiliated with the residential college;*
- *provide residence-life, commuter, and other student-life programs and activities for students affiliated with the residential college, under uniform guidelines established by the VPSA and the VPUE;*
- *coordinate the local delivery of centralized services on the residential college campus.*

Each residential college dean will have the task of creating a vibrant and cohesive intellectual campus community by creating and sustaining living-learning communities, nonresidential learning communities, and a variety of co-curricular, residence life, commuter, and other student-life programs. Programs of these sorts, particularly learning communities, are expensive in terms of both funding and staff time, and they require close coordination and cooperation among student-life staff, academic affairs staff, staff providing centralized services on the campus, and faculty in relevant academic departments. The residential college dean will therefore need to have a staff of student-life professionals reporting to him or her, as well as a small academic affairs staff to coordinate the delivery of academic services on the campus and to work with the degree-granting schools and individual academic departments to offer learning communities and other co-curricular programs.

III. Recommendations Concerning Admissions and Recruitment

III.1. *There should be a single standard and process for regular admission for all applicants to the School of Arts and Sciences-New Brunswick, regardless of the residential college with which the student wishes to affiliate. This standard and process should be modified appropriately for transfer, EOF, and non-traditional-age students, as well as for students with special skills.* (approved 1/20/06)

III.2. *The criteria used in admission decisions should be sufficiently flexible to ensure the diversity of the student body and not exclude talented applicants whose potential is not adequately measured by standard test scores.* (approved 1/20/06)

The Senate agrees with the assertion of the TFUE that the current substantial difference in admissions standards between Rutgers College and the other arts and sciences colleges (and Cook) is harmful because it leads to confusion among prospective students and their families, makes some students at other New Brunswick colleges feel like second-class citizens, and leads some applicants to choose not to attend Rutgers because they are not admitted to Rutgers College. We therefore believe that these differences in admission standards should be eliminated. We also strongly agree with the Task Force that efforts to improve the profile of entering students must protect and, if possible, enhance the wonderful diversity of our undergraduate student body.

III.3. *There should be a single New Brunswick arts and sciences admissions process in which all applicants would apply to and, if successful, be admitted to the School of Arts and Sciences. Admit-coming students would then be matched with a residential college based on a*

combination of their preferences and the need for each residential college to have a reasonably representative mixture of students in terms of demographic characteristics and academic backgrounds and interests.

We acknowledge that how the assignment of new students to the residential colleges is done is an important matter which could have a substantial impact on admission yield and that the best process for making the assignments is not obvious. We believe, therefore, that experts need to be involved in designing an effective plan for filling the beds on all the campuses without driving away admitted students. We also believe it is particularly important that the assignment process be tailored to avoid carrying into the future the unfortunate stereotypes that have arisen from past practice.

Further, we note that in order to realize our admissions goals, the facilities at Livingston and, to a lesser extent, Cook and Douglass need to be brought up to par with those on College Avenue and Busch. At the same time, we think that having strong learning communities and certificate programs based at the residential colleges will help to induce arts and sciences students to be willing to live on campuses other than College Avenue and Busch.

III.4. *The Rutgers undergraduate application should give an accurate idea of what we expect of our students and of the rigor of our academic programs.* (approved 1/20/06)

While the Rutgers “easy-to-complete” application is easy to process (an important consideration given the large numbers of applicants) and may encourage some students to apply, student Senators have argued very forcefully and convincingly that the lack of effort and intellectual challenge involved in completing the application gives the erroneous impression that Rutgers is a school with low academic standards and discourages some academically very strong prospective students from seriously considering attending the University.

III.5. *Faculty members should play a major collaborative role with the administration in establishing admissions policies, determining standards for admission, and setting enrollment goals at the school and campus levels. In particular, we recommend that:*

- ***there be an active faculty admissions committee for the School of Arts and Sciences and for each professional school in New Brunswick, and that these committees should exercise the powers and responsibilities laid out in the TFUE Admissions and Recruitment recommendation ;***
- ***a New Brunswick-wide primarily faculty Admissions Committee, reporting to the Vice President for Undergraduate Education, be established with roughly the composition and powers proposed in the TFUE Admissions and Recruitment recommendation 5.***

We strongly support the Task Force recommendation that faculty need to be much more involved in undergraduate admissions at the policy-making level. This recommendation is completely consistent with those of the Senate Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee’s report entitled “Faculty Role in Undergraduate Admissions and Recruitment,” approved by the Senate on April 22, 2005. To quote that report: “The faculty has the responsibility for setting the curriculum, teaching students in the classroom, studio, or laboratory, evaluating student performance, and setting graduation standards. The quality of

the faculty and the academic programs they provide is a major factor attracting high-achieving students to Rutgers University. It is counterproductive, therefore, to have an admissions system in which faculty members play a minimal role, at best, at the policy-making level.”

