

**Administrative Response to Senate Report on Charge S-2106:
Office of Disability Services
November 2, 2023**

Recommendation 1. In light of the recognized need for increased staff alignment to each of the campus ODS divisions to maintain parity of service, the Chancellor-led units are urged to consider a staffing and resource plan that ensures that the needs of every campus are being met.

Response: The Offices of Disability Services and Rutgers Access and Disability Resources are considered mission critical offices that provide necessary services to our disabled student population at Rutgers. To this end, additional funding was provided to Rutgers Access and Disability Resources in the AY 2023-24 budget cycle to handle the increasing student population and needs. Also, the New Brunswick Chancellor's office provided additional personnel support for AY 2023-24 by adding an additional Coordinator position and upgrading a position to Senior Coordinator. The other Chancellor led units are urged to work with their Director of Disability Services and their reporting supervisors to review the current staffing and resource levels and act accordingly. The number of active registered students is continuing to rise each year so ongoing support for current and increased staffing is encouraged.

Recommendation 2. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs in conjunction with each campus Chancellor work with ODS and other key stakeholders to develop, identify, and expand testing centers on each campus.

Response: The New Brunswick Chancellor's office worked with the Senior Director of ODS New Brunswick to provide temporary exam accommodation space in the Livingston Apartment complex. This space has continued to be available for use in the 2023-2024 academic year. Identifying additional, permanent space is encouraged. The Office of Disability Services in Camden also received additional space allocation for testing space within the library. Rutgers Newark and RBHS are encouraged to explore additional space allocations at their campuses as needed to expand testing facilities.

Additionally, as a longer-range goal, it is recommended that the University Senate revisit the Instruction, Curricula and Advising Committee Response to Charge S-1503 on Testing Facilities at Rutgers report from November 2015. It should be determined what efforts have been addressed since November 2015, what needs are outstanding, and what has changed post pandemic related to testing administration at the university. While this current University Senate report focuses on disabled student exam accommodation needs, assessment is still central to the academic mission of the University. Therefore, it is recommended that the Senate revisit these efforts and make recommendations to the administration to address current needs for university testing facilities, especially considering post pandemic assessment requirements.

Recommendation 3. Human Resources in conjunction with ODS develop a training module for faculty on federal and state laws regarding students with disabilities. Completion of the module should be required annually for all course instructors, advisors, and appropriate program staff.

Response: Rutgers University Ethics and Compliance (UEC) is committed to ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), and all

other relevant local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Presently, mandatory training on this topic is not a requirement under the ADA, Rehabilitation Act, or any other relevant law or regulation. UEC continues to monitor and adapt to new laws and requirements from governing bodies.

Rutgers University's Disability and Reasonable Accommodation Policy (60.1.34) emphasizes the shared responsibility of all university stakeholders. UEC is dedicated to providing support for any University entity in need of assistance in this area, including by providing training upon request. Because mandating disability-related training is not a legal requirement, however, UEC believes it is preferable to allow for flexibility, and to allow individual schools and departments to request the support that best meets their specific needs.

Recommendation 4. ODS develop brief reports with current updates and information that could be made available to departments and programs. Chairs and department heads may also periodically invite ODS to present at faculty and department meetings.

Response: The Offices of Disability Services have all developed annual reports that provide an overview of their activities throughout the year. Upon request, departments and programs can request information from ODS related to these reports or other pertinent information needed. ODS at all campuses already provide a myriad of presentations to faculty, administrators, and departments. ODS welcomes departments heads and chairs to reach out to ODS for presentations to their schools or departments.

Recommendation 5. To ensure all students are aware of the resources provided by ODS, all faculty across all units and campuses should include a statement of accommodations and disability services on their syllabi for student reference. ODS has developed some sample statements:
<https://ods.rutgers.edu/faculty-staff/syllabus-statement>

Response: College and School deans are encouraged to provide guidance to their faculty regarding inclusion of statements in all syllabi, and contact their Office of Disability Services for assistance in developing statements appropriate for their students.

Recommendation 6. Deans should routinely remind faculty to point to the statement on accommodations and disability services when reviewing syllabus information or when the first exam is approaching so students can reach out to ODS if they need accommodations.

Response: A semester reminder should be sent by academic leadership at each CLU to remind Deans to send a message to faculty and instructors related to the syllabus statement for disability as well as reminding them of the policy on required information on all syllabi.

Recommendation 7. A Faculty Advisory Council on Disabilities Services be formed on each campus. Councils would work with the campus ODS to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities on that campus were being met and would provide advice to Chancellors regarding any challenges or concerns.

Response: It is recommended that the ODS Directors at each CLU convene with the current chair of their respective Faculty Councils at each campus to begin discussion on developing coordinated efforts to work together to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are being met.