

Questions/Comments from Senate Standing Committees On the Proposal to Form a School of Graduate Studies in New Brunswick

Compiled from Committee responses submitted by 9:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 29, 2016

Academic Standards, Regulations and Admissions Committee

1. Will Graduate Assistants supported by faculty from GSBS be able to join the AAUP after the merger?
2. Given the different funding sources, how will the School of Graduate Studies be able to insure that all graduate students are treated equitably in terms of support and access to resources?
3. Why must this be done so quickly? Wouldn't it be better to develop bylaws before the new entity is formed?

Budget and Finance Committee

1. In order for BFC to evaluate the suggested merger BFC members asked see the **detailed budgets** for FY 2015 and FY 2016 of the two schools.
2. What are the services provided under the current structure of two graduate schools and what are the costs of providing these services? Please enumerate the cost and the benefits of the merger for each of one of services provided.
3. How this merger change the fundamental fiscal problems that are plaguing the graduate programs in NB and RBHS?
4. It seems that the current proposal makes no substantial changes to the current financial structure. While having a new name may be helpful, it is not clear how keeping all structures intact will strengthen the any of the existing graduate program.
5. We would like to know: What specific existing problems does this proposal address? Academic? Financial? Reputation?
How these problems will be resolved by the merger?
6. The proposal notes that one benefit will be to remove obstacles. What are they? And can they be resolved without merging?
7. What are the benefits (from the RCM budgeting viewpoint) to the proposed reporting structure to two chancellors?
8. What will be the impact of the merged unit on similar graduate schools in Camden and in Newark?
9. Will this merger lead to changes in the assessment and quality assurance of graduate programs and in the decision process for creating new programs and ending existing ones?

Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee

1. The committee wanted the Deans of GSNB and GSBS to present to the committee greater detail of the rationale and vision for the combined graduate school. The question regarded why do these units need to merge and the committee wanted greater detail on which programs will be covered by the merger.
2. The committee wanted to what impact the merger would have on graduate students, staff and faculty. The committee wanted to know whether the graduate students, staff, and faculty were aligned or non-aligned and would these be "harmonized" in the new school. (the question regarding graduate student representation is unanswered in question 4)
3. The committee raised the question about the 10 faculty in GSBS that voted against the proposal. What are the views of those opposed to the merger?
4. The committee wanted further information concerning the SGS impact on the medical and dental schools. The proposal indicated that the Deans of these schools were consulted but the proposal had limited information regarding this consultation.

Instruction, Curricula and Advising Committee

1. While we understand why "New Brunswick" is not included as part of the new school's name, having a name that appears to be all-encompassing creates an issue for Newark and Camden, who also have graduate schools.
2. We would like to see a list of the schools/programs that are included in this proposal.

While they seem to be saying everything except the professional schools, engineering is listed as one of those included. We think it would be useful to actually have the affected schools listed.

3. The question of the Bylaws seems to be a rather critical one.

As the proposal notes under "Faculty governance," GSNB and GSBS each have a separate set of Bylaws that specify faculty governance matters. The proposal indicates that forming a committee to harmonize those by-laws will be the first order of business for the new School, and that until that can be done the existing by-laws would remain in effect. We're not sure how that is going to work. Bylaw revision tends to be tedious, contentious, and prolonged. A School whose faculty is governed by two different sets of bylaws for even one year is going to find itself with a lot of problems.

There also should be a defined process for approving any revised bylaws.

4. We're not exactly sure what the list of "Common Support for all Graduate Programs" on page 3 is illustrating.
5. As funding under RCM means that funds will need to be solicited from both the New Brunswick and RBHS Chancellors, we are concerned about how these monies get pooled. Are

the "Common Support" areas covered by pooled funds, or are they coming from another, "central" source? What can be done to more equalize those areas of student financial support listed on page 4? It seems clear that while the schools are being merged, the students are not!

Research, and Graduate and Professional Education Committee

What is the financial impact on schools which are part of the larger graduate program, particularly where extant services mean redundancies? RBHS has used the RCM model for many years, and different schools within RBHS contribute to GSBS. This model was not in effect on the legacy Rutgers side. How will the new grad school be financially supported, and how are the two financial systems to be merged?

Please address how tuition allocation will be handled, given existing differences in practice between legacy Rutgers and legacy UMDNJ.

Faculty at FASN at Rutgers Newark must budget graduate student tuition in external grant proposals; this appears to also be currently the case at GSNB (as highlighted in FAQ #7). At FASN, many tenured faculty simply elect to budget for and hire post-docs as they are effectively less expensive; this erodes our ability to carry out our core mission of graduate education. Can we ensure that the resultant new tuition model currently being negotiated specifically for SGS be extended to all graduate programs at all Rutgers campuses? If not, programs at Rutgers units that do not belong to SGS, but that are of similar caliber and complement strengths to those within SGS, will be unfairly hampered in their ability to educate graduate students. This would occur by way of both budgets to external funding agencies with severely reduced non-personnel costs and higher rejection rates from those agencies due to elevated budgets, or by way of continuing to elect to budget for post-docs instead. This would put those non-SGS graduate programs at a distinct disadvantage at best.

Current fringe rates (cf. #7, page 5), are not competitive with those of our peers. The total package of graduate student costs, and not just the salaries, should be addressed. Currently it costs \$75,000 per year to support a PhD student in Engineering

The proposal states that "Professional practice doctoral and master's degrees will not be housed in SGS. Professional degrees will continue to be supported and awarded by the individual professional schools." For a professional school whose program is currently part of GSNB (e.g. SC&I), can you confirm that the program would remain in the new SGS even though the school is technically a professional school? Perhaps the Proposal should explicitly state that all programs that are currently part of GSNB will be part of the new SGS.

