

Report of the NFC ad hoc Committee on Implementation (NFCCI)

April 14, 2014

The ad hoc NFCCI met several times since the last NFC meeting and discussed recommendations to the Strategic Plan.

The NFCCI appreciates and commends Chancellor Nancy Cantor, Provost Todd Clear, and their Executive Committee for soliciting the views of the entire Rutgers-Newark University community via Town Hall Meetings, Listening Tours, Charrette groups, and other venues. We believe that these efforts will promote the participation of all the stakeholders and will ultimately benefit the strategic plan.

We believe that the NFC should be actively involved in the development and implementation of the strategic plan; we offer our assistance, and we trust that such involvement is concordant with the views of the Chancellor and Provost.

Absent a draft of the Newark Campus Strategic Plan at present, we suggest below some areas that the Strategic Plan might address. We trust that a draft of the Strategic Plan will be made available for discussion, modification, and approval by the NFC prior to its next meeting.

We believe that Rutgers-Newark should be provided with the resources required of a first-rate urban university. It should serve the surrounding urban population – educating its students and benefiting its needs. It should be a force for upward mobility for students at all levels: undergraduate, graduate, and professional. This requires resources to support excellence in pedagogy and research.

The NFCCI members concurred that the strategic plan for the Newark Campus should build upon the existing unique strengths of our Campus, as the basis for justifying a significant increase in financial resources provided to our Campus.

The following are some of the strengths discussed by the NFCCI; we emphasize that they are provided as *examples* of potential initiatives that would justify increased financial resources. Potential stakeholders should be provided the opportunity and encouragement to initiate specific proposals. Thus, we recommend that the Administration provide a formal mechanism by which the Newark Faculty stakeholders can, and would be encouraged to, propose

programmatic, increased resource-requiring, initiatives for incorporation into the Campus Strategic Plan.

Example #1: Newark: The Global University City

Our Newark Campus exemplifies the Rutgers motto: “Jersey Roots, Global Reach”. The criterion for the Rutgers-Newark Campus being rated #1 in diversity for 15 years in succession by USNWR is the number of other countries represented by more than 10 students each; at Rutgers-Newark, that number exceeds 65. Moreover, this highest international representation in the nation is embedded in the iconic American inner city of Newark. How to integrate these two incontestably unique Rutgers-Newark features to maximum advantage should be a focus of attention in the strategic plan. For example, creation of a Center of Multi-Ethnic Research integrated with our Division of Global Affairs, Center for Ethnicity, School of Public Policy, Department of Political Science, Law School, Department of Urban Education, and EOF, aimed at analyzing the operation of international cities as models for improving the quality of life of Newark. This could justify providing new high-profile faculty, scholarships and doctoral and postdoctoral research fellowships. While this is only one suggestion, the concept of creating an entity that could integrate our Campus’ two uncontestedly unique resources -- international student representation and inner city issues – could be presented to the Faculty as an objective for the Strategic Plan. It could be presented to the Faculty as (in NIH parlance) an “RFA” – Request for Applications. Then, the Faculty could design innovative, interdisciplinary proposals to be incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

Example #2: Clinical Neuroscience Interdisciplinary Initiative:

Neuroscience is an incontestable strength of the Newark Campus, exemplified by our CMBN, RUBIC, and first-rate neuroscience faculty basic research in the CMBN, Psychology and Biology departments. With the incorporation of the legacy NJMS into Rutgers, now neurologists, psychiatrists and other medical doctors are members of the Rutgers Faculty, including the Faculty of our College of Nursing. This provides an opportunity for our Campus to develop a unique, innovative interdisciplinary and collaborative specialty – Clinical Neuroscience, i.e., applying our current basic neuroscience research toward addressing clinical issues. It would also provide a rational basis for the Administration’s expressed imperative to integrate the legacy NJMS with Rutgers-Newark. Furthermore, we have major expertise on our Campus for image analysis; the resources of CMBN, Psychology, and Biology could integrate with the Center for Information Management, which specializes in image analysis, and even our Library (digital image storage technology) in collaboration with neurology clinicians, for a

uniquely powerful interdisciplinary effort to apply brain image analysis to clinical neurological problems. This could also justify increased resources in terms of new high-profile faculty, doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships, MD/PhD fellowships, etc. An RFA for such an interdisciplinary endeavor would certainly generate innovative, workable proposals for the Strategic Plan that could even effectively incorporate the physical and mathematical disciplines on our Campus, e.g., related to magnetic resonance imaging and computation.

Example #3: The Rutgers Business School and Newark Urban Blight:

Our Campus would be particularly justified in addressing the objective of eliminating Newark urban blight using the intellectual interdisciplinary resources of the Business School, School of Public Policy, the Center for Urban Education, the Law School, the School of Criminal Justice, and even the Philosophy Department (e.g., addressing issues of business ethics ...certainly a need there!). Working toward eliminating Newark urban blight is certainly a unique and justifiable objective for the Strategic Plan. Increased scholarships, doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships, and new high-profile faculty hires could provide the necessary interdisciplinary links and “glue” (NIH “glue grants” are an NIH invention to promote interdisciplinary research). An RFA to our Faculty, specifying this objective, would certainly generate specific plans to address this issue.

Example #4: Henry Rutgers Distinguished Math-Bio Professor /Math-Bio initiative

Rutgers-Newark should hire a MathBio for Henry Rutgers Prestige Senior Professor who would lead the Newark campus in the development of a campus wide MathBio initiative. This person would not be housed in any one Rutgers-Newark department. Many universities now have strong groups in MathBio. The Division of Mathematical Sciences at the NSF has a strong program funding MathBio. Many other agencies are funding MathBio initiatives. MathBio seems poised to be one of the new and central areas of academia in this century.

The Newark campus has an ideal concentration of expertise in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Neuroscience and the Bio-Medical Sciences to make this one of the premier settings for MathBio. The availability of MathBio programs at every academic level would give Rutgers-Newark students the opportunity to develop strong credentials for placement in the workforce and continued intellectual and professional development after graduation. Degree programs should be developed at every level (e.g. undergraduate, masters, PhD, medical and nursing and as well a professional degree programs).

The above are just a few examples of how we could take advantage of the Strategic Plan to generate major advances that are uniquely appropriate to our Campus. Toward this objective, we encourage the Administration to challenge the Newark Campus Faculty to propose specific, detailed innovative interdisciplinary plans.

The Strategic Plan must also address the following:

A) Incorporation of wording that includes an opportunity for all current areas of excellence in basic research to benefit from the increased resources. These are areas with international reputations which do not necessarily fall into an interdisciplinary rubric. These areas would also benefit from increased resources for their programs at the undergraduate and graduate level, and must not be left to wither on the vine.

B) The composition of the faculty must be addressed in certain areas. In some departments, women and underrepresented minorities are concentrated in the full-time, but non-tenure-track ranks. This makes the overall statistics for full-time faculty (non-tenure-track, tenure-track and tenured) look good, but it generates misleading statistics for any given discipline when broken down into categories. Such over-representation of these groups at the lower ranks gives an inaccurate impression of the Rutgers-Newark Faculty..

Toward achieving the above objectives and goals, we members of the NFC offer our support and help with formulating and executing the Strategic Plan. This would involve immediate consideration of the following:

In implementing the Strategic Plan, how are the initiative areas to be chosen? Should there be campus-wide competition? Should specific areas for development be identified, or should the Strategic Plan be more general?

We trust that as members of the NFC, we will be brought into the process of developing the Strategic Plan, in which we can play a significant role.

Respectfully submitted,

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