In a 250-Year History, a Singular Moment in Time ...

Our Moment

The Rutgers University Strategic Plan in Brief
A SINGULAR MOMENT IN TIME

Dear Members of the Rutgers Community:

As Rutgers approaches its 250th anniversary, the confluence of three unique events amplifies the importance and opportunities inherent in this milestone:

- Our integration with the former University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, creating Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) and establishing Rutgers as a truly comprehensive research university;
- The largest capital construction program at Rutgers in decades, funded in large part by the Building Our Future Bond Act approved by New Jersey voters in 2012; and
- Our entrance into the Big Ten Conference and its academic counterpart, the Committee on Institutional Cooperation, a consortium of 15 top-tier research universities.

Even in the context of these positive events, Rutgers must adapt and innovate as we confront the same social and economic challenges that are facing higher education nationally. At this singular moment, we have a unique opportunity to raise the quality and excellence of Rutgers for our students, our communities, our partners in government and business, and society.

Our University Strategic Plan, a five-year roadmap for excellence written for Rutgers, by Rutgers, sets a clear aspiration: To be broadly recognized as among the nation’s leading public universities: preeminent in research, excellent in teaching, and committed to community.

Our plan is the product of a lively and intensive 18-month process of discussion and analysis, reflecting input from many thousands across the community—students, faculty, staff, alumni, members of our governing boards, and friends of the University.

To achieve our aspiration, Rutgers will pursue a series of University-wide priorities and initiatives that will complement strategic efforts developed and carried out by Rutgers’ three geographic campuses in New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden and by RBHS. These goals and priorities will also inform our Physical Master Plan, ensuring that our capital development supports our bold ambitions for the New Rutgers.

Our University Strategic Plan and the vision it outlines will build on our historic strengths while developing new areas and programs that will take Rutgers to new levels.

This is our plan … and our moment.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Barchi
President
Across the nation, forces larger than Rutgers are reshaping higher education, putting pressure on the very models by which most universities—including Rutgers—operate. Costs have escalated dramatically over the past decade in the face of dwindling state support, forcing colleges and universities to raise tuition and fees and increasingly rely on alternative funding sources. Partly in reaction to mounting student debt, state and federal legislatures and agencies have called for greater transparency and accountability at public institutions.

Meanwhile, new entrants into the higher education sector that rely on technology to reach students have generated increasing demand among students for distance and virtual learning. Changes in job market demographics, career opportunities, and areas of student interest are also redefining core disciplines.

To be successful, our strategic plan must both address the challenges and opportunities provided by the recent restructuring of higher education in New Jersey and confront the rapidly shifting nature of higher education nationally. Our ability to continue educating future leaders and attracting world-class faculty requires a proactive, collaborative, and Rutgers-wide response to the changing academic landscape.

Already Among the Great …

Rutgers already is counted among the nation’s great research-intensive universities. Out of more than 3,000 four-year colleges and universities nationwide, Rutgers is one of only 34 research-intensive public universities to earn membership in the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU) on our New Brunswick Campus.

We are strong in many areas:

- The humanities at Rutgers rank among the nation’s very best, including English, philosophy, history, fine arts, and library and information studies.
- Core sciences, particularly physics and mathematics, compete with the nation’s top universities.
- Rutgers boasts a highly diverse student population, far more diverse than at peer institutions.
- Our location offers an unparalleled range of resources—corporate headquarters, cultural institutions, shorelines and farmlands, and major metropolitan areas.
- We have a nearly 250-year history and a storied tradition of serving New Jersey and the nation.
- Our graduation rates are closing the gap with our aspirational peers.

… But Need to Catch Up with the Best

We recognize the need to benchmark ourselves against the best public AAU institutions, such as the University of Michigan, the University of California–Berkeley, and the University of North Carolina, which we consider our aspirational peers. A detailed analysis and frank assessment of data gathered during the strategic planning process make clear that Rutgers must strengthen its performance across several dimensions:

- Rutgers University–New Brunswick’s ranking has declined in recent years in four of the five most prominent ranking systems.
Some of our key undergraduate disciplines lag our peers, and several of our largest graduate disciplines—such as business, public health, medicine, law, and engineering—also rank below our peers.

Our endowment per student is one-third that of the public AAU average and one-fourth that of the best public universities—and alumni giving rates are far below these institutions.