Will the combined MD/MPH programs be impacted by this proposal? The School of Public Health is not in the GSBS, but is run out of the School of Public Health (i.e. outside RBHS), and not the graduate school.

What does naming the new school, the "School for Graduate Studies," suggest for the Graduate School - Rutgers Newark? If external communities see a School of Graduate Studies for Rutgers,

there is concern it will provide confusion around where and how the Graduate School - Rutgers Newark (and presumably the Graduate School –Rutgers Camden), fit within the system.

What are possible means of enabling students and faculty who are part of the Graduate School- Rutgers Newark to benefit from this arrangement? My interpretation of the proposal is that there are a number of exciting opportunities that might emerge for students and faculty who are part of the schools that are looking to merge, we would like to explore ways that our students and faculty can also benefit from some of the opportunities - as they too are Rutgers graduate students and Rutgers graduate faculty. Note this question may also apply to Camden graduate programs.

It would be desirable to have more graduate student involvement in the plan, beyond GSA involvement. Would it be possible to solicit input from the grad programs, and particularly once the merger has gone into effect. Announce the change beyond the GSA so that all grad students are aware of the change and the financial ramifications beyond travel awards. An outline of plans regarding travel awards, including how the amounts will change and how the awards will be distributed, would be helpful.

Have the online PhD programs (for example, School of Health Professions) been factored into the model?

How does this merger impact the admission of departmental faculty into the Graduate School, where requirements differ?

Student Affairs Committee

Will the student information systems be merged when the schools are merged? Currently, the GSBS students are on the Banner System and GSNB students are on RUTADMIN.

University Structure and Governance Committee

Discussion centered around the following themes:

Membership: Page 10. Question 21: How will faculty reappointments, promotions, or other personnel matters be handled? N/A Why is the question not applicable? How would membership in SGS be determined? What is the procedure across multiple units under multiple chancellors, how will appointments/memberships be handled in this proposal? How will you harmonize membership process?

Harmonizing By-Laws: Page 4. Question 5: Will faculty from all of the current GSBS and GSNB graduate programs have input in governance of the new SGS? Harmonization of bylaws tend to be more complicated and contentious than might be expected. There are always differences in culture and expectation. Why not have draft by-laws done ahead of time?

Branding/Identity: Page 6. Question 13. Why is “New Brunswick” being removed from the name of the new graduate school? Have you conferred with the other graduate schools (Camden and

Newark) regarding this aspect and what were their concerns if any? How does removing the descriptor "New Brunswick" specifically impact the graduate schools in Camden and Newark? Stakeholders: Page 10. Question 26: What other stakeholders might be involved and/or impacted? What stakeholders have GSNB consulted and communicated with? Please elaborate on how both GSNB and GSBS have communicated or consulted with students and alumni?

From Individuals:

Adam Kustka: Faculty at FASN at Rutgers Newark must budget graduate student tuition in external grant proposals. I understand this is also currently the case at GSNB (as highlighted in FAQ #7). At FASN, many tenured faculty simply elect to budget for and hire post-docs as they are effectively less expensive; this erodes our ability to carry out our core mission of graduate education.

Can we ensure that the resultant new tuition model currently being negotiated specifically for SGS be extended to all graduate programs at all Rutgers campuses? If not, programs at Rutgers units that do not belong to SGS, but that are of similar caliber and complement strengths to those within SGS, will be unfairly hampered in their ability to educate graduate students. This would occur by way of both budgets to external funding agencies with severely reduced non-personnel costs and higher rejection rates from those agencies due to elevated budgets, or by way of continuing to elect to budget for post-docs instead. This would put those non-SGS graduate programs at a distinct disadvantage at best.

James Oleske: I also have some questions on the impact of these changes on MD and PHD collaborative arrangements, teaching and research at NJMS Rutgers. There are combined MD/MPH programs. Will these be impacted? I have experienced the benefit and advantages of collaboration with my PHD colleagues at NJMS Rutgers. Will these changes negatively impact on cross collaboration between MDs and PHDs at current school sites?

Kyle Farmbry: I would like to register some concerns:

1. The name of the proposed school: What does naming the new school, the "School for Graduate Studies," suggest for the Graduate School - Rutgers Newark? If external communities see a School of Graduate Studies for Rutgers, I fear it will provide confusion around where and how the Graduate School - Rutgers Newark (and presumably the Graduate School -Rutgers Camden), fit within the system.
2. What are possible means of enabling students and faculty who are part of the Graduate School-Rutgers Newark to benefit from this arrangement? My interpretation of the proposal is that there are a number of exciting opportunities that might emerge for students and faculty who are part of the schools that are looking to merge, we would like to explore ways that our students and faculty can also benefit from some of the opportunities - as they too are Rutgers graduate

students and Rutgers graduate faculty. (Does Camden have the same question regarding how to link this proposed School of Graduate Studies with opportunities for its graduate students?).

Jan Ellen Lewis: I value and applaud the efforts of Deans Kukor and Scotto to develop a more reasonable tuition model and would want it to be applicable across the system. (I am not sure that this particular issue has direct bearing on the matter before this committee; I would have the same concerns if any graduate unit were able to negotiate tuition rates in this way for their own units rather than the entire system. Or to put it more positively, policies such as this should be system-wide.)