

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA
Friday, December 5, 2025, 12:00 p.m. via Zoom**

<https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/93756433609?pwd=2t81oNDAwvoE6tawu1bMNnRI0cUbNE.1>

Chair's Report– Lucille Foster, Senate Chair

Secretary's Report– Taryn Cooper, Executive Secretary

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of the [November 7, 2025 Senate Executive Committee Minutes](#)
- Communications
 - Website Updates- IT Team working on changes to committee roster, reverse chronological order of charges/resolutions, and constituency inconsistencies for Senators

Discussion- Francine Conway, Rutgers – New Brunswick Chancellor (12:20 – 12:45 p.m.)

Listserv Communications - Senator Ashleie Gordy (12:45 – 12:55 p.m.)

[Senate Engagement in Policy Development Process](#) (12:55 – 1:00 p.m.)

USGC [Policy on Policies Resolution](#) (1:00 – 1:10 p.m.)

USGC [Elections Proposal Resolution](#) (1:10 – 1:20 p.m.)

Determine formal date to request results of SAS Senate elections in Spring 2026 (1:20 – 1:25 p.m.)

[Rutgers School of Medicine \(RSM\) Bylaws Process](#) (1:25 – 1:35 p.m.)

Standing Committees/Panels

Committee Report and Recommendations (1:35 – 1:45 p.m.)

Instruction, Curricula, and Advising Committee/ Student Affairs Committee-
Senator Natalie Borisovets (ICAC), Taryn Cooper (Former ICAC), Senator Lisa Siebenaler Easley (SAC), Senator Consuella Askew (SAC)

[Report on S-2330-1 Expanding Access to University Libraries Across Campuses](#)

ICAC and SAC were jointly charged as follows:

Investigate current University library hours across all campuses. Determine if those hours are adequately meeting student needs (access to collections; access to study spaces; access to technology) on each campus. Make recommendations as appropriate.

Proposed Charge (1:45 – 1:55 p.m.)

School to School Transfer Issues – Senator Martha Haviland, Faculty-New Brunswick and Non-Senator Sofia Pinto-Figueroa, Staff-Newark

Charge: Examine (i) the existing policies, procedures, and practices that govern school-to-school and campus-to-campus transfers within the university, and (ii) the challenges that currently enrolled undergraduate students face when seeking to transfer to another Rutgers program outside of their school of enrollment. Recommend strategies and considerations, as appropriate, to ensure that the transfer process is transparent, accessible, and easily understood by all students.

Rationale: Applicants to Rutgers University may select multiple schools for admission consideration. Many students are not admitted to their first-choice school, and in some cases, applicants to schools at Rutgers–New Brunswick may be considered for admission to schools on the Rutgers–Newark or Rutgers–Camden campuses. Students who enroll at a school other than their top choice may do so with the expectation that they will have an opportunity to apply for a transfer after completing a semester or more at Rutgers. While many students remain at their initially enrolled school throughout their academic careers, others may seek to transfer to another school - either to pursue a specific academic program not offered at their current school or to better align with their academic or career goals. These transfers may occur within a campus (inter-school or intra-campus transfers) or between campuses (inter-campus transfers). Anecdotal reports from students, including student-athletes, suggest that the transfer process, particularly for school-to-school transfers within Rutgers–New Brunswick and campus-to-campus transfers to Rutgers–New Brunswick, can present challenges. Reported issues include a perceived lack of transparency regarding transfer criteria, limited clarity about decision-making processes, and instances of transfer denials without detailed explanations. At the same time, it is recognized that individual schools and campuses operate within constraints such as enrollment capacity, accreditation standards, and resource limitations that may affect their ability to accept all qualified transfer applicants. A clear understanding of these processes and constraints, and the identification of potential areas for improved communication and consistency, can help ensure that transfer policies support both institutional goals and student success across Rutgers University.

Proposed Charge (1:55 – 2:05 p.m.)

Review and Clarification of the Educational Benefits (Tuition Remission) Policy for Rutgers Employees- Chazz Fellenz, Non-Senator, Staff, Newark

Charge: I would like for the committee to examine the current policy [60.2.1 Educational Benefits](#), specifically the section governing tuition remission eligibility for graduate and professional programs. The review should focus on: Clarifying which programs are considered eligible or ineligible, particularly in relation to online and hybrid degree programs created after July 1, 2013. Assessing whether the policy language is transparent and easily understood by employees, especially newer staff. Evaluating whether the policy's intent, to support and encourage continuing education and professional development among Rutgers employees, remains aligned with the university's evolving academic landscape, which now includes a wide range of online and hybrid offerings. Recommending updates or supplemental guidance to ensure consistency, accessibility, and equity across all campuses and employee groups. Consideration for removal of programs created prior to July 1, 2013.

Rationale: Tuition remission remains one of Rutgers University's most valued employee benefits, offering staff and faculty the opportunity to pursue further education and professional growth within the institution. However, the current Educational Benefits policy includes a clause limiting eligibility to "academic programs that were established by and contained within Rutgers University prior to July 1, 2013." As written, this language can be confusing for employees, particularly newer staff, who may not have the means to determine which programs were established before or after that date, or whether online or hybrid programs qualify. Recently, a staff member enrolled in an online master's program, believing it would be covered, only to later discover it was ineligible under this clause, resulting in a financial hold mid-semester. Despite the fact that the in-person program is the same exact program, just in person. This situation highlights the need to revisit the clarity and intent of the policy to prevent similar hardships and to ensure that tuition remission continues to serve as an equitable and accessible benefit in an era of increasingly digital academic offerings. A Senate review and recommendation process could help strengthen transparency, consistency, and employee confidence in this important benefit.