Although nationally acclaimed in many areas, our faculty trail their peers in the AAU in scholarly metrics such as references to their published work and research expenditures per capita.

Many of the strongest New Jersey high school graduates do not consider Rutgers. Our University also struggles to attract high-achieving out-of-state students, who account for less than 10 percent of all students at the University, compared to a 23 percent average for our peers.

Steps needed to close the “quality gap” with our aspirational peers

**Academic programs**
- **Focus selectively** on strengthening key large ranked disciplines, including engineering, health and biological sciences, and business …
- … while **sustaining quality and excellence** in the humanities and the core sciences.

**Faculty**
- **Target academic excellence** in our faculty by recruiting and retaining the best individuals in strategically identified areas, supporting them for success, and creating a culture that rewards faculty productivity and faculty recognition.

**Students**
- Construct a **campus environment** that supports student social needs, enhances educational opportunities, and improves student satisfaction while encouraging academic growth and engagement.
- Enhance the **academic profile** of the student body and improve retention, graduation rates, and placement.

**Infrastructure**
- Provide **best-practice academic and administrative systems** and organizations, backed by updated technology.

As surveys during the planning process revealed, our University community recognizes the need for change. We must undertake specific initiatives to close the gap with the nation’s top public universities in four key areas: academic programs, faculty excellence, student satisfaction and performance, and infrastructure. Just as important, Rutgers must define its future based on its history, mission, and distinctiveness as a prominent national public research university.
AN ACTIONABLE, MEASURABLE, ACHIEVABLE STRATEGY

The University Strategic Plan for the New Rutgers combines an assessment of our strengths with a vision of the opportunities for improvement to create a five-year roadmap with a straightforward goal: to be broadly recognized as among the nation’s leading public universities: preeminent in research, excellent in teaching, and committed to community.

Our plan organizes initiatives along three dimensions: strategic priorities—areas that limit us and where attention is needed over the next five years; foundational elements—basic components required for future success; and integrating themes—Rutgers-wide areas of academic strength by which to coordinate initiatives along interdisciplinary and topically relevant areas.

The plan in overview

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Our plan identifies four strategic priorities. Each priority represents an area that currently limits our success and demands our institutional attention over the next five years. For each priority, our strategic plan identifies major initiatives that will improve our performance and foster a broader environment of change:

**Envision Tomorrow’s University**

In the midst of transformative changes to American higher education, our strategic planning has had to conceptualize tomorrow’s university in an effort to envision how we can become more competitive and innovative. As higher education changes, Rutgers must identify its key areas of opportunity and risk, specifically around forming internal and external partnerships, embracing technology-driven changes, and understanding how our academic structures can best be organized to meet dramatic shifts in student expectations and needs.

**Key Initiatives**

- Establish a University-wide committee to investigate the near- and long-term impact of instructional technology on our educational model.
- Charge a blue-ribbon faculty committee to examine optimal organization of Rutgers’ academic units, including the best structure for units that span multiple campuses.
- Challenge our campuses to direct resources toward strengthening disciplinary areas that are key to Rutgers’ future growth and academic reputation.
- Enhance corporate relationships through avenues such as a single, business-friendly portal of entry to Rutgers, opportunities for commercialization of faculty discoveries, and innovative public-private partnerships.

**Build Faculty Excellence**

Great universities are defined by the strength of their faculty. While many members of the Rutgers faculty are preeminent in their disciplines, our faculty trails in a number of key measures of academic achievement when compared to faculty at peer universities. We must continue to improve the quality and volume of our research and scholarship as we continue to build a diverse, world-class faculty. Rutgers must commit to aggressive recruitment, faculty support and development, the appropriate alignment of incentives, and infrastructure improvements.

**Key Initiatives**

- Recruit 150 additional tenure-track faculty in selected disciplines over the next five years.
Develop at least 30 endowed professorships for senior faculty and at least 20 new Presidential term chairs for exceptional mid-career faculty.

Build and support state-of-the-art infrastructure to advance faculty achievement and innovation and foster interdisciplinary discovery.

Strengthen graduate education programs that are integral to the work of our faculty, and review all graduate programs to assess whether some should be time-limited.

Construct the physical spaces that will enable tomorrow’s research and education.