III.6. *Current internally competitive recruiting procedures need to be eliminated, and general New Brunswick recruiting materials redesigned so that they:*

- *make clear the advantages all undergraduates derive from attending this research university;*
- *place primary emphasis on curricular, research, co-curricular, and student-life programs and opportunities available to all undergraduates in New Brunswick, particularly programs for first-year students;*
- *portray all schools, colleges, campuses, and programs in an internally non-competitive manner, and take great care not to market one unit or program at the possible expense of others.*

The Senate is convinced that, in order to eliminate the current confusion and send out a clear, positive, and accurate message about what it means to be an undergraduate at Rutgers-New Brunswick/Piscataway, it is necessary to redesign our undergraduate recruiting materials, both print and electronic. We believe that the current competitive recruiting booklets for the arts and sciences colleges should be eliminated rather than converted into residential college booklets, and that all marketing of arts and sciences at Rutgers-New Brunswick should be focused on the School of Arts and Sciences. Likewise, Cook College, whatever it may be called, should no longer be able to bill its campus as “the science campus” in competition with science programs at Busch. We recommend that highly competitive recruiting materials be replaced by general recruiting materials that primarily stress the many advantages that all undergraduates – arts and sciences students and professional-school students – enjoy at Rutgers-New Brunswick/Piscataway.

III.7. *A plan should be developed to recruit and enroll more out-of-state students, particularly students from other regions of the United States.*

As the Task Force noted, the Rutgers-New Brunswick/Piscataway student body is highly diverse in all respects except geographically. In fall 2003, the student body was 9.4% out-of-state by residence, well below the average of 21.5% among public members of the American Association of Universities (AAU). Moreover, most of the 9.4% were foreign students; only about 3% of the student body actually came from other US states. This very low fraction of out-of-state students gives our New Jersey students little opportunity to get to know students from other parts of the country, gives us a reputation as a very local institution rather than a national one, and fails to tap the out-of-state tuition revenue source, which is used to great advantage by many of our peer institutions. Increasing our national reputation would also increase our reputation within New Jersey, and recruiting high-achieving students from other states who want to attend college far away from home would help to compensate for the many New Jersey students who prefer and can afford to attend college in other parts of the country.

IV. Recommendations Concerning Faculty Incentives

IV.1. *Effective incentives, some of which will carry additional costs, must be put into place to achieve increased faculty participation in all aspects of undergraduate education. We recommend that incentives of the following three types be implemented:*

- *recognition and promotion incentives such as annual departmental recognition awards for PTLs, Annuals and TAs; amending Forms 1a-e to include all the additional faculty responsibilities; reaffirming the 10-year rule for promotion to PI and modifying the process to make it easier to assess the candidate's contributions; requiring at least a minimum of attention to undergraduate teaching for promotion to PI for faculty with IDR appointments; publicizing to units Senate resolutions already adopted that deal with the improvement of teaching.*
- *monetary incentives from existing funds such as setting aside a portion of merit funds at the department level for contributions to undergraduate education; having a substantial portion of the president's FASIP funds be used for awards for undergraduate teaching and service.*
- *incentives requiring some new funds, such as providing funds for release time for the development of new courses; providing funds to academic department for awards for meritorious faculty and TAs; allotment of out-of-cycle salary adjustments for faculty who receive major national recognition in undergraduate teaching; awarding competitive grants and/or summer salary to develop new courses; providing funds for expanded weekend instruction; ensuring increased funding to the Aresty Research Center so as to make funding available for all qualified and interested undergraduate students.*

The Senate endorses in principle the bulk of the incentives for faculty participation proposed by the Task Force on Undergraduate Education. However, we believe those incentives are insufficient and that the report fell short in adequately addressing the issue of rewards and incentives, an issue which the TFUE recognized as being crucial. We believe that widespread faculty participation is central to the success or failure of the proposed transformation of undergraduate education, and that effective incentives, some of which will carry additional costs, must be put into place. The Faculty Affairs and Personnel Committee (FAPC) formulated the lists of specific incentives above, and more detailed information about them can be found in the FAPC's report on the TFUE proposals. We endorse the need for all three types of incentives, and urge the Administration to incorporate development of such incentives into the implementation stage of the TFUE proposals. Further, it should be noted that it is not our intention that any of the recommended incentives should divert funds from other Campuses or from units that do not teach undergraduate students.

