

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY SENATE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 6, 2026**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrews, Asch, Foster (Chair), Boxer, Davis, Haley, Kiss, Ntiwunka-Ifeanyi, Pierce, Purcell (Vice Chair), Salas-de la Cruz, Schwartz, Scott

ALSO ATTENDING: *T. Cooper (University Senate Executive Secretary), R. Gigliotti (Chief of Staff, President's Office-Rutgers), M. Smith (University Senate Administrative Assistant), W. Tate (President)*

The regular meeting of the University Senate Executive Committee (EC) was held on Friday, March 6, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. remotely via Zoom.

Chair's Report– Lucille Foster, Senate Chair

Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. Due to the time restraint in President Tate's schedule, the chair and secretary reports have been suspended so the meeting may begin with President Tate's presentation.

Secretary's Report– Taryn Cooper, Senate Executive Secretary

- Approval of Agenda: A motion was made and approved to add new business by Senator Scott relating to standstill budget cuts and athletics subsidies. A motion was made and approved to add new business by Senator Salas-de la Cruz to discuss the Camden Chancellor's departure and search committee. A motion was made and approved to add new business by Vice Chair Purcell to discuss an updated follow up from the Free Expression Guidelines meeting.
- Approval of the [February 6, 2026 Senate Executive Committee Minutes](#)
- Communications
 - The Senate Social postponed to Friday May 1, 2026, from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. due to the weather.
 - Staff and Lecturer elections will be starting in the upcoming weeks. Communications will be coming from Vivian Fernandez.
 - [Call for Nominations for 2026-2027 Senate Elections](#) – Due Fri. April 17th.
 - [President Tate's letter to the University Senate.](#)
 - Executive Secretary is away March 13-23; Morgan Smith is point of contact.
 - Senate call for faculty nominations for the University Librarian Evaluation Committee.

[Survey Report: Rutgers University's Image in New Jersey Presentation](#)- William F. Tate IV, President

President Tate gave a presentation to the EC on a survey conducted to understand the perception of Rutgers University by the people of New Jersey, in partnership with the Rutgers MADC. President Tate also provided an update of Rutgers's legal compliance in the current federal

landscape, particularly how the Department of Justice's memorandum remains in effect but encourages collaboration with the Office of General Council to preserve programming. President Tate answered questions on the following topics:

- Why are the words of diversity, equity, and inclusion not legally defensible like the programs related to them are?
- How can we separate diversity, equity, and inclusion from programs and campuses when they are rooted in the history and missions of the university, particularly at the Rutgers Camden campus?
- How do we ensure Admissions and other programs provide real opportunity and equal access?
- How can we protect those disciplines where diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the heart of their research?

Discussion- Chancellor Tonya Smith-Jackson, Rutgers Newark

Chancellor Smith-Jackson was unable to join on this day due to a scheduling conflict.

Senate Budget Update

The Executive Secretary provided an update that the President's Office will be giving \$10,000 to the Senate for several areas such as Senator conference attendance relating to shared governance, programming initiatives by the Senate, and materials costs for the programs. The EC decided that there should be a budget subcommittee of the EC voted upon during the first EC meeting in June. The June EC subcommittee members will create a proposal for utilization of the budget that will be brought to the Senate for discussion and vote. There was discussion on asking the CLUs for matching funds towards the Senate. Senator Haley suggested to start with faculty council leaders first and to not reach out to CLUs until the Senate has established a process.

Election Committee Members

The EC approved the following members to the 2026 Election Committee: Senators Paul Boxer, Patricia Morton, Ashleie Gordy, Kerry Hennessy, Malica Dock, Robert Schwartz, Rachel Maeng Brown, Taryn Cooper (*ex-officio*), Morgan Smith (*ex-officio*).

Rutgers School of Medicine Merger Senate Entitlements

The Executive Secretary provided information regarding the entitlements for the medical schools of RWJMS and NJMS, particularly that if the merger completes next year then the entitlements will be combined for both schools and would drop in the number of representatives. The EC agreed that the bylaws need to be amended to create a clear process for the merger of schools and Senate entitlements.

RBS Candidate Nominations

The EC requested to review the bylaws language that exists around entitlements, particularly the math involved. The EC agreed that a charge should be created for clarification of entitlements for a unit such as Rutgers Business School.

NJ-MADC Representatives: Election of two Senators by full Senate

The Executive Committee determined that the two Rutgers Senate representatives should be one two-year term from a member in the Rutgers MADC and the other as a one-year term elected by the full Senate during the April organizational meeting as a leadership position. Senator Boxer motioned for Senator Haley to be the two year representative from MADC, which was voted upon and approved by the EC.

