

**Proposal**

**Title:** The Merger of the Rutgers College of Nursing –Newark & New Brunswick and the Rutgers School of Nursing – Newark.

**Proposed Name:** The Rutgers School of Nursing

**Date Effective:** July 1, 2014

Background: The 2012 legislative action of the State of New Jersey merged legacy University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) into Rutgers University and formed the new unit, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS), a unit that has facilities across the State of New Jersey. As a health care education, research, and clinical division at Rutgers University, RBHS comprises most of the units of the former UMDNJ, which was dissolved under the 2012 statute, several existing Rutgers units with key health-related missions, and two research units that historically were jointly operated by Rutgers and UMDNJ.

The legislative act also specified that the Rutgers College of Nursing would become part of RBHS, creating the unique situation of having two nursing programs within one mile of each other in the city of Newark.

President Robert Barchi, on his arrival, expected that the three existing nursing schools in existence as part of Rutgers University or UMDNJ would merge. Accordingly, the three deans of the nursing schools, Susan W. Salmond, EdD, RN, ANEF, FAAN (School of Nursing-Newark), William Holzemer, RN, PhD, FAAN (College of Nursing), and Joanne P. Robinson, PhD, RN, GCNS-BC, FAAN (School of Nursing-Camden), met with Rutgers Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Richard L. Edwards to discuss a merger of all three schools. The initial concept was to create one nursing school with three distinct campuses, which would allow for greater unification and efficiency and eliminate redundancy. However, Dean Robinson, as well as the Camden Chancellor, did not support the merger. Following this meeting, President Barchi decided that the Camden-based School of Nursing (now identified as Rutgers School of Nursing-Camden) would remain separate, but that the College of Nursing and School of Nursing would merge.

**Specific Proposal:** We propose to merge the Rutgers College of Nursing (Newark and New Brunswick) and the Rutgers School of Nursing (legacy UMDNJ) into one Rutgers School of Nursing effective July 1, 2014. The rationale for this request is as follows:

- Unified we will be able to serve the people of the State of New Jersey more effectively and efficiently;
- Unified we will be able to contribute to improving health outcomes through our preparation of nurses, research on health matters, and service to communities;
- Unified we will have the depth and breadth to become one of the nation's leading Schools of Nursing, offering a broad array of academic programs;
- Unified we will have the capacity to participate in interprofessional training and practice, providing high quality of care for the citizens of New Jersey; and,
- Unified we will have the resources required to contribute significantly to nursing science and patient care research.

- The School and College offer the same degrees (bachelors, masters, doctor of nursing practice, and PhD). Further, there is significant overlap in course offerings.

The Vision: The Rutgers School of Nursing is known for the quality of its faculty, academic programs and alumni; its research, service and educational programs contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of diverse populations and enhancing patient safety and quality across all health care settings.

The Mission: To educate students, improve patient care through advancing the discipline of nursing through research and scholarship, provide service responsive to the health care needs of multicultural populations; and demonstrate local, national, and international leadership in informing health care outcomes. This mission reflects the beliefs of the faculty and provides direction to the curricula of the baccalaureate, the master's, and the doctoral nursing programs, as well as to the continuing education and Educational Opportunity Fund programs. The School's mission and goals are congruent with the University's tripartite mission of education, research, and service.

Challenges of Merger: The College of Nursing and the Rutgers School of Nursing – Newark utilize separate legacy budgeting systems, multiple faculty and staff unions, differences in expected workloads, and differences in appointment and promotion criteria. These areas are currently being addressed as quickly as possible during this period of transition for the entire university.

The two nursing programs have significant commonality in the programs offered to students, clinical service projects in the community, and ongoing research activities.

The merged School will approximately double the number of students, faculty, and staff in each of the two existing entities and be comparable to some of the larger nursing programs such as those at the University of Michigan, Indiana University, and the University of Illinois. Drs. Holzemer and Salmond believe that most existing personnel will be needed in the new structure, given the doubling in size of each existing program. They anticipate utilizing a budget neutral approach in the first year; they then will assess any need for realignment in subsequent years.

