

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE

Statement on University Response to Current Crisis

The University Senate, as the preeminent shared governance organization representing all constituencies at Rutgers, is deeply concerned about the welfare of the university and all of us who are a part of it. Thus, we have concerns about many of the measures included and many of the measures not included in the response of the administration to the current crisis. As a partner in this process, we believe it is urgent that we advise both the Barchi administration and the incoming Holloway administration on fashioning a response that will minimize the harmful effects of the crisis on the university and all of its constituencies.

The Executive Committee of the University Senate urges the University:

- A. To give paramount consideration to the health of all members of the academic community in determining nonfinancial responses to the crisis, consistent with the following principles:
 1. All members of the university community, especially the students, should be thoroughly consulted on how the University can help them deal with the educational and personal stresses created by the current crisis. This consultation should serve as the basis for the implementation of measures to help them.
 2. The special needs of graduate students in areas such as research opportunities, time for degree completion, and continued financial support, must be addressed.
 3. All necessary measures to protect the health of all those returning to campus should be put in place.
 4. The varied health issues faced by faculty must be addressed, such as:
 - a. the COVID-19 exposure dangers to medical school faculty
 - b. faculty in high-risk groups who may interact directly with students or patients
 - c. faculty without the protections of health insurance, such as part-time lecturers
 - d. anxieties created by job insecurity

- B. To address the financial ramifications of the current crisis in a way that is consistent with the following imperatives:
1. Provide full financial transparency
 2. Minimize the financial impact on the core missions of the University
 3. Minimize the financial impact on the lowest-paid members of our community
 4. Consult thoroughly with all groups affected by any given cost-cutting measure before it is implemented
 5. Refrain from using the crisis as an opportunity to implement previously unacceptable cost-cutting measures
 6. Consider the particular circumstances of part-time lecturers for whom a hiring freeze is tantamount to a sudden firing
 7. Consider workshare or other innovative programs
 8. Consider further use of the unrestricted reserves to provide needed funds
- C. To maintain the reputation and quality of Rutgers by protecting our core missions:
1. The ability of the faculty, primarily the tenure-track faculty, to carry out high-quality research must be secured.
 2. The overall research reputation of the faculty must be safeguarded by maintaining the environment essential for carrying out high-quality research.
 3. The balance of research and teaching faculty must be maintained as research faculty leave the university.
 4. Resources necessary for remote instruction must be provided to maintain our high-quality teaching, such as:
 - a. more instructors to allow sections small enough for optimal remote instruction
 - b. more IT assistance with the technology
 5. Whatever additional support is necessary to allow faculty to make their customary time commitments to service must be provided.

May 21, 2020