V. Recommendations Concerning Advising and Curriculum

V.1. *General and pre-major advising should be done on each residential college campus primarily by a centralized unit of professional advisers, reporting to and funded by the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education. For such a system to work well:*

- *A structure must be developed for regular communication about graduation requirements and for discussion of issues between general purpose advisers and academic departments, and between general purpose advisers and faculty deans.*

- *There needs to be coordination and communication between the general purpose advisers and the staff of each residential college.*
- *Students must assume their share of responsibility in the advising process.*

The goal in reorganizing general advising is the provision of a consistent level of highly accurate and useful advice to undergraduates in New Brunswick/Piscataway. Having a centralized unit of professional advisors (i.e., qualified staff whose primary responsibility would be advising) responsible for working with and across Schools would seem to be the best approach to achieve the desired level of consistency. In order for such professional advisers to provide accurate and useful advice, however, they would need to be very knowledgeable: about the general education requirements for arts and sciences students (since the professional schools will presumably continue to do their own advising); about what a student considering majoring in a requirement-heavy discipline (particularly in the sciences) or interested in being accepted into the Business School, the Bloustein School, SCILS, or the 5-year Education Program needs to do in the first year in order to graduate in the normal time frame; and about co-curricular programs, learning communities, internships, etc. available to students with a variety of interests. This would clearly require that there be effective, ongoing communication between the general advisers and academic departments, the decanal staffs of the degree-granting Schools, particularly the School of Arts and Sciences, and the decanal staffs of the residential colleges, and that faculty and staff from the appropriate units be involved in the training of the advisers.

It must be pointed out, however, that having all general advising (i.e., advising of entering students, students without declared majors, students with questions about graduation requirements other than their major requirements, and students with questions about academic standing) done by professional staff would clearly require a significant influx of resources. Since the funds to hire on the order of 30 new advisers is unlikely to be available, at least initially, the initial group of advisers will probably have to draw on current college advising staff, career service staff, and willing faculty members. All advisers, however, would need to be centrally trained, and their performance monitored.

It must also be emphasized that students also need to assume their share of responsibility for the advising process by regularly scheduling and keeping appointments with their advisers, and by giving careful consideration to the advice offered.

V.2. *Academic departments must take appropriate responsibility for advising undergraduates by:*

- *providing an excellent advising program for the department's majors;*
- *providing advice about the department's major and minor programs and course offerings to prospective majors and minors and to students seeking information about departmental courses required in other majors;*
- *helping to train general advisers about what entering students need to do to prepare themselves to major in the particular discipline.*

Academic departments and individuals must also be involved in advising undergraduates. Departments bear full responsibility for advising their majors, and also need to take some responsibility for pre-major advising of students seeking information about the major or minor or about the department's course offerings. Likewise, as noted in recommendation V.1,

departmental faculty need to be involved in training general advisers. Finally, advising and mentoring are critical components of teaching, and faculty members should expect to participate in their departmental advising program as part of their normal responsibilities.

To help departments improve their advising programs, the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education should provide a compendium of “Best Practices in Major Advising” to each department.

- V.3. *In centralizing general and pre-major advising, care should be taken to ensure that the outstanding advising that Equal Opportunity Fund (EOF) students now enjoy is enhanced, not compromised. Since local service delivery is essential to the success of the EOF program, EOF advisers must remain integrated into the various school and campus communities, even if administration of the program is further centralized.***

The Senate recognizes the tension between the University’s twin goals of ensuring equity of standards through centralization while preserving the benefits of local programming and service delivery. For the Educational Opportunity Fund, local service delivery is essential to its success. Thus, even if administration of the EOF is further centralized, services must stay integrated into the various campus communities. For example, we recommend that EOF counselors stay at the residential colleges so they remain easily accessible to the EOF students as well as to administrators and staff..