Resolution on Preserving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Infrastructure at Rutgers- **Jon Oliver, Past Chair of the Rutgers University Senate**

The EC docketed this resolution to the March Senate agenda. The EC suggested an additional point be added about the restoration of items that have been removed from websites, syllabi, etc.

President Tate's Letter to the Senate

The EC docketed President Tate's letter for the March Senate agenda. The discussion will be used to inform a formal response letter written by the EC and voted upon by the full Senate as a response by the full Senate. The EC voted for Vice Chair Purcell, Senator Andrews, and Senator Scott to draft the initial response letter with feedback from the full Senate during the March Senate meeting. The draft of the letter will be brought back to the April EC meeting for approval, then the final letter presented for Senate approval in April.

Review Pending Committee Charges and Deadlines

The EC approved extensions for all three charges that have expired. Senator Haley noted concern about how committees are getting charges done throughout the year, as FPAC felt they were struggling to finish them.

Standing Committees/Panels

Committee Report and Recommendations

Research and Graduate & Professional Education Committee- Monica Mazurek,
Enrique Curchitser (co-chairs)

S-2331: Research Trainee Compensation and Benefits Inequity

RGPEC was charged as follows:

Investigate current practices in postdoc and current doctoral student remuneration, in particular as it relates to inequality following fellowship funding and to develop solutions to reward talent.

Outcome: The EC docketed the report for the March Senate meeting agenda. The EC also suggested that Senator Salas de la Cruz reach out to the research office to ensure the

recommendations in the report are legally feasible. Senator Pierce suggested reaching out to Becky Given for union perspective.

Proposed Charge

University Vendor Evaluations and Guidelines- Senator Brian Everett, Staff-Camden

Charge: Examine various external vendors currently under contract with Rutgers for software, information technology, office supplies, food, construction, etc., and make recommendations on vendor standards, community guidelines, and opportunities for in-house solutions.

Rationale: Information technology, food services, construction firms, and office supply vendors are all regular business partners of universities throughout the BIG10, among other sectors. As market demands, community needs, and business trends evolve rapidly, it is important to evaluate current partners and practices from a shared governance perspective, and perhaps make recommendations for home-grown solutions for the purposes of security, ethics, and cost savings.

Outcome: BFC was charged with suggested input from USGC and ITC with amendments to the title to include “Within the Framework of Shared Governance” and to the charge language to “Examine the processes in selection of the various external vendors currently under contract with Rutgers and make recommendations on vendor standards, community guidelines, and opportunities for in-house solutions to enhance shared governance.” The deadline is March 2027.

Proposed Charge

Local Knowledge Access- Senator Brian Everett, Staff-Camden

Charge: For ASRAC and/or ICA committees: Examine the university's relationship(s) with local news and journalism outlets. Consider how to bolster access to geographically relevant outlets for students, faculty, and staff.

Rationale: Through the Rutgers University library system, all members of the university community are able to access some media/journalism outlets, such as the Wall Street Journal, via CAS login. That ability is not possible, though, for geographically relevant outlets throughout New Jersey. Our state has recently observed the cessation of several media/journalistic outlets in the past calendar year, and other national and international outlets have initiated mass layoffs and firings resulting in less access to local knowledge, and at times, academically necessary information.

Outcome: The EC declined to charge to a committee and suggested Senator Everett reach out to the Vice President for University Libraries and University Librarian directly.

Proposed Charge

Review of Processes, Priorities, and Accountability within the Offices of Technology Transfer, Research Contract Services, and New Ventures- Senator Arash Hatefi,
Faculty- RBHS

Charge: The Rutgers Office for Research (OFR) plays a central role in supporting the University's research mission through technology commercialization, sponsored research administration, and innovation and entrepreneurship. • These functions are carried out primarily through the Offices of Technology Transfer (OTT), Research Contract Services (RCS), and New Ventures (NV). • Faculty investigators have raised concerns regarding excessive delays, lack of transparency, unclear policies, and limited accountability within these offices (i.e., OTT, RCS, and NV). We would like the Research and Graduate & Professional Education Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of the policies, procedures, priorities, and accountability mechanisms with particular attention to the Offices of Technology Transfer, Research Contract Services, and New Ventures. Scope of the Charge

I. Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) The Committee shall examine and report on:

