

Rutgers University Senate

Report of the University Structure and Governance Committee on Charge A-1102A: Proposal for New School of Nursing–Camden

Charge: Discuss, document findings, and make recommendations on the Proposal to Establish a School of Nursing at Rutgers-Camden. Discuss with Camden Chancellor Pritchett or his representative, who will attend your March 2011 meeting, any questions or concerns you may have relating to the proposal. Also, include in your deliberations advice from the three Senate committees instructed in Charge A-1102. Decide if the Senate should endorse establishment of this new school. By April 1, 2011, prepare and send to the Senate Executive Secretary your advice, findings, and recommendations on the proposal, which will be forwarded to the Senate Executive Committee to docket for Senate action. Respond to Senate Executive Secretary (for the Senate Executive Committee) no later than April 1, 2011.

Background: In January 2011, Executive Vice President Furmanski submitted to the Chair of the Rutgers University Senate a proposal to transform the Department of Nursing in Camden into an independent School of Nursing. At its next meeting, the Executive Committee decided to charge the University Structure and Governance Committee (USGC) as shown above, and also charged the Budget and Finance Committee, Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee, and Research and Graduate and Professional Education Committee as follows:

S-1102: At the February 2011 committee meeting, discuss the Proposal to Establish a School of Nursing at Rutgers-Camden. Discuss with Camden Chancellor Pritchett or his representative, who will attend your committee meeting, any questions or concerns you may have relating to the proposal, from the perspective of your committee's standing charge. By March 7, 2011, prepare and send to the Senate Executive Secretary your advice, findings, and recommendations on the proposal, which will be forwarded to the University Structure and Governance Committee so it can prepare its own response on this matter immediately after its discussions at its March 2011 meeting. Respond to Senate Executive Secretary (for the Senate Executive Committee) no later than March 7, 2011.

At its February meeting, the USGC discussed the proposal documents (see attached); it also decided to invite Nursing faculty in Newark and New Brunswick, and in Camden to submit comments on the proposal. Chancellor Pritchett and his team attended the February meetings of the Budget and Finance Committee, Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee, and Research and Graduate and Professional Education Committee to assist them in responding to their charges, and attended the March meeting of the USGC to present the proposal and to answer questions. In addition, the USGC had available for its deliberations in March the written reports of the above committees (see attached), supported by representatives of those committees who made themselves available to present their reports and to answer questions. The feedback obtained from Nursing Faculty was also made available anonymously.

Considerations: As can be seen from their reports, the three committees considering the proposal prior to the USGC all expressed concerns and reservations, and all expressed some measure of support. In brief:

- the Budget and Finance Committee concluded:
The BFC recommend that Rutgers University expand its role in providing high quality academic/professional education to nurses. At this stage and age when the State of New Jersey's support is decreasing, this new school of Nursing, like other professional

schools, should be funded in a sound way so that it will not become a financial burden on the limited resource available to the Camden Campus.

- the Faculty and Personnel Affairs Committee concluded:
The sense of the meeting was that the need for enhancing nursing education in southern New Jersey is real, that local politicians desire such an autonomous school and that, despite its size, the proposed SNC probably will prove viable. The committee recognized the fervent desire of the administration and faculty of Rutgers-Camden for an autonomous School of Nursing in Camden, independent of the College of Nursing in Newark. It is not clear to several members that this is the best way to proceed; however the final vote was to recommend to the USGC approval of the proposed school.
- the Research and Graduate and Professional Education Committee concluded:
In considering if this School should be established, the RGPEC would like to see a survey conducted concurrent with the possible establishment of the School of Nursing to assess the viability of a single unified School across all campuses. The results of this survey should be reported back to the RGPEC with the results within one year to assess if this is a feasible option. For the undergraduate level of education, the Committee agrees with the expansion to a School of Nursing. This will further the excellence of the established program and will allow additional students to be admitted to the program. We have some reservations about the Masters and Ph.D. programs The Committee looks forward to assessing proposals for these programs when the time is appropriate. We, the Rutgers Senate Research and Graduate and Professional Education Committee endorse the establishment of the Camden School of Nursing as a new undergraduate school within the university.

Feedback obtained by the USGC from Nursing faculty in Camden was overwhelmingly supportive of the formation of a new, independent School of Nursing in Camden. Feedback from Nursing faculty in Newark and New Brunswick was supportive of transforming the Department into a School, but there was a strong feeling that a single combined school serving all three campus locations would be both more appropriate and more cost-effective.

Key items of the testimony provided by Chancellor Pritchett and his team at the USGC meeting in March included:

- the prevailing political climate is such that there WILL be an independent School of Nursing in South Jersey – if not at Rutgers, then at another University, probably Rowan
- though there can be no guarantees, discussions indicate that there are significant prospects for obtaining external funding for a School of Nursing in South Jersey – but though there may be room for more than one School of Nursing in South Jersey, only the first mover will likely obtain this funding
- all the local hospital facilities are supportive of Rutgers making this move now and we already have good collaborative relations with them
- delaying until Rutgers has more Nursing faculty in Camden will itself make it harder to recruit new faculty
- although a three-year financial roll-out was provided with the proposal, more recent analysis on a five-year basis (not made available to the USGC) is more favorable.

