

# Summary of Departmental Discussion Responses

March 2013

## Introduction to departmental discussion synthesis

**>100 department discussion documents were received from across the 3 campuses, representing 27 Rutgers schools and colleges and the University Libraries**

**Six questions were proposed for departmental discussion:**

1. What should the aspiration(s) be for Rutgers University for the next 10+ years?
2. What are the largest opportunities for Rutgers to pursue over the next 10+ years?
3. What current strengths of the university should be leveraged in achieving the future aspiration(s) for Rutgers?
4. Which areas are most in need of improvement for Rutgers to achieve its aspiration(s)?
5. What is holding Rutgers back from reaching its aspiration(s)?
6. What are the key concerns for Rutgers as the university defines its strategy?

**The following slides synthesize key ideas and input captured**

# Summary of departmental discussion documents (I)

## **Overall, department discussions reinforced messages heard through survey, interviews, retreat**

- Faculty largely agreed on an overall direction and set of broader aims for the university, as well as select key initiatives to achieve those goals
- These goals and initiatives are consistent with input received from interviews and focus groups, and have been incorporated into the Strategic Plan framework
- Faculty voiced concerns around aspects of the strategic plan and Rutgers' ability to achieve its lofty aspirations
- Many also expressed support for the endeavor and gratitude for the opportunity to be involved

## **Opportunities similar to areas previously mentioned**

- Better leverage key existing strengths, including academic and community assets (students, faculty, alumni, and academic programs), location, and brand
- Build on momentum and further opportunities provided by integration with UMDNJ and membership in the Big 10 / CIC
- Expand collaboration with industry, with the local community, and within the university across disciplines
- Further build on globalization to expand perspectives within scholarly and research endeavors
- Enhance the quality, availability, and accessibility of education

## Summary of departmental discussion documents (II)

### **Additionally, there was agreement on major areas for improvement**

- Administrative infrastructure and bureaucracy contributing to the "RU Screw"
- Inadequate physical facilities
- Lack of coordination and unifying culture across the university
- Poor management of state, alumni, and donor relations
- Academic environment for students and faculty could be enhanced

### **Common hurdles to success and concerns for the university were identified**

- Lack of resources, poor relationship with state, absence of cohesive Rutgers identity, and culture of skepticism and resistance to change are the key hurdles to success
- Faculty were concerned about several emerging tensions, including:
  - ability to achieve both academic excellence and access
  - ability to manage tension between quality of education and focus on revenue generation
  - ability to scale and maintain quality of education while growing

# Q1. Aspirations for the next 10 years

## Summary

There was broad agreement across schools and departments that Rutgers University should aspire ***to become one of the top public research universities in the nation.***

Within the overarching objective, faculty identified further aspirations for the next 10 years:

- To achieve excellence and global recognition in all aspects of the triple mission: teaching, research, and service
- To earn distinction in scholarship for top programs within the physical and life sciences, social sciences, and humanities and in interdisciplinary studies
- To be known for world-class faculty and students
- To become a state-of-the-art university with regards to facilities and infrastructure
- To be viewed as a top choice for New Jersey students
- To become an economic engine for the region
- To partner with and serve local communities
- To identify and function as "One Rutgers"

# Q1. Aspirations for Rutgers University for the next 10 years

## Representative quotes (I)

*"Become a university recognized for excellence in undergraduate education, providing new tools for citizenship and productive lives."*

– School of Communication and Information

*"We must see ourselves as a single great university, with outstanding liberal arts, science, and professional schools, undergraduate and graduate, on all three campuses."*

– Rutgers Business School

*"Rutgers is an economic driver for the region and viewed as a valuable resource by the citizens of New Jersey as well as its government leaders."*

– School of Engineering

*"That Rutgers...becomes the university that New Jersey's best students want to attend."*

– School of Environmental and Biological Sciences

*"To have state-of-the-art physical spaces, facilities, and IT systems to support teaching, research, and community engagement."*

– School of Social Work

*"Our aspirations should extend across fields, embracing both cutting-edge scientific and technical fields as well as fundamental areas of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences."*

– Graduate School-New Brunswick

# Q1. Aspirations for Rutgers University for the next 10 years

## Representative quotes (II)

*"As 'The State University of New Jersey,' position Rutgers to be recognized as a key resource for New Jersey in addressing major state-level health, education, environmental, and social issues."*  
– School of Applied and Professional Psychology