Summary of Work to Date: All faculty members have been involved in all aspects of the restructuring process. The process included a joint two-day strategic planning retreat, which included both faculty, where faculty explored a vision for the future and potential governance structure models. Harmonization committees from both schools were formed and have been working for several months to bring the academic programs into similar titles, numbering, learning objectives, and learning outcomes. This work is nearly completed. One joint faculty meeting has been held and two more have been scheduled for this year. Faculty will vote on adopting the structure and harmonized curriculum. The votes and recording of the votes are performed separately by the two faculty since they have not officially merged. Separate voting on curriculum issues by tenure and non-tenure has not occurred in the past for either school and did not occur in votes related to curriculum as part of the merger.

The harmonization committee meetings focused on academic programs and courses to bring our two curricula into alignment. We have successfully harmonized course titles and learning outcome objectives so that curricula are aligned for each of our degree programs. We are prepared to go live with one academic program for fall, 2014. We have almost completed preparing our web sites, admissions procedures, etc. to present a common front to prospective students. Students graduating in May 2014 will receive a diploma from their respective school. For all graduations to follow, students will

receive a diploma from the new entity. Further, we have developed a teach-out program for students who might be at different stages in their programs so that no students will be harmed by these decisions.

We propose the following unified academic programs to be offered as of July 1, 2014.

Academic degree programs offered by merged School of Nursing (legacy UMDNJ) and  
College of Nursing, effective July 1, 2014

**Entry to Practice  
Programs**

Generic BSN  
Accelerated BSN  
RN to BSN  
(Baccalaureate)

**DNP (MS) Specialties/  
Advanced Practice**

DNP Programs (post BS/BSN)

PNP  
ANP/GNP Primary Care  
ANP/GNP Acute Care  
FNP  
FNP/ER  
Leadership  
Women's Health  
Psych/Mental Health

Post-Master DNP Programs

Leadership  
On-line  
Executive Program  
Clinical (e.g. Psych/Mental Health)

MS Programs:

Midwifery  
Nurse Anesthetist  
Leadership-Management  
Informatics

Areas of Sub Specialization

\*HIV/AIDS

Teach-out only –no new admissions

Leadership-Clinical  
Community  
Education

**PhD Programs**

Nursing Science  
  
Urban Health  
Systems

Background information for each degree program and the progress to date on curricula integration are described below.

**Baccalaureate:** The College of Nursing has a large generic baccalaureate program and a small 2<sup>nd</sup> degree program. The 2<sup>nd</sup> degree students at the College are integrated into the generic courses. The School has a large 2<sup>nd</sup> degree program and does not offer the generic program.

A joint baccalaureate committee met informally in the Fall of 2013 and officially in January of 2013. The committee was charged with harmonizing the curricula. To date the following have been achieved:

- Revised admission requirements: recommended by the baccalaureate harmonization committee. Faculty members from both programs have voted to approve the new admission criteria.
  - Added prerequisite courses: interprofessional communication, nutrition, and lifespan growth and development
  - Changed required GPA from 3.0 to 3.3 (3.3 was the mean score of UMDNJ BSN admits and the requirement for College of Nursing).
- Joint committee recommendations regarding 2<sup>nd</sup> degree program:
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> degree baccalaureate program should be a distinct cohort of students and not integrated with generic students.
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> degree program should be offered on both the Newark and New Brunswick campuses.
    - Admissions are now being accepted for 2<sup>nd</sup> degree bachelors students for both campuses.
- Course Plan: The overall course plan for the generic and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree programs are similar. Legacy UMDNJ had 17 courses and College of Nursing had 15 courses.
  - A joint faculty committee recommended the elimination of one legacy UMDNJ course with integration of that content into two other courses.
    - This was voted upon by both faculties and approved.
  - The program plans for the generic and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree programs vary slightly with a 62 and 61 course credit load. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree program, 62 credits are dispersed across 16 courses. For the generic program, 61 credits are dispersed across 15 courses. This will remain the program plan until a complete curriculum revision can be undertaken by faculty.
- Courses: At the baccalaureate level (both 2<sup>nd</sup> degree and generic): A joint committee of faculty was formed for each of the 15 overlapping courses. Committees were charged with reviewing and “harmonizing” the Title, Course Description, Course Objectives and Course Outcomes.
  - The purpose of the harmonization was not to do a full curriculum revision but for there to be dialog and agreement among faculty as to how the courses from both programs can be slightly adapted so that common syllabi can be shared.
  - The joint faculty committees have completed reviews of 80% of the courses and made recommendations for revisions.
    - The proposed revisions are currently being reviewed by a joint curriculum committee.
    - After approval by the joint curriculum committee, the revised syllabi will be voted upon at a joint March faculty meeting.
- Impact: There will be a teach-out of the old curriculum by both the School of Nursing and the College of Nursing. New course syllabi will be used beginning Fall 2014. This will be totally seamless by students as the changes are not content-specific.