1. Licensing Priority and Timeliness - Whether licensing of Rutgers-developed technologies to external entities remains a stated and operational priority. - Typical timelines for licensing negotiations and the extent to which delays may jeopardize potential transactions.
2. Return of Intellectual Property Rights
 - o Policies and procedures governing the return of IP rights to inventors when Rutgers elects not to pursue licensing or commercialization.
 - o Expected timeframes for such determinations following submission of a Notice of Invention.
3. Responsiveness and Communication Standards
 - o Expectations for response times by licensing managers to inquiries from inventors and external partners.
 - o Potential impacts of delayed communications on research and commercialization opportunities.
4. Transparency of Licensing Agreements
 - o Policies regarding inventor and School/Department access to executed licensing agreements.
 - o The rationale for any limitations on access to such agreements.
5. Ownership and Assignment of Intellectual Property
 - o Clarification of circumstances under which IP rights automatically vest in Rutgers versus those in which inventors retain rights.
 - o The purpose and legal necessity of assignment language required at the time of invention disclosure.
6. Commercialization Support Decisions
 - o Whether Rutgers may retain IP rights while electing not to support commercialization.
 - o Policies or safeguards intended to prevent prolonged stagnation of potentially valuable technologies.
7. Workload and Capacity Assessment
 - o Evaluation of staffing levels, workload distribution, and long-term impacts on research productivity and commercialization.

II. Research Contract Services (RCS) The Committee shall examine and report on:

1. Turnaround Time for Agreements and Contracts - Reasonable timeframes for drafting and reviewing MTAs and research contracts. - Mechanisms for prioritizing time-sensitive or at-risk agreements.
2. Institutional Impact of Delays
 - o Recognition of the potential loss of research funding, revenue, and personnel resulting from prolonged contract delays.
3. Responsiveness and Escalation Mechanisms
 - o Procedures for addressing unresponsiveness by contract managers.
 - o Availability of escalation pathways for time-sensitive matters.
4. Use of External Legal Resources
 - o Feasibility of engaging pre-approved external legal counsel (including AI softwares) to assist with drafting or reviewing research-related agreements.
 - o Alignment of such practices with University policies and risk management

considerations. 5. Workload and Capacity Assessment o Evaluation of staffing levels, workload distribution, and long-term impacts on research productivity and commercialization. III. Office of New Ventures The Committee shall examine and report on: 1. Startup Formation and Licensing Decisions - The role of Principal Investigators in decisions regarding startup formation versus licensing to third parties. - Whether current practices may discourage faculty entrepreneurship or innovation. IV. Cross-Cutting Issues within the Office for Research The Committee shall examine and report on: 1. Performance Feedback and Accountability - Whether Principal Investigators have a formal mechanism to provide feedback on interactions with OFR personnel. - The structure, independence, and inclusivity of any existing evaluation processes. - The feasibility of implementing a transparent and constructive feedback system.

Rationale: Such concerns, if substantiated, may negatively affect research productivity, research personnel, intellectual properties, external partnerships, commercialization outcomes, and the University's financial and reputational interests.

Outcome: RGPEC was charged with the amended charge language "The Rutgers Office for Research (OFR) plays a central role in supporting the University's research mission through technology commercialization, sponsored research administration, and innovation and entrepreneurship. These functions are carried out primarily through the Offices of Technology Transfer (OTT), Research Contract Services (RCS), and New Ventures (NV). Faculty investigators have raised concerns regarding excessive delays, lack of transparency, unclear policies, and limited accountability within these offices (i.e., OTT, RCS, and NV). We would like the Research and Graduate & Professional Education Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of the policies, procedures, priorities, and accountability mechanisms with particular attention to the Offices of Technology Transfer, Research Contract Services, and New Ventures." The deadline is March 2027.

Old Business

There was none.

New Business

Senator Scott raised the item of budget impacts and the athletics subsidy with documents including a [letter from the SAS-NB Chairs](#), [response to the SAS-NB Chairs letter](#), and [news article](#). Senator Scott presented concerns from SAS-NB constituents. Senator Pierce reported that she met with the Dean of SAS-NB and the NB Chancellor, who is also agreed to meet with the other chairs from the letter. There was conversation around a general lack of strategic oversight of the budget and a need for clarity from administration. Senators Boxer and Pierce volunteered to draft a resolution from the EC acting on behalf of the Senate. The EC voted on and approved for Senators Boxer and Pierce to draft a resolution to be circulated through the EC and voted via email to be approved before spring break on March 11, 2026.

At 3:59 p.m. Chair Foster motioned to extend the EC meeting by 10 minutes, which was approved.

Senator Salas-de la Cruz raised the item of the Camden Chancellor's upcoming vacancy. The EC approved a call out to the Senate for representatives on the Camden Chancellor Search Committee, with a priority for Camden representatives.

Vice Chair Purcell raised the item of an update following the Free Expression Guidelines conversation. Senator