*"To be a globally recognized as a state-of-the-art institution where faculty are encouraged to push boundaries in both research and in the classroom and where students obtain a high-quality education that prepares them for life after college."*  
– School of Business-Camden

*"Become the 'go to' expert 'capacity builder' for the private, nonprofit, and public sector industries."*  
– School of Public Affairs and Administration

*"The faculty believes that Rutgers' aspirations should center on the triple missions of the school, teaching, research, and service... each of these components should be interpreted boldly in the decade ahead."*  
– Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

*"It should...aspire to be recognized for its service commitments to the communities surrounding its three campuses."*  
– School of Law-Camden

*"Our academic programs should offer a wider range of off-campus and cross-disciplinary experiences than any other state-supported higher education institution around."*  
– School of Criminal Justice



## Q2. Opportunities for Rutgers University to pursue Summary (I)

### **Integration with UMDNJ**

- Potential for interdisciplinary collaboration and innovative learning opportunities between UMDNJ and other schools or departments within Rutgers including genomics, public health, engineering, computational biology, social work, etc.
- Opportunity to enhance reputation as a leader in the health (incl. mental health) and life sciences
- Opportunity for marketing and fundraising thrusts to seek donations from private and public sources
- Represents a natural juncture for reevaluation of organizational structure and process for collaboration / interaction between schools
- Potential opening to strengthen relations with the state government

### **Membership in the Big Ten and Committee on Institutional Cooperation**

- Opportunity to enhance the Rutgers brand and reputation in both athletic and academic spheres
- Further opportunities in the areas of fundraising, recruitment, research partnerships, etc.

### **Collaboration with local industry**

- Opportunity to leverage local industry to develop internship programs and private-public partnerships

### **Expansion of interdisciplinary collaboration**

- Pursuing cross-discipline topics and leveraging synergies by encouraging collaboration across departments and schools
- Investing in areas that span academic boundaries and are relevant to society



## Q2. Opportunities for Rutgers University to pursue Summary (II)

### **Community engagement**

- Expanding civic engagement as a learning opportunity
- Developing partnerships with state and public agencies to establish strategic programs
- Collaborating with local community colleges to better identify high-potential students
- Partnering with nonprofits to identify engagement opportunities

### **Enhancing quality, availability, and accessibility of education to meet modern day demands**

- Pursuing innovative teaching methods and formats, including expansion of online course offerings
- Partnering with community colleges to identify potential applicants
- Revising faculty performance metrics to incentivize student interaction and high-quality teaching

### **Extending global reach**

- Developing international partnerships in the capacity of recruitment, international study, research, and internship opportunities
- Expanding focus of teaching and research to encompass global perspective
- Enhancing global presence and reputation

### **Leveraging location**

- Leveraging the multifaceted diversity of the state and region to enable broad perspectives
- Better utilizing nearby metropolitan hubs to enhance the learning experience in the form of partnerships, internships, networks, etc.
- Recognizing and responding to the unique concerns of the local ecosystem to become a leader in environmental issues

## Q2. Opportunities for Rutgers University to pursue Representative quotes (I)

*"Take advantage of the emergent multicultural diversity in New Jersey and the Northeast region."  
– School of Communication and Information*

*"Strategic international partnerships with developing countries in research, graduate, and undergraduate education – especially in Brazil, China, and India."  
– Camden College of the Arts and Sciences*

*"Develop and enforce a teaching and service workload system that is conducive to scholarly productivity."  
– School of Nursing-Camden*

*"The acquisition of the medical schools and membership in the Big 10/CIC are natural vehicles for improved opportunity and recognition."  
– School of Engineering*

*"Nonprofit partners will position the university as both a co-innovator and a source for intelligence in the delivery of services to citizens."  
– School Criminal Justice*

*"We are surrounded by major industries with which far stronger relationships are possible, starting with effective communication about ongoing research and about the skills we can provide to them."  
– Graduate School-New Brunswick*

## Q2. Opportunities for Rutgers University to pursue Representative quotes (II)

*"Curriculum that is reflective of forthcoming changes in health care, health care reimbursements, and the changing student population."*

– College of Nursing

*"Rutgers has the opportunity to renew interest in the values supported within arts as forms of research...We believe it may be timely to reconsider our membership in Imagining America."*

– Mason Gross School of the Arts

*"New university administration offers fresh eyes and new perspectives and the opportunity to form new partnerships with stakeholders, especially the State of New Jersey."*

– School of Social Work

*"The university should commit to maintaining the high profile of the SAS departments and interdisciplinary programs that are generally recognized for their ability to compete with the best departments and programs throughout the country."*