- V.4. *There should be one core curriculum for Arts and Sciences students.*** (approved 1/20/06)

- V.5. *Academic authority over the curriculum, as well as over admissions requirements, scholastic standing, and degree certification, should reside with the faculties of the degree-granting schools.***

The School of Arts and Sciences obviously needs to have a curriculum. However, the Senate does not wish to weigh in on the question of whether a core curriculum for all undergraduates in New Brunswick/Piscataway, of the sort proposed by the TFUE, is either desirable or practical. We merely wish to emphasize that setting the curriculum is the prerogative of the faculty, and that the faculty of each school should therefore have the final say as to whether the school will adopt any proposed New Brunswick-wide core curriculum.

- V.6. *A diversity course should be included as part of any core curriculum that may be adopted, to display the University’s commitment to acknowledge, encourage, teach and celebrate diversity.***

We recommend that a diversity course be included in any core curriculum that may be developed. Diversity courses, which are distinguishable from global studies courses, provide a comparative framework for understanding religion, ethnicity, and culture, and also examine the intersection of race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, all of which are issues undergraduates will face on campus and throughout their lives. During the implementation phase of the Task Force plan, departments should be encouraged to identify and/or develop courses that meet these objectives, and students should be able to choose from several such courses to fulfill the diversity requirement.

VI. Recommendations Concerning the Student Experience

VI.1. *To ensure equitable local delivery of student services, a unified organizational structure, with centralized reporting, should be established to oversee management of student centers and recreation centers; provision of psychological services; setting of uniform guidelines for formation of student clubs and organizations; establishment of uniform policies regarding job titles, job descriptions, and salary ranges for student-life professional staff members; as well as continued, centralized management of housing and dining services, financial aid, registration, student health centers, etc.*

The current differences in policies and guidelines for reserving rooms in student centers, formation of student clubs and organizations, use of recreation centers, etc. cause many problems for students and are widely viewed as part of the “Rutgers screw.” Likewise, the variations in the quality of services provided on different campuses leads some students to feel less valued than others. At the same time, students want the full range of student services provided on their home campus; they do not want to have to travel to access services they need. We therefore agree with the TFUE that there should be centralized administration but local delivery of student services on the residential college campuses.

VI.2. *In order for the proposed structural and organizational changes to succeed in truly transforming undergraduate education at Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway, classrooms and dormitories must be improved, and the current, marked inequality of facilities on our various campuses must be remedied. The highest priority in this regard should be constructing improved facilities on the Livingston Campus.*

The Campus Planning and Facilities Working Group of the TFUE documented a depressing list of serious problems with the physical facilities on the New Brunswick/Piscataway Campus, including lack of basic climate control in classrooms, poor maintenance of campus buildings, lack of communal spaces for informal discussion, and lack of amenities in dormitories. Likewise, the students surveyed in the Constituency Research Project gave our dormitories a poor rating. The identified problems need correction if we are to succeed in truly transforming undergraduate education. While there are physical-plant problems on all campuses, the situation at Livingston is particularly poor, and the facilities there are clearly inferior to those on other campuses. Therefore, improving the facilities at Livingston must be a very high priority.

VI.3. *A task force of faculty, staff, students, and administrators should be set up to begin planning for the creation of various types of learning communities at Rutgers - New Brunswick/Piscataway, including development of the resources, incentives and support systems to both create and sustain such communities.*

We believe that learning communities can significantly enhance the educational experience of participating students, provide a mechanism for faculty-student interaction outside of the classroom, and help to build a sense of community on our residential college campuses. As the experiences of peer institutions make clear, effective learning communities require careful planning and development. We should, therefore, begin the planning process as soon as possible.

We caution, however, that it is likely that only a relatively small number of students will be interested in participation in learning communities, and that it is therefore not realistic to think that learning communities can be implemented on a scale whereby they could, as the TFUE seems to envision, become the focus of campus life and provide the majority of students with the sense of identity currently provided by some of the colleges.

VII.1. Recommendations Concerning Implementation

- VII.1.** *The implementation process must be open, transparent, and inclusive, taking advantage of the expertise and perspectives of academic-affairs and student-life staffs of our current schools and colleges, faculty members, students, deans, and administrators from the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and various offices providing centralized student services.*
- VII.2.** *In the implementation process, substantial weight should be given to the detailed recommendations in the reports of the Senate Standing Committees on the Task Force proposals. The Chairs of those committees should be asked to serve on the appropriate implementation committees.*

Implementation of the Task Force proposals that are accepted will be a challenging and labor-intensive process, particularly since the proposed timeframe for doing so is rather tight. The process therefore needs to be open, transparent, inclusive, and efficient. Knowledgeable faculty, staff, students, and alumni should be involved as much as possible in the development of the implementation plan, as well as in carrying it out. It is particularly important that academic-affairs and student-life staff members (such as assistant and associate deans) at our current schools and colleges, as well as staff members providing centralized student services, play a substantial role in the implementation process, since they are the experts on the practical issues involved in the delivery of academic and non-academic services, the creation of co-curricular and student-life programs, and, in some cases, the creation of learning communities.