The USGC, too, concluded that endorsement of the proposal was appropriate, though during its deliberations, members of the USGC expressed a number of concerns, including:

- the existing faculty is small and the existing tenured faculty is very small
- the proposal indicates that there is a current and even greater future shortage of nurses in NJ; conversely, press reports within the last year (e.g., in the Star Ledger) indicate that

supply currently exceeds demand in the Northern NJ/New York area; if nothing else, this suggests that formation of a new School in response to demand may not be time-critical

- if the future shortage of nurses in NJ is as great as the proposal suggests, there appears to be ample scope for multiple Schools of Nursing in NJ, and even in South Jersey, and no apparent necessity for Rutgers to act now so as to pre-empt similar moves by competitors
- so far as the USGC is aware, the financial models supporting this proposal have not been subject to independent review and the Senate and the UGSC have not yet been provided with the latest versions; we strongly request disclosure of any new information, business plans or milestones that the Senate should be informed of in the creation of the school
- the USGC initially believed that the financial shortfall predicted for the School of Nursing in the short/medium term would be entirely absorbed within the overall budget for Rutgers Camden, but now understands from the presentation at its meeting by the Camden team that this is not the case
- it will be important to ensure that the formation of a new School of Nursing in Camden does not lead to excessive competition for public and private funding within Rutgers, or to loss of faculty, students, funds, or other resources from the existing school in Newark and New Brunswick to the newly formed school, and it will be vital to ensure that the university provides adequate support for the development of the existing school in Newark and New Brunswick
- although it is important to develop graduate programs and research on a timely basis, plans for the graduate programs in the new school are less well developed than plans for undergraduate programs, and it is important to be clear that support for the formation of a new School of Nursing does not imply endorsement of plans for graduate education in their existing form
- the recent New Jersey Higher Education Task Force criticized duplication within Rutgers, it is not clear that all possible avenues for operating a single combined School of Nursing have been explored – for instance, if it proved impractical for a single Dean to manage all three campuses effectively, Executive Associate Deans with hiring authority on each campus reporting to a single Dean might be a possibility
- nevertheless, creation of a new independent school now need not preclude eventual merger
- following the report of the recent New Jersey Higher Education Task Force, potential future merger of Rutgers with UMDNJ is a significant factor that should be considered in deciding how to extend Rutgers' involvement in the education of nurses, and the current proposal does not reflect this
- political will for the creation of an independent School of Nursing in South Jersey would not create a practical obstacle to Rutgers going ahead even if another university establishes a School first – though loss of a unique funding opportunity would clearly be unfortunate; nevertheless, it is important that the Senate's recommendations be based on what is best for Rutgers as a whole, recognizing political realities, but avoiding undue deference to regional sensitivities that might favor one campus over another
- although the administration previously announced its intention to develop nursing in Camden, and has been working hard on this proposal for some time, the Senate and its committees have had very little time to examine the proposal in detail, and limited opportunity to obtain independent evidence in support of, or contrary to, the administration's arguments; the USGC has been told very clearly that feared competition from Rowan has not been a driver of the haste in which the Senate is considering this proposal – yet, at the same time, potential loss of funding opportunities if we do not act before Rowan has repeatedly surfaced in arguments in favor of proceeding now rather than waiting to grow the faculty within the existing department before a new School is formed.

Recommendation: The University Structure and Governance Committee recommends adoption of the following resolution by the University Senate:

Whereas the Senate expresses concern that limited time was available for detailed consideration of the Proposal to Establish a School of Nursing at Rutgers-Camden; and

whereas the Senate expresses concern that the existing faculty is small, that university support for a new school that does not immediately operate profitably should not be permitted to constrain resources available to other units within the university, that plans for graduate programs are not yet fully developed, that support for a new school should not impair support for the existing school in Newark and New Brunswick, that the implications for this proposal of a potential merger of Rutgers with UMDNJ are unknown, and that the viability of a new school in the future is uncertain at this time, so that merger with the existing school may need to be considered if events do not unfold as planned; and

whereas it is desirable to enable Rutgers to become a major force in local and regional health care and a sustainable center of excellence in nursing education, research, and service for the people of southern New Jersey and the Delaware Valley and beyond, to enhance our intellectual, professional, urban, public service, and global missions, and to increase our impact and influence in southern New Jersey

be it therefore resolved that the Senate endorses the Proposal to Establish a School of Nursing at Rutgers-Camden.

University Structure and Governance Committee, 2010–2011

Peter Gillett, RBS:N/NB (F), Chair – Executive Committee Liaison

John Aspray, SAS-NB (S)

Christopher Binetti, GS-N (S)

Daniel Bubb, At-Large Camden (F)

Jaishankar Ganesh, SB-C Dean (A)

Yuan Gao, NCAS (F)

Richard Gomes, PTL-N (F)

Marc Holzer, SPAA Dean (A)

James Hughes, EJBSPPP Dean (A)

Paul Leath, SAS-NB (F)

Charles Maher, GSAPP (F)

Jody Miller, SCJ (F)

Naftaly Minsky, SAS-NB (F)

Daniel O'Connor, SC&I (F)

Jon Oliver, Associate Director of Information Technology

Rebecca Pero, SAS-NB (S)

Joseph Potenza, SAS-NB (F)

Robert Puhak, FAS-N (F)

Jorge Reina Schement, SC&I Dean (A) - Administrative Liaison

Rayman Solomon, Law-Camden Dean (A)

Kenneth Swalagin, Senate Executive Secretary

Andrew Yu, Law-N (S)