#### **Masters:**

- NP Programs: Legacy UMDNJ School of Nursing has five masters level NP programs (and some joint programs that combined specialty). Rutgers College of Nursing offers the same NP programs, but at the DNP level. Legacy UMDNJ School of Nursing had plans to transition these programs to the DNP level in one-two years. Consequently, the decision was made that the merger would be an ideal time to make this move.

- The existing website clearly indicates that these masters programs are transitioning to the DNP.
- The last admissions to the nurse practitioner masters programs was for the Spring 2014 term.
- Remaining Masters level programs:
  - Informatics: the curriculum remains the same. This program was only offered by the School of Nursing.
  - Midwifery: will admit an MSN cohort for Fall 2014 and transition to the DNP level for the 2015-16 academic year.
  - Anesthesia: will admit an MSN cohort for Fall 2014 and transition to the DNP level for the 2015-16 academic year.

#### **Doctor of Nursing Practice:**

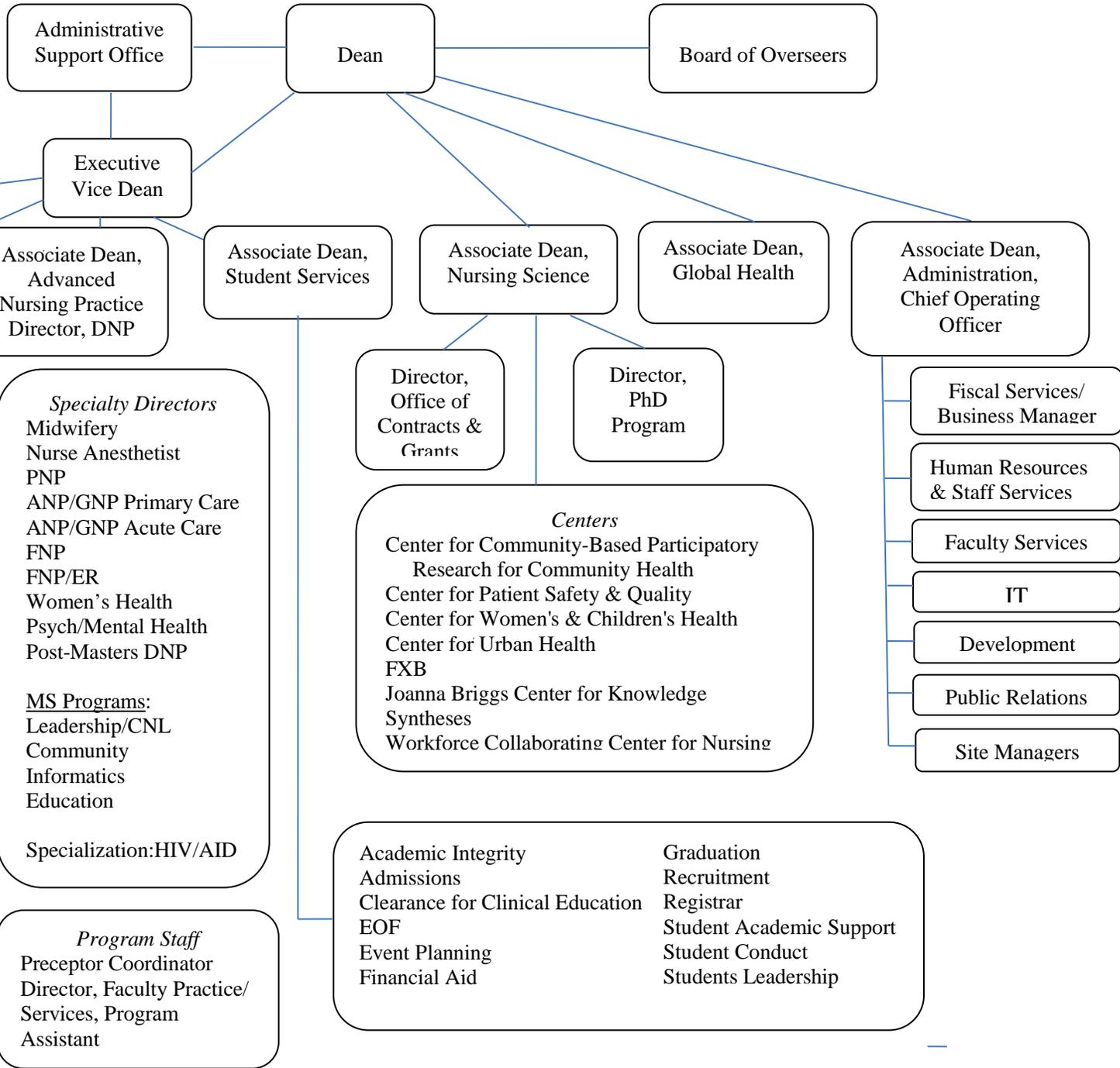
- Admission Requirements: The harmonization committee examined the admission requirements for the DNP from both schools. Recommendations for changes included: eliminate the requirement for GRE (was a college requirement), reduce the number of letters of reference from three to two, and recommend an interview for students with GPAs < 3.25 and > 3.0.
  - The admission requirement changes were presented at a joint faculty meeting and approved.
- Core Course Plan: Both the College of Nursing and School of Nursing have existing DNP programs, with some similarities. A joint committee from the School and College examined the core courses and made recommendations for changes to the DNP Core.
  - The revised DNP Core plan was presented to the joint faculty in January 2014 and the Core plan was approved by both faculty groups.
  - Students currently in the program will be taught out with their respective core requirement on admission. Students entering in fall of 2014 will have a curriculum plan based on the new Core.
- Course Changes: A harmonization committee consisting of faculty from the School and College was formed for each course at the DNP level.
  - The committees have completed their work and submitted revised courses.
  - The courses are being reviewed at the curriculum committee level.
    - The courses will be presented to faculty at the February and March faculty meetings for approval.

