

**Rutgers University Senate**  
**Academic Standards, Regulations, and Admissions Committee**  
**Response to Charge S-1506**  
**April 2017**

*Charge S-1506 - RBHS and Other Rutgers Academic Calendars: Consider the academic calendars of the various units of RBHS and how they differ from other Rutgers academic calendars. Make proposals for reconciling the different calendars where possible, and for incorporating the RBHS calendar(s) in the official Rutgers academic calendar.*

**Background**

Rutgers University is a complex and sometimes confusing institution that has become more complex and confusing since the merging of units of the former UMDNJ into Rutgers. This complexity is reflected in the academic calendars of Rutgers schools and colleges. The confusion generated by this complexity is exacerbated by the way in which the academic calendars are presented on the Rutgers websites.

Prior to the merger with units of UMDNJ, there was only one Rutgers academic calendar that all Rutgers schools and colleges followed sometimes with minor variation; this calendar is what is now referred to as the University academic calendar. At the time of the merger, the legacy UMDNJ schools all had academic calendars substantially different from one another and from the legacy Rutgers academic calendar. This complexity has since been reduced somewhat in that three of the soon-to-be seven schools in RBHS<sup>1</sup> now follow the University academic calendar.

For several years after the merger, searching for an academic calendar on any Rutgers website except those in RBHS yielded the University academic calendar with no indication that this calendar is not followed by a number of Rutgers schools. The situation has recently improved somewhat in that links to academic calendars on the all-university and New Brunswick websites now go to a page with links to the University academic calendar and to an RBHS page with a links to the academic calendar of each RBHS school. Much still needs to be done to improve access to current Rutgers academic calendars.

**Discussion and Recommendations**

In considering this charge, ASRAC focused on two possible areas of concern: access to and clarity of information about academic calendars and differences among the calendars.

**Access and Clarity**

It is neither straightforward nor fast to find the academic calendars followed by each Rutgers school or college on Rutgers websites. There is no direct link to any academic calendar on the University, Camden, Newark, New Brunswick, or RBHS home page. To find a particular academic calendar starting from any of the home pages, one needs to click on either Info for Current Students or Info for Faculty and Staff and then find the link to calendars. Or one can use the search function on the home page. Moreover, there is no single place where all the academic calendars in use can be found. To remedy this situation, we offer the following recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> On July 1, 2017, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences will merge with the Graduate School - New Brunswick to form the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies, which will not be a part of RBHS.

**Recommendation 1:** Rutgers should create a single web page that provides a link to each academic calendar currently being followed by one or more Rutgers schools or colleges and indicates which schools follow each calendar.

**Recommendation 2:** There should be a link to this single web page on the Academics pull-down menu on the University, Camden, Newark, New Brunswick, and RBHS home pages.

### Differences in Academic Calendars

At the present time, the situation with respect to Rutgers academic calendars is as follows:

- All schools and colleges of Rutgers-Camden, Rutgers-Newark, and Rutgers-New Brunswick except the Rutgers Law School follow the University academic calendar, possibly with minor variations.
- The Law School follows a variant of the University academic calendar in which fall classes start the last week in August and end several days before classes end in other units.
- The Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, the School of Nursing, and the School of Public Health all follow the University academic calendar.
- The Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, the School of Dental Medicine, and the School of Health Professions all have their own separate academic calendars.
- The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences currently has its own academic calendar but the Board of Governors just approved its merger with the Graduate School – New Brunswick to form the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies, effective July 1, 2017. The merged school will presumably follow the University academic calendar.

ASRAC believes that it may be possible and desirable to make changes to some of the RBHS academic calendars in order to make them closer to each other and/or to the University academic calendar. At first glance, for example, there does not appear to be any compelling academic reason why the School of Health Professions could not follow the University academic calendar. Members of ASRAC do not, however, think that we have the expertise to propose specific changes to any of the RBHS academic calendars. Instead, we make the following recommendation.

**Recommendation 3:** ASRAC recommends that President Barchi ask the RBHS administration to review the academic calendars of RBHS schools to see if there are unnecessary differences among those calendars and the University academic calendar that could be eliminated without adversely impacting academic programs.

### Resolution:

*Be it resolved that the Rutgers University Senate:*

1. recommends that Rutgers create a single web page that will provide a link to each academic calendar currently being followed by one or more Rutgers schools or colleges and indicates which schools follow each calendar.
2. recommends that there be a link to this single web page on the Academics pull-down menu on the University, Camden, Newark, New Brunswick, and RBHS websites.

3. requests President Barchi to ask the RBHS administration to review the RBHS academic calendars to see if there are unnecessary differences among those calendars and the University academic calendar that could be eliminated without adversely impacting academic programs.

***2016 -17 ASRAC Members***

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