– School of Arts and Sciences

*"Use the 250th anniversary to advance the Rutgers brand across the state; connect with and engage business, industry, and residents; bring more visibility to the university."*

– University Libraries

*"Take advantage of emerging global challenges in energy, the environment, and sustainability such that Rutgers is recognized as a world leader in solving these problems."*

– Newark College of Arts and Sciences

## Q3. Current strengths to leverage

### Summary

#### **Academic and community assets: students, faculty, alumni, programs**

- Diverse student body with strong academic credentials and potential
- Breadth of dedicated faculty driving excellence across all disciplines
- Top ranking academic programs and renowned institutes / research centers
- Vast network of successful alumni

#### **Positive impact on local communities and state**

- Commitment to service and civil engagement through student outreach and pro bono programs
- Contribution to state economy

#### **Location**

- Location near major metropolitan hubs as an advantage for scholarly experience, proximity to business, and quality of life
- Diversity in New Jersey and the region
- Robust local industry (e.g., pharmaceutical, financial, tech)
- Strength of local K-12 public education

#### **Rutgers brand**

- University history; legacy of strength and excellence
- Strong name recognition and reputation, particularly outside of New Jersey and globally
- Standing as the only Research I public university in the state

### Q3. Current strengths to leverage

#### Representative quotes (I)

*"Throughout the university, Rutgers already boasts scholars of diversity of national and international renown; we are poised to become an international leader in the study of diversity."*

– Newark College of Arts and Sciences

*"Few universities have as deep a presence throughout their entire home state as Rutgers does ...the university already has deep connections with and serves its surrounding communities, so [it] simply needs to promote this better."*

– School of Law-Camden

*"The vast and diverse alumni of the university provide an extraordinary resource for initiatives including fundraising, networking, recruitment, workforce development, community partnerships, etc."*

– School of Social Work

*"Maintain science and technology as core competencies, and establish a technological cluster in central New Jersey."*

– School of Management and Labor Relations

*"Rutgers' location close to major urban centers and in one of the nation's most densely populated, diverse, and complex states implies numerous opportunities to conduct research and to partner with private and public entities."*

– School of Business-Camden

*"Rutgers has a long and rich history and has shown itself capable of adaptation and self-renewal. As the university continues to evolve we can do so with pride in our long history and a sense of institutional efficacy."*

– Graduate School of Education

## Q3. Current strengths to leverage

### Representative quotes (II)

*"The shifting demographics of South Jersey present opportunities for the growth in undergraduate and graduate recruitment."*

– Camden College of Arts and Sciences

*"Engage the large number of alumni still residing in the state, many in important and influential positions, with the university and its needs/aspirations."*

– University Libraries

*"Rutgers has its world-class reputation. We are quite known for our faculty, staff, and alumni accomplishments locally, nationally, and internationally."*

– College of Nursing

*"Further strengths are embedded in the ethnic and national diversity of the university and its environs, making it attractive to a wide range of prospective faculty members and students."*

– Graduate School-New Brunswick

*"As New Jersey's premier research-intensive university, we also have the benefit of a special relationship to the state's economic and policy development agenda."*

– School of Criminal Justice

*"Our location in the country's most productive metropolitan region offers first-rate opportunities to our graduates."*

– Rutgers Business School

## Q4. Areas in need of improvement

### Summary (I)

#### **Administrative and physical infrastructure**

- IT systems – including payroll, student records, registration, OSRP, IRB, and other grant processing systems – are lacking
- Administrative processes – including hiring, purchasing, transportation, housing, and scheduling – are difficult and time-consuming to navigate
- High levels of bureaucracy and a lack of transparency
- Subpar facilities (including outdated classrooms, shortage of lab space, and poorly maintained public spaces) suffering from a lack of administrative oversight

#### **Lack of coordination across departments, schools, and campuses**

- No unifying identity / culture
- Silo mentality preventing cross-disciplinary learning environment
- Opaque resource allocation process contributes to "rivalry" between units
- Redundancies in program offerings

#### **Culture**

- Need for stronger universitywide culture of pride among students, faculty, and staff
- Alignment on need to establish a more supportive, student-oriented community
- Perception of "RU Screw" is prevalent throughout community



## Q4. Areas in need of improvement

### Summary (II)

#### **Student experience**

- Advisory / career development services can be enhanced
- Need for increased interaction with tenure-track faculty
- Availability of student resources (e.g., access to library systems, 24-hour facilities)
- Opportunities for participation in learning experiences beyond the classroom (e.g., research, internships, civic engagement) should be expanded
- Funding for graduate students is insufficient