Transform the Student Experience

The new higher education model demands renewed attention to the student experience, which can be transformed by the quality of technological support and personal guidance available to students. Rutgers’ immense size and sometimes unwieldy bureaucracy create needless challenges for students navigating University systems or trying to access educational and financial resources. Rutgers must offer a more personalized and institutionally streamlined student experience, more interaction with faculty, and effective and responsive student support systems.

Key Initiatives

- Develop signature first-year honors colleges and other personalized learning environments, such as living and learning communities, which reduce the effective scale of Rutgers and increase interactions between and among students and faculty.
- Revamp academic support services, instructional support, academic advising, and career counseling to establish a platform that best supports our students and best positions them for professional success.
- Develop new programs for the early and direct interaction of undergraduates and faculty, leading to active participation in research and the scholarly process.
- Develop programs that capitalize on our proximity to New York City, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., to enhance cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities for Rutgers students.
- Recruit top-performing students through merit-based scholarships and other programs.

Enhance Our Public Prominence

In recent years, public perception of Rutgers has not reflected the University’s true strength as New Jersey’s premier educational, research, and health care asset, and as an internationally recognized university. We must more broadly promote our unique history, our diversity, and the achievements of our faculty, students, and alumni with a disciplined, consistent, and ongoing communications program. At the same time, we need to monitor and mitigate institutional shortcomings and risks that might negatively affect our reputation.

Key Initiatives

- Execute targeted local, regional, and national marketing campaigns that address attitudes and impressions regarding Rutgers.
- Complete high-impact, short-term projects to enhance the physical appearance of our campuses.
- Create an enterprise risk management system to manage and monitor issues that present reputational risks for Rutgers.
- Transition Rutgers into the Big Ten Conference and move Athletics toward financial independence.
Foundational Elements

Five critical foundational elements representing core components of the University must be in place across Rutgers in order to make our strategic priorities and integrating themes possible. They span many areas relating to our governance, our academic and administrative departments, our institutional culture, and the financial commitments we must make. These are the prerequisites and core strengths of our future success:

**Strong Core of Sciences and Humanities**
Many of our science and humanities programs are recognized as being among the best in the nation. To ensure its reputation as a leading university, Rutgers must sustain these disciplinary strengths and renew its commitment to a strong core of research, scholarship, and undergraduate and graduate teaching in the arts and sciences.

**Key Initiatives**
- Maintain excellence in the sciences and humanities through strategic investments and faculty recruitments that emphasize academic quality rather than expanding size. Maintain faculty vigor by recruiting outstanding colleagues from peer programs, including senior thought leaders in key fields.
- Invest in infrastructure and technology to fully support primary research and scholarship.
- Reinforce the centrality of an arts and sciences core as the foundation for undergraduate education programs.
- Reward best practices in teaching and evaluation of learning in faculty evaluation processes and promotion decisions.

**Inclusive, Diverse, and Cohesive Culture**
Rutgers is renowned for the diversity of its student body, which far outpaces that of our peers, but diversity alone is not enough. The University strives for a culture of inclusiveness. We will work to create the conditions needed for all individuals and groups to enjoy full participation and inclusion in our community. We will also improve our ability to recruit, retain, and support a diverse faculty and staff.

**Key Initiatives**
- Establish a University office for diversity, equity, and inclusion and representative councils on each campus.
- Monitor the proportion of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups at each stage of the talent pipeline and report on a “diversity scorecard” to shared governance and University leadership.
- Provide directed peer mentoring for underrepresented faculty and staff.
- Model and communicate core values throughout the University administration and academic organization.

**Effective and Efficient Infrastructure and Staff**
At Rutgers, administrative processes are often inefficient and time-consuming. The University must facilitate agile responses to administrative needs and inculcate, support, and reward a
culture of excellence, collaboration, responsiveness, and accountability among its staff. We need to create and maintain an environment oriented toward student service and satisfaction.

**Key Initiatives**

- Conduct a full overhaul of our enterprise resource planning platform and provide cost-effective data center support for all critical IT functions.
- Strengthen core facilities for research and education with special attention to academic computing.
- Evaluate each major administrative division against best practices to identify cost-saving opportunities, and redesign business practices to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.
- Establish an ethos of support and service in our administrative units and nurture a culture of professional development.

