

## **Faculty engagement and satisfaction with the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School: the Association of American Medical Colleges survey**

Rutgers University Senate  
Faculty Affairs and Personnel Committee  
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### **Background**

In the three years between 2016 and 2019, thirty four medical schools, including Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) commissioned a survey to the Association of American Medicine Colleges (AAMC) to gauge the level of faculty engagement and satisfaction. The survey consisted of items that measure faculty engagement and that assess workplace factors that may impact faculty engagement (e.g., satisfaction with faculty-related institutional policies and practices). Results for each School are compared with the average of the cohort of medical schools surveyed during the same 3-year period, using the same survey instrument.

The results of the survey for the RWJMS, were recently disclosed and they provide an alarming picture of the morale of the faculty. While the RWJMS faculty demonstrate a satisfaction with retirement and health benefits similar to that of other medical school faculties, in EVERY OTHER domain, the RWJMS level of dissatisfaction is markedly higher compared to cohort. The overall satisfaction of the faculties with the RWJMS is 52% compared to 68% of the cohort (a negative differential of 16 points). Faculty satisfied with faculty recruitment and retention are 40% at RWJMS compared to 63% for the cohort. Only 49% RWJMS faculties are satisfied with workplace culture compared to 68% cohort. The governance of the medical school satisfies 31% RWJMS faculties compared to 49% of the cohort. Indeed, only 53% of RWJMS faculties would recommend working at their school compared to 72% of the cohort, and only 59% of RWJMS faculties would again chose to work in the school compared to 78% of the cohort. Only 43% of the RWJMS faculty, compared to 58% of the cohort are satisfied with the opportunities for professional development that the school offers. Career advancement is also a sore point. The percentage of RWJMS faculties satisfied with promotion and tenure requirements is 44% versus 60% of the cohort. Only 45% RWJMS faculty compared to 63% of the cohort think that what it is requested for promotion is reasonable and only 60% of RWJMS faculty are satisfied with promotion equality compared to 74% of the cohort.

### **Resolution**

Whereas the Senate is deeply troubled with the outcome of the AAMC survey, and there is concern that the low morale of the faculty undermines the ability of the School to fulfill its core missions, which are, to deliver excellent medical education, to generate innovative research, to promote community outreach and engagement, and to provide high quality and appropriate medical care to the patient population of New Jersey.

Whereas the leadership of an organization is responsible for fostering a positive and productive workplace culture that promotes the engagement, satisfaction, productivity and professional growth of the employees.

*Resolved*, that the Rutgers University Senate urges the leadership of RBHS and RWJMS to:

1. Promptly initiate a vigorous and transparent review process, as already planned by Dean Johnson and senior faculty, to understand the administrative, operations and other factors contributing to the current status of discontent of the faculty.
2. Implement the recommendations for improvement indicated in the AAMC survey:
  - a. Establish a stable and clear vision for the Institution.
  - b. Improve support for the education mission by valuing teaching activities and faculty compensation that accounts for/rewards teaching.
  - c. Increase support for research by valuing researchers and improving administrative support.
  - d. Increase financial transparency, as well as transparency and equity in compensation.
  - e. Refine and clarify promotion and tenure requirements. Ensure there is support for paths for advancement.
3. Continue to work with the AAMC and other external organizations, including surveying other RBHS units such as NJ School of Medicine, to better understand the causes of the current dissatisfaction of its faculty and to monitor progress.
4. Facilitate proposed solutions by adjusting relevant policies if necessary.

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