#### **Academic environment for faculty**

- Lack of administrative and institutional support for grant application process; OSRP, technology marketing, and licensing offices are "weakly supportive"
- Promotion and evaluation metrics do not identify / reward excellence well
- Hiring policies hinder recruitment and retention of high performing faculty
- Faculty compensation is uncompetitive with other universities when cost-of-living is taken into account
- "Start-up" packages and resource budgets are inadequate

#### **Management of state, industry, alumni, and donor relationships**

- Inadequate support to manage already suffering relations with state
- Insufficient resources dedicated to interfacing with local industry (e.g., tech, pharma) to establish partnerships and secure grants
- Rutgers University Foundation and Rutgers University Alumni Association can be enhanced

## Q4. Areas in need of improvement

### Representative quotes (I)

*"A culture of inefficiency in most administrative units that are focused more on rules and procedures than helping faculty, staff, and students."*

– School of Management and Labor Relations

*"In recent history, attention to different campus needs has been varied and not at all transparent, much less linked to academic mission and institutional priorities."*

– School of Environmental and Biological Sciences

*"Lacking a shared, interwoven sense of identity, Rutgers' messaging to both internal and external stakeholders is poor."*

– Graduate School of Education

*"Rutgers needs to develop an everyday administrative capacity that is consistent with a world-class university."*

– School of Criminal Justice

*"The relatively small number of support staff available to assist faculty with everything from grants to IT problems also seriously compromises Rutgers' ability to achieve greatness."*

– Graduate School-Newark

*"Although declining state funding was and is inevitable, poor university-Trenton relations have been damaging to Rutgers for decades."*

– Graduate School of Education

## Q4. Areas in need of improvement

### Representative quotes (II)

*"For faculty, the lack of a sensible reward structure linked to performance is a major problem. Clearly, Rutgers is either unable or unwilling to adequately reward high-performing faculty."*

– School of Business-Camden

*"It is a curious reality of Rutgers that our fundraisers rarely ask faculty to participate in fundraising activities."*

– School of Arts and Sciences

*"Address tensions among the three campuses, particularly the perception of marginalization of Newark and Camden in contrast to New Brunswick."*

– School of Social Work

*"The university has long-struggled with making its administration more efficient, and President Barchi's administrative restructuring – for example, adding a New Brunswick Chancellor – is a clear step in the right direction."*

– School of Law-Camden

*"The bureaucracy and overall sentiment creates the impression that employees and students are not really a key priority for the university."*

– School of Management and Labor Relations

*"Coordination of library resources with faster and complete access to all library collections."*

– School of Nursing-Camden

## Q5. Hurdles preventing Rutgers from reaching its aspirations

### Summary (I)

#### **Insufficient resources**

- Endowment is small compared to peers
- Long-term decline in state funding for higher education
- Current fundraising approach is underperforming
- Low levels of alumni giving; no "culture of giving" among current students and alumni
- Debt associated with UMDNJ
- Building deferred maintenance backlog is a concern

#### **Poor relationship with state**

- Lack of alignment with state legislature on mission and role of state university
- Need to enhance value proposition to the state
- Insufficient awareness of the Rutgers brand and university quality

#### **Policies / infrastructure that do not support the vision**

- Unclear or nonexistent prioritization of resource allocation
- Poorly designed performance assessment system that fails to incentivize achievement
- Lack of willingness to invest in critical infrastructure
- Excessive bureaucracy resulting in perception that administration is indifferent to needs and concerns of the community

## Q5. Hurdles preventing Rutgers from reaching its aspirations

### Summary (II)

#### **Lack of shared identity and cohesion**

- Undefined Rutgers brand
- Understanding of role and identity of each campus is absent
- Need for more robust student, faculty, and staff pride in Rutgers
- Lack of common vision and coordination among campuses
- Silo mentality within schools, disciplines, and departments
- Poor internal communication

#### **Culture of skepticism and resistance to change among community**

- Academic community is slow to change and accept change
- Previous administrations have under-delivered on stated visions and plans for change

## Q5. Hurdles preventing Rutgers from reaching its aspirations

### Representative quotes (I)

*"The lack of a sustainable and replenished capital investment program is a severe hurdle to many as we aspire to be true leaders in research."  
– School of Environmental and Biological Sciences*

*"Lack of common vision and coordination across the vast university system; student / faculty pride in RU identity is often lacking."  
– School of Social Work*