Proposed Charge (2:05 – 2:15 p.m.)

Forced Merger of Criminal Justice and Sociology Department (Rutgers, NB) - Non- Senator, Michael Welch, Faculty-New Brunswick

Charge: Attached is a memo (17 May 2025) that I sent to Executive Dean Wade (and Area Dean Robin Leichenko), concerning the (coerced) merger between Criminal Justice and the Department of Sociology. As of 10 October (2025), I have not

received a response from either of them. Also attached is an update on other related developments (12 October 2025). The essence of the problem revolves around a proposal that was prepared in bad faith without sufficient transparency, leaving CJ faculty uninformed about the plans to merge with Sociology. Moreover, the merger was developed while Professor Michael Welch (founding member of CJ), was overseas on sabbatical at the University of Sydney in year 2024. Complicating matters, CJ faculty were unaware that Alec Walen had assumed the role of “Deputy Director of Strategic Planning.” Walen is neither a Social or Behavioral Scientist. Actually, he is on faculty at the Law School at Rutgers, Camden.

1.) [Merger report](#); 2.) [Update](#).

Rationale: This charge requests that the Senate thoroughly investigate the matter. So as to reconcile the objections of the Criminal Justice faculty who oppose the merger, we recommend that the Senate declare the merger invalid until alternative plans can be explored. For years, I have recommended to the Executive Dean to have the CJ major evaluated by the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, our leading advisory group. The ACJS recommends that all CJ Departments in the nation be assessed every five years. That last time ACJS evaluated the undergraduate program at Rutgers (NB) was in 1996. At stake is a host of problems that have an enormous negative impact on CJ faculty and staff as well as our 600 undergraduate students majoring in Criminal Justice (Rutgers, NB).

Proposed Charge (2:15 – 2:25 p.m.)

Review and Standardize the Election Processes for Faculty Senators Across All Academic Units- Senator Tuğrul Özel, Faculty- New Brunswick

Charge: The University Senate is charged with examining the election processes used across all academic units (departments, divisions, schools, and colleges) to select faculty senators. Specifically, the Senate committee shall: 1) Determine whether faculty senators in each academic unit are elected by the eligible faculty through a verifiable and transparent election process, or whether any units rely on appointment practices by unit heads or administrators. 2) Assess the degree of compliance with University Policy 50.2.1 and any relevant governing documents requiring that senators be chosen by election. 3) Identify inconsistencies, gaps, or deviations in how elections are conducted, including absence of formal procedures, lack of transparency, or administrative influence. 4) Develop recommendations for a standardized, university-wide procedure to ensure that all faculty senators are elected through: - A true, fair, and democratic election; - Conducted or overseen by an impartial Ombuds entity, designated by the University Senate (e.g., the Senate Parliamentarian or the Senate Executive Secretary); - Implemented uniformly across all units. 5) Propose mechanisms for verification and accountability, including: - Annual certification of election results by the

designated Ombudsman; - A repository for documented election procedures for every academic unit; - Clear consequences or remediation steps for units not in compliance. Expected Outcome: 1) A written report to the Senate Executive Committee detailing: - Findings regarding current election practices; - Identification of units where senators are appointed rather than elected; - Recommended policy revisions or new procedures to enforce fair elections; - A proposed University-wide standard for Senator elections, including the formal role of an independent Ombudsman. Suggested Timeline: A report with findings and recommendations should be submitted no later than May 2026, or earlier if feasible.

Rationale: The Rutgers University Senate derives its legitimacy, representativeness, and shared-governance authority from the democratic election of faculty senators by their peers. However, concerns have been raised that in some academic units, faculty senators may be appointed by department chairs, program directors, or other administrative leaders rather than being elected through a transparent, documented, and fair electoral process. Such practices—whether isolated or widespread—undermine the principles of shared governance, faculty autonomy, and the Senate’s foundational commitment to institutional democracy. To safeguard representative governance and ensure consistency across Rutgers’ diverse academic units, a formal review is needed to determine whether all faculty senators are, in fact, elected by faculty constituents through a legitimate election supervised by a neutral party.

Proposed Charge (2:25 -2:35 p.m.)

Responses to threats and harassment- Senator Troy Shinbrot, Faculty- New Brunswick

Charge: The following is a draft of a charge to be submitted to the RU Senate EC dealing with Threats & Harassment. This includes more than the usual amount of background material; hopefully this may be helpful for completing a resolution expeditiously. ALSO, it may be desirable to break this up into multiple charges: I leave that to the EC, but urge that significant elements not be removed without discussion. Finally, in view of the broad importance and interest to Senators in multiple different committees, it would be helpful if whatever Committee is assigned allows active participation from members of other committees.

[LINK TO CHARGE HERE.](#)

Rationale: Rutgers community members have been personally identified by multiple external groups, some identified and some anonymous, and have been threatened based on their scholarly speech and writing. Action is needed to protect the rights of free expression and academic freedom without fear of reprisal or personal attack.

Open Charge Request (2:35 – 2:40 p.m.)

FPAC requests an extension on:

[S-2317-3 Prevalence, Procedures, and Challenges of Faculty Occupancy of Dual Leadership Roles](#)

The current deadline is 12/3/2025. FPAC is working on a report that they hope to submit soon, but they are still waiting on data from UHR.

Old Business

New Business

Adjournment