A great deal of effort has been expended by a variety of faculty groups, student government associations, deans and their staffs to analyze the Task Force proposals in substantial detail and to provide a number of thoughtful comments and recommendations concerning how best to transform undergraduate education at Rutgers - New Brunswick/ Piscataway. We believe that these recommendations and comments should be considered seriously during the implementation process. In particular, we recommend that the detailed reports of the Senate standing committees on the Task Force proposals be given substantial weight, and that the chairs of the relevant committees be invited to serve on the implementation committees.

- VII.3.** *As the Task Force recommendations are implemented over the next several years, a very high priority should be given to significantly increasing the number of tenure-track faculty lines and the number of TAs.*

Over the past ten years, there has been a steady decrease in the number of tenured faculty and in the number of tenure-track faculty lines, and a steady increase in the number of non-tenure-track full-time and part-time instructors. If learning communities, new curricula, and more faculty involvement with undergraduate education are to become a reality, then there needs to be growth in the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty who will serve as advisers and mentors and who will remain at the

University as meaningful contacts for alumni/alumnae and as long-term contributors in service to the State of New Jersey. There is also a need for more TAs to enable us to provide more/smaller recitation, discussion, and workshop sections of large courses.

VII.4. *The decision regarding which Task Force proposals should be implemented should be based on the academic merit of the proposals, rather than on their budgetary implications. It should be recognized, however, that it is very unlikely that implementation of the recommendations would result in cost savings. At the very least, implementation would be cost-neutral; more likely, it would involve modest cost increases, particularly if recommendation VII.3 is implemented .*

The Senate Budget and Finance Committee made a serious effort to estimate the cost implications of implementing the Task Force proposals, including estimating which components of the proposed plan would involve cost increases, which would involve cost savings, and which would be cost-neutral. Their estimate involved the assumption that both the number of tenure-track faculty and the number of teaching assistants would increase by 10% over the next ten years. They concluded that the overall costs to implement the TFUE plan should be relatively modest, even with the costs of increasing the number of faculty and teaching assistants.

VII.5. *In the implementation phase of the restructuring, care should be taken to ensure that the changes adopted enhance rather than diminish the campus climate and the diversity of the campus community. In particular, we recommend that:*

- *guidelines be established to ensure that the general honors program, learning communities, and co-curricular programs are inclusive of qualified students of all races, religions, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations;*
- *a committee be appointed to design a unified, coordinated effort to address issues of campus tolerance and diversity, and to consider establishing a centralized, adequately staffed office/department of diversity affairs similar to those found at a number of peer institutions.*

The preliminary campus climate survey of students identifies many areas of concern including discrimination and harassment experienced by African-American, gay and lesbian, and female students. We believe that there is currently a relatively uncoordinated patchwork of efforts to deal with these problems. By contrast, a number of peer institutions (e.g., University of Michigan, Ohio State, University of Kansas) have equal opportunity departments or multicultural centers charged with: 1) ensuring compliance with federal regulations on nondiscriminatory hiring; 2) providing consultation to departments on minority faculty, staff, and student recruitment; 3) providing sensitivity training for faculty, staff, and students; and 4) processing and resolving complaints of discrimination. These centers have their own dedicated staff, numbering anywhere from 8 to 30 people, and are led by directors who report to the provost or equivalent. We recommend that, during the implementation phase of the restructuring, serious consideration be given to establishing such a centralized, well-staffed office/department at Rutgers - New Brunswick/Piscataway.

In addition, we support the TFUE recommendation (p. 47) that the general honors program should have flexible admissions criteria to allow students with diverse sets of talents and accomplishments to participate in the program. Similarly, we believe that guidelines need to be put in place to ensure that learning communities and other co-curricular programs are inclusive.

Members of the Steering Committee:

Martha Cotter, GS-NB (F) - Executive Committee Chairperson and
Academic Standards, Regulations and Admissions Co-chair
Samuel Rabinowitz, SB-Camden (F) – Executive Committee Vice Chairperson
Robert Boikess, Rutgers (F) – Executive Committee Member
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