*"The competition for top-tier status among public universities is fierce. There are very strong and entrenched interests to support the status quo."  
– School of Criminal Justice*

*"Insufficient funding is uniformly seen as the single most important factor holding Rutgers back. Rutgers needs to convince our state legislators that support for Rutgers is equivalent to direct support for NJ."  
– Graduate School-Newark*

*"Our university is reluctant to embrace change. This culture needs to be changed and change in this area has to stem from repeated open and honest communication, involvement of all campuses, and transparency in our dealings."  
– School of Business-Camden*

*"Lack of investment in infrastructure and deferred maintenance over decades have created spaces that are crowded, that hamper, rather than enhance teaching and learning."  
– Mason Gross School of the Arts*

## Q5. Hurdles preventing Rutgers from reaching its aspirations

### Representative quotes (II)

*"Divisiveness and unhealthy competition for resources between campuses and units."  
– School of Nursing-Camden*

*"Ineffective performance management system that undermines motivation."  
– School of Management and Labor Relations*

*"The lack of discretionary dollars is of course fundamental to many of our handicaps."  
– Graduate School-New Brunswick*

*"Rutgers has been an organization with high aspirations but small solutions; this mindset needs to change."  
– School of Communication and Information*

*"Factors holding Rutgers back include departments and programs that are not world class, facilities that are missing, such as a research fMRI on the New Brunswick campus, and facilities that are out of date."  
– School of Applied and Professional Psychology*

*"Lack of frequent self-reflection to assess competition and best practices-Rutgers must be a more nimble organization that can quickly adapt and change."  
– School of Public Affairs and Administration*



## Q6. Key concerns as the strategy is defined

### Summary

#### **UMDNJ merger**

- Concern that merger may exacerbate existing problems around identity, funding, state relations, etc.

#### **Maintaining quality of experience while expanding student body**

- Capacity issues in regards to physical infrastructure and human resources (faculty, support staff)
- Concerns that a lower student / faculty ratio and higher use of PTLs will result, diluting the Rutgers brand

#### **Tension between goals of academic excellence and accessibility**

- Need to balance aspirations of academic excellence with responsibility as New Jersey's land-grant institution
- Concerns that strength in diversity will be lost

#### **Dilution of educational priorities and values as a result of greater focus on revenue generation**

- Concerns that online course offerings will decrease educational quality

#### **Ability to realize strategic vision**

- Limited by resources, managerial oversight, and capacity to change
- Worry that bureaucracy will hamper progress and performance
- Skepticism around ability of leadership to unite community around vision and achieve faculty buy-in
- Concern that expectations will be raised without ability to deliver

## Q6. Key concerns as the strategy is defined

### Representative quotes (I)

*"Balancing responsibility as New Jersey's land-grant institution with the need to establish a national and international reputation."*

– College of Nursing

*"Ensure that growth in terms of size does not diminish quality."*

– School of Applied and Professional Psychology

*"Can we find the formula for continuing to provide an elite education to a middle-lower income student population?"*

– School of Management and Labor Relations

*"[The UMDNJ integration] presents the risk of distorting the character of the university by absorbing a disproportionate share of both funding and focus."*

– Newark College of Arts and Sciences

*"Opportunities and challenges differ in each area of the state – north, central, and south – these differences must be recognized and addressed."*

– School of Nursing-Camden

*"Rebranding to make visible our seriousness as engines of research and graduate education"*

– Graduate School-New Brunswick

## Q6. Key concerns as the strategy is defined

### Representative quotes (II)

*"Funding is a key concern for the university as it defines its strategy. The state's subsidy is declining just as the university's ambitions are growing."*

– School of Law-Camden

*"Accountability in following the strategic plan and making strategic choices at all levels; energizing faculty, staff and students, buy-in from the community."*

– University Libraries

*"Rutgers must continue to plan against the budgetary issues that have crippled other state universities."*

– Mason Gross School of the Arts

*"If teaching, service, and research are all to be equally valued, then the incentives for faculty should reflect them equally. If research is most important, then we should acknowledge that."*

– Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

*"As we invest for the next 10+ years, a key concern is how to replenish the depleted ranks of faculty and staff at Rutgers and to provide physical space and equipment that would be at least on a par with other competitive public universities."*

– School of Applied and Professional Psychology

*"Faculty are concerned that resources might be diverted to feed the insatiable needs of a few programs at the cost of other programs... that might be looked upon as cash cows."*

– School of Business-Camden