Both the School of Nursing and College of Nursing are currently accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), which documents that both schools meet all the standards set by the accrediting body. The new curricula will meet all CCNE requirements.

Faculty committees will continue to meet. Faculty will vote on these merged programs and common curricula in February/March 2014.

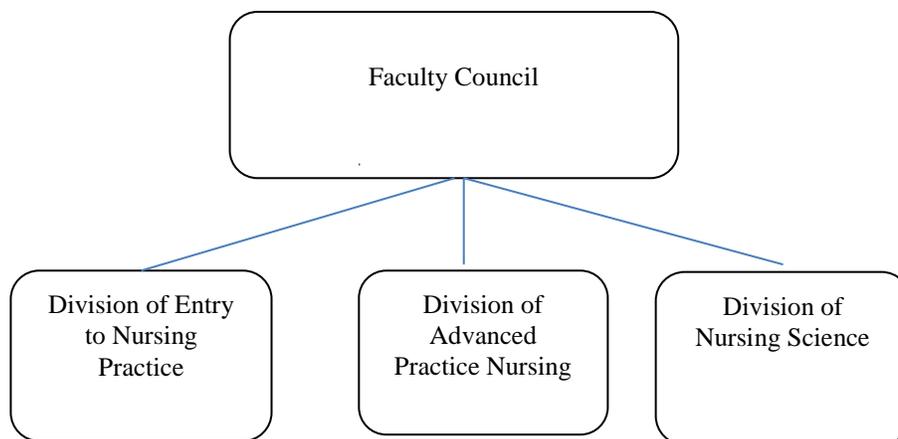
We have developed a proposed administrative structure that is presented next.