**Financial Resources Sufficient to Fund Our Aspirations**

In order to compete for the best students and faculty, Rutgers must address its financial position. At a time of steady decline in State revenues, Rutgers has to augment revenues by expanding nontraditional academic offerings, developing innovative fundraising paradigms, and rethinking delivery of academic, student, and auxiliary services. At the same time, we must recover resources internally that are associated with inefficient, ineffective, or outmoded programs and redeploy these resources toward our new strategic goals.

**Key Initiatives**

- Transition to a Responsibility Center Management budgeting model to align financial incentives more closely with outcomes and increase financial transparency, accuracy, efficiency, and accountability.
- Review all centers, institutes, and centrally funded programs to assess ongoing relevance, progress, and productivity.
- Develop a streamlined contracting process for research and development interactions with our business partners in the State.
- Cultivate stronger philanthropic relationships with alumni, current students, and faculty, and enlarge our endowment through strategic investment of funds.
- Explore expanding enrollments in targeted areas, including summer and winter sessions, and at Camden and Newark.
- Create new revenue opportunities through nontraditional sources like online instruction and partnerships.
Robust Shared Governance, Academic Freedom, and Effective Communication

Rutgers strongly believes that its faculty is best positioned to add to the body of human knowledge when its members enjoy the security of academic freedom. In addition, the University must maintain its ongoing commitment to shared governance and a responsive, transparent, and communicative leadership.

Key Initiatives

- Reiterate Rutgers’ commitment to upholding academic freedom for our faculty.
- Continue to engage with existing shared governance structures in matters that affect the University community.
- Take advantage of the expertise in our faculty for guidance on formulating University policies related to academic governance and communication.
- Expand the breadth of faculty participation in, and input into, governance organizations.

Integrating Themes

The five integrating themes identified by our University community form the heart of our strategic plan and will be essential to our efforts to distinguish Rutgers among our peers in addressing some of the most pressing issues and problems of the 21st century. Building on our foundational elements and strategic priorities, these themes will integrate isolated pockets of excellence across our campuses and schools and serve as a framework for the interdisciplinary work that Rutgers values and embodies. We will seek to attract scholars of international renown with expertise in these cross-cutting areas. We will expect all Rutgers students to engage with these themes throughout their academic careers, regardless of their field of study. We will challenge our faculty to incorporate these themes into their curricula and to develop international symposia around them. These themes will also inform individual campus and school strategic plans.

To advance the five integrating themes that follow, the University will:

- Develop and convene major interdisciplinary, international symposia centered on each theme.
- Create University-wide general education courses in each area that will expose our undergraduates to the critical issues
Develop new initiatives that focus the broader charges of the various strategic priorities within the context of each integrating theme.

Cultures, Diversity, and Inequality—Local and Global
Rutgers possesses both remarkable diversity in its communities and outstanding programs and scholarship centered on diversity, equality, and migration. Today, our faculty and students are engaged in inquiries regarding these topics in forms that range from the movement of people, ideas, and resources to global health burdens shaped by cultural diversity and social inequalities. The University will leverage these strengths, as well as its unique location, to direct academic investments, inform scholarship, and connect research to community needs.

Improving the Health and Wellness of Individuals and Populations
Rutgers is now poised to build on its success in addressing a wide array of health challenges, locally and globally. Through our broad reach and interdisciplinary work, we have the resources to support initiatives to maintain and manage wellness, while moving beyond the case-by-case treatment of the individual to address challenges facing populations both in our own communities and in nations around the globe. Doing so will require a holistic approach to education, discovery, and translation across the entire health research continuum. In pursuit of this goal, RBHS will encourage interactions among institutional units within and beyond the University’s confines.

Creating a Sustainable World through Innovation, Engineering, and Technology
Nearby coastlines, metropolitan centers, transportation hubs, and industrial and natural sites, coupled with our engineering and innovation expertise, uniquely position Rutgers to explore sustainability solutions. Leveraging our prowess across critically relevant—and nationally growing—disciplines, Rutgers aspires to be a world leader in addressing sustainability challenges by conducting interdisciplinary research, educating tomorrow’s leaders, and reaching out to State, national, and global public institutions.

Educating Involved Citizens and Effective Leaders for a Dynamic World
To become involved citizens who contribute to society, students must not only gain disciplinary knowledge of contemporary issues like health care and poverty but also appreciate how this abstract knowledge plays out in the public domain. Given its location and the diversity of its student body, Rutgers is uniquely equipped to integrate disciplinary research and teaching with their real-world application in our local communities, helping students experience how ideas are tested in practice and how the work of the University has immediate, tangible, and far-reaching applicability.

