

Newark Faculty Council
November 16 2020

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Nancy Cantor:

Disciplined plans in place with COVID19 in the area, but in zipcodes outside of RU-N. RU-N is in communication with the mayor's office regarding our procedures. We are moving towards a stronger, wider testing program for those coming regularly to campus.

Sherri-Ann Butterfield:

We have implemented health guidance rules. These are tightening up.
Curfews have been put in place – they shouldn't affect too many folks. If you are on campus beyond 9pm, let everyone know.
More robust testing to follow.
Robeson center will distribute test kits, several drop off locations.

Ashwani Monga:

Signage has been placed in buildings indicating that you must log into system: much better systems are in place. Would like some people to come in. More in person classes in Spring.
Faculty members: can convert to hybrid or if worsens can switch to remote.
We hope this is a transition for faculty to come back.

John Gunkel:

Courses: We are 3% higher in terms of offerings on campus.

We have 60 sections lecture/seminar.

2/3 are grad and 1/3 are undergrad.

We are working to organize spaces that will be used for teaching. Seats will be marked, classrooms sanitized between classes.

Amber Randolph:

Financial situation updates:

Budget for the year was approved. There are Covid cuts, but also some state support as well.

Most state support goes to direct student aid, or indirect student aid. Our deficit is down to 11 ½ million dollars (from about 20 million).

Ashwani Monga

There was anxiety about the elections, so we created a website with information and sources about the election, voting, etc. They brought in our deans, people from political science, etc.

They have been very well attended.

Amber Randolph:

We have a new process around discretionary spending. We only allow it with approval from the Chancellor's Office. Travel, food is down, of course. Central Procurement has created a system-wide change to the approval process. Any expense over \$5000 that can be covered by an internal budget will need a second layer of approval through our marketplace system.

Hopefully it streamlines a bit. We're trying to be strategic about how to support Newark-based suppliers. We want to meet goals around supplier diversity and regional support. Soon we'll be having target training for faculty.

Alex Gates:

We wanted to create a faculty group to speak directly to the university president. Now we don't know if we'll even meet with the president. We'll meet with his provost instead. Nevertheless, we want a line from faculty on all four campuses to the president. It will be called the Coalition of Rutgers Faculty Councils. We would have chair and vice-chair of each Faculty Council attend (so, eight people), with some back-up people in case those people can't make the meeting. The problem is that the four faculties don't necessarily have the same agenda, so we might need to meet beforehand, so we can determine common concerns. We'll start with Gates and Barnett as the main people attending.

Q: Will there be pressure for the four campuses be pressured to speak in a unified voice? Why not let each of the four campuses each have their own time in the meeting?

Gates: We can consider this. The structure is still in process.

Piotr Piotrowiak: Update on Campus Research and Research Procedures

Right now, we're on "Phase C," which means we have 75% on-site lab research. We have select low-risk in-person human subject projects. We have select domestic low-risk research travel. We have limited number of undergrad researchers.

-Office of Research and SP is 100% remote.

-Testing: our positive fraction is well below the Newark and the NJ average. Our latest test of researchers had 1 positive result; overall, researchers had 2 positive results in November. Face coverings, etc. are working.

-We may begin mandatory weekly testing after Thanksgiving, or maybe in Spring 2021 semester. It depends on public health indicators. Since they are not looking good, we may have to push on-site lab research back to 50%.

-We might have to cancel undergrad research after Thanksgiving.

-We might request that all students who go home for Thanksgiving quarantine before returning to the laboratory.

-If infections rise, we'll have to go. Back to Phase B (grad, staff, faculty, postdocs will all be at 50%).

Cantor:

Many of our students commute from home, so "going home for Thanksgiving" might not matter.

Piotrowiak:

Yes, we should deal with distance between long distance and short distance travel, for example.

Q: In Life Sciences, we had 2 positive cases on one floor. This raised anxiety among students. \ We asked Occupational Health. We discussed having students stay home for a week. What is the guideline? Just continue social distancing and wear masks? We don't know identity of the positive cases, so we don't know who was exposed. Students have to travel to med school, taking public transport, just to get tested, which is also risky. Can we get a test kit to test a cohort in the same building in this case?

Butterfield:

When people test positive, we have a whole procedure that are private (HIPPA) – contract tracing, etc. So this is already going on. We should be informed right away when cases like this happen, so we can help (bringing the test down to the student, rather than making them travel).

Q: We were told that travel to med school was the way to get rapid testing.

Butterfield:

Rapid testing is at the med school, but if we are informed, we can accommodate.

Piotrowiak:

For now, we don't have rapid testing on Newark campus other than med school. We have to rely on Occupational Health and Student Health. There was a case in Chemistry in which the PI told the group to quarantine. This came from Occupational Health. But again, privacy reasons

means chair of department isn't always informed. If cases get more frequent, we might have to ramp down.

We've gotten some assistance for researchers through the Governor's Emergency Educational Relief (GEER) and Coronavirus Relief (CR). Priority for Assistant Professors close to end of tenure clock, assistance to Ph.D. students, and assistance to departments. For Assistant Professors, we're getting them funding to keep their postdocs and grad students going. Departments get help to pay for all the health precautions they have to install. Also to pay for specialized software to help now that teaching has to be online.