Rutgers College of Nursing  
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Faculty: Currently, the School of Nursing operates with three departments and the College of Nursing operates as a department of the whole. At the joint faculty retreat and subsequent joint faculty meeting, different options on how to organize the faculty were considered and discussed.

We have developed a faculty structure that flows from the organizational structure for the new entity that will go into effect on July 1, 2014. Rather than adopt a departmental structure, we propose to adopt a structural or programmatic organizational structure. The school will function in three major areas: Entry to Baccalaureate Nursing Education, Advanced Practice Nursing, and Nursing Science. Faculty members have voted on and approved this structure.



The new School of Nursing plans to operate with two separate AAUP contracts until negotiations have been completed and this issue has been resolved at the University level. School leadership and faculty believe that the contracts are sufficiently similar to prevent this from being a concern. Further, Drs. Holzemer and Salmond will work with faculty members, academic affairs, and union representatives to administratively manage differences. For assignment of newly hired faculty, guidance will be provided by the legacy of the vacancy, with decisions made on a case-by-case basis as needed. Note that RBHS is developing standardized appointment, reappointment, and promotions procedures for all RBHS schools, consistent with Rutgers procedures, which will go into effect in 2014-15.

Proposed Name: We propose the name **Rutgers School of Nursing**, in order to be parallel to the Schools Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, etc. We recognize that there is a Rutgers-Camden School of Nursing.

The new school will be housed in both Newark and New Brunswick. In fact, a charge to the new school by President Barchi and Executive Vice President Edwards has been to grow the presence of the program in New Brunswick. The generic baccalaureate program has been offered on both campuses and will continue to be offered. A new 2<sup>nd</sup> degree baccalaureate program will be offered on the New Brunswick campus. Applications are currently being accepted.

Expansion has been based on an assumption that there would be space for this expansion in New Brunswick. To date this has not yet happened.

Profile of the combined faculty by titles in the Rutgers School of Nursing on July 1, 2014.

**Total Faculty: N=103** (effective July 1, 2014)

<b>Tenured/Tenure Track (N=37; 36%)</b>	<b>Non-tenure/Clinical Track (n=66; 64%)</b>
Distinguished Professor (n=3)	
Professor (n=7)	Clinical Professor (n=5)
Associate Professor (n=5; tenured)	Clinical Associate Professor (n=10)
Associate Professor (n=4; not tenured)	Clinical Assistant Professor (n=31)
Assistant Professor (n=18)	Clinical Instructor (n=20)

Part-time lecturers (PTL, College of Nursing) and adjunct faculty (School of Nursing) are important components of the faculty in both programs. The number of PTLs/adjuncts varies by term but, generally, it is estimated that there are approximately twice the number of PTLs/adjuncts as full-time faculty. PTLs/adjuncts teach one course whereas full-time faculty teach multiple courses per term.

All PTLs and adjunct faculty are at least MS-prepared nurses currently working in practice within a healthcare organization that agrees to take up to ten students for a clinical experience in a topical area such as medical-surgical nursing or pediatrics. PTLs and adjunct faculty are clinically competent and current and provide extremely important clinical training for students.

**Total Students: N= 1,834** (effective December 18, 2013)

	<b>College of Nursing</b>	<b>School of Nursing</b>
Undergraduates	517	264
Graduates MS/DNP	212	749
PhD	47	48
Total	776	1,058
<b>Grand Total: 1,834</b>		

(Stratford students not included)

Costs: We are not able to estimate the costs of the merger because our existing programs operate under two different financial accounting systems. However, we are confident that both programs have adequate reserves to manage all unanticipated costs.

#### **Policies and Procedures:**

We are working with all units of Rutgers University as they merge various policies and procedures that deal with faculty appointment and promotion, staff union issues, academic calendars, payroll systems, faculty contracts, student integrity policies, faculty integrity policies, and others.

We are also working on merging many other areas of work that include, but are not limited to:

- Combining two alumni associations
- Combining two honor societies for nursing (Sigma Theta Tau, International)
- Recruitment activities for students and faculty
- Event planning
- Enrollment planning
- Development and fund and friend raising
- Merging two administrative structures

This change will require a substantive change document submitted to the 3 accrediting agencies. This will be completed prior to the July 1, 2014 deadline.

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February 20, 2014