Creative Expression and the Human Experience
All aspects of our educational mission are enhanced by the sociocultural literacy and cognitive flexibility that the arts and humanities teach. With our renowned school of the arts and our immediate proximity to one of the greatest cultural centers in the world, Rutgers is well positioned to integrate the creative arts into the social and intellectual life of our academic community and establish the University as an international leader in the study, practice, and performance of creative expression and in understanding its place within the human experience.
Measuring Our Progress

Successful initiatives must be actionable and accountable. In order to become a living document that drives change, a strategic plan must define the metrics used to measure progress and, ultimately, success. Our strategic plan includes a framework of assessment tools and metrics that will evaluate our progress both qualitatively and quantitatively. We have selected measurements that emphasize transparency, ease of use, and accessibility, while facilitating our ability to gather only the most relevant data. These metrics include:

- Financial indicators such as primary reserve ratio, net operating revenues ratio, and operating margin.
- Operational indices such as targeted cost savings and user satisfaction with administrative services.
- Faculty performance measures such as grant revenue, publication impact, and election to national academies.
- Reputational indicators such as trends in national rankings and media exposure.
- Student experience measures such as student satisfaction surveys and retention and graduation rates.

In conjunction with our Board of Governors, Rutgers will set specific targets and completion dates, and will assign accountability for improvement in each area of our plan.

Funding the Plan

In implementing these initiatives, we are mindful of our students’ financial burden and determined not to use tuition increases as a major source of new funds. We will seek funding from a combination of sources that include:

- Savings from increased efficiency and reduced administrative costs
- Revenue from nontraditional education
- Public-private partnerships
- Clinical care enterprises
- Increased grants and contracts
- New State investment
- Greater philanthropy among alumni and friends

In recognition of the financial realities of the University, Rutgers will be prudent in the sequence and scope of our initiatives, prioritizing them based on impact and availability of funds.
The Path Forward

Campus and RBHS Plans

Using the University Strategic Plan as a guiding framework, each campus and RBHS will develop its own strategic plan that will elaborate on the themes already touched on in the plan, and each will refine its priorities in order to develop concrete initiatives and identify the resources necessary to pursue them. The chancellors will be responsible for periodically measuring progress and adhering to timelines set by the central administration and the Board of Governors. Campus plans will be completed by the end of the 2013–2014 academic year and will rely on community collaboration, discussion, and input throughout the planning process.

A Firm Commitment

The Rutgers Board of Governors approved the University Strategic Plan on February 4, 2014. Within days, President Robert Barchi announced a series of initiatives funded through his office to kick-start implementation, including:

- New endowed professorships, term chairs, and graduate fellowships.
- Scholarships for high-performing New Jersey students.
- Blue-ribbon committee on optimal organization of academic units.
- University-wide committee on the impact of instructional technology.
- Fund to improve student advising, career counseling, and academic support.
- Assessment of University computing and IT infrastructure.

As these initiatives make clear, Rutgers is committed to action. We will demonstrate focused commitment to the University Strategic Plan and hold ourselves accountable. We will measure our progress every step of the way. We will make Rutgers a steadfast beacon of intellectual might for our students, for our State, and for our nation.

This is our plan, and our moment. We will seize the moment, together.
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<td>Engine of opportunity for families and communities</td>
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<td>Diverse metropolitan campus, proximity to NYC</td>
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**Rutgers University–New Brunswick**

- Large, land-grant, AAU campus
- Broad distinction in research and scholarship
- Physical and life sciences hub
- Comprehensive academic offerings
- International recognition in arts and humanities

**Rutgers University–Camden**

- Personalized campus environment
- High-impact civic engagement
- Distinct areas of research excellence
- Engine of opportunity for families and communities
- Educational and economic impact in South Jersey and Delaware Valley

**Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences**

- Organizationally aligned with New Brunswick
- Leader in medical, dental, and health sciences
- Clinical and research excellence
- Public/private partnerships
- Interprofessional education
- Deep engagement with community
- Collaborative programs with all three campuses
This is an abridged version of the University Strategic Plan approved by the Rutgers Board of Governors on February 4, 2014. The full plan is available at universitystrategy.rutgers.edu.