Graduate tuition reimbursement for students will continue. Central Office for research will pay a quarter of costs on instrumentation proposals. There might also be a return of IMRT/ IHASRT internal grants.

Q: What is impact on grad students going forward? Are we still accepting grad students for the fall?

A: There's a wide variation. Some decided not to recruit for next year. Others see this as an opportunity to get students who might not have come otherwise.

Q: Can we hear about how grad student programs are being effected in the fall? Bring in Taja-Nia Henderson next time?

A: Yes, we can do that.

Gates:

Rutgers has taken steps to address diversity and inclusion as a response to the social unrest of the summer. Gates has program to help minority student succeed in STEM: The Garden State LSAMP (Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation). Cantor is part of it, as is Monga. It tries to increase minority participation in STEM because currently, it's a crisis. The charts demonstrate this to be the case. While Black and Hispanic populations are at about 15% (Black) and 21% (Hispanic), their presence in STEMP disciplines is significantly below – about 8% at best – while some (math, physics) are actually getting worse.

This program began at R-N in 2009 (we were the lead among other NJ institutions). The LSAMP began in 1001. There are 59 LSAMP Alliances nationally.

-We have a learning community; research experiences; annual conference; tutoring and peer-led team learning; and experimental enrichment (ex: math enrichment: GPA in math 1/8 before, and 3.45 after.

-It's been hard to get them doing research because of COVID-19, but program generally is working well.

-We've helped at-risk students quite a bit.

-We get big-name speakers come to speak (Senator Booker, head of NSF). We have poster sessions for them. We have 600 students show up for our conferences, as well as presidents, deans and provosts.

- We started with 488 students; we now have 1446 (number of minority students graduating with STEM degrees). We've done exceptionally well – increased our minority students in STEM 156% in three years.
- We've sponsored the most research experiences of any LSAMP.
- Essex County College is part our coalition. We invited “feeder schools” in (community colleges). They push get students to graduate in STEM and come to us. There are 4 participating.
- We place undergrads from community college to RN doing research; math bridge programs; mentoring, etc.
- We had 200 students show up on our “Transfer Day.” WE show them how to transfer, what major they might want.
- We did a cross-campus peer mentoring program. We surveyed them on their confidence re: what they'd study, where they'd transfer, how they'd do it. We paired them with undergrad majors from RN who had transferred themselves, to meet on a weekly basis, to help them with transfers, etc. By the end, they become highly confident.
- Only 29% of those at community colleges actually transfer to 4 year colleges. But 98% of those doing cross-campus peer mentoring transferred!
- We've doubled our graduation rates and transfer rates.
- Those who participate the most (Keane, Montclair State and RN) do the best. Most come to RN.
- We did a social media experiment, March-April 2017; Facebook and Instagram spotlighted student successes. A student who was in jail; now getting a Ph.D. in Math with help of LSAMP.
- We had professional help with producing the videos.
- We've measured reach; 160,000 views in about a month. They also got stats on reactions. They hit the age group they wanted – mostly men watched it. Most were from NJ. Overwhelmingly positive reactions. Cory Booker shared it.
- We charted transfers from Newark community colleges to RN; we can see a big jump from underrepresented minorities that spring.
- We now have underrepresented minorities in STEM than non-minority students.
- We are now working on the Bridges to Doctorate Program at RUN; They get stipends, free tuition for 2 years, and receiving department commits to support for 3-5 years. We have faculty advisor diversity seminars and other forms of academic support for the students. It is stunning what the students have overcome. The program is working. We're expanding number of programs we are working with.

Cantor:

LSAMP here at RN has an amazing track record. Gates is doing a phenomenal job.

Butterfield:

-How can we help keep up your social media presence? Also, Newest Americans can make a video about LSAMP.

Q: We've recruited 4 wonderful new students in Biology Ph.D. through the Bridge to Doctorate program. How can we ramp up support after the 2-year support from LSAMP? TA lines are limited.

Gates:

We can apply for another Bridges to Doctorate after this. We are successful at RN because faculty here have stepped up and are mentoring the students.

Q: Can we have a LSAMP program for faculty? NTT and PTL faculty numbers are exploding. There are more women and underrepresented minorities in the NTT and PTL faculty, probably as a result of systemic racism and sexism. Tenure track have better pay, support and resources. A LSAMP program for NTT and PTL faculty would be welcome.

Gates:

The Psychology Department has joined in LSAMP. They are working on mentoring students. Maybe this can be more widely applied.

Cantor:

We can bring this up with the deans.

Butterfield:

Faculty support makes a huge difference.

Q: Can we have workshops for faculty who are mentoring LSAMP students? Not all faculty know how to do this.

Q: We have this already, but we can do more.

Gates:

-We hope to have Ashaki Rouff build a program to help faculty be better mentors to the undergrads. Eventually the P3 can pick it up and offer it campus wide.

Minutes by Beryl Satter and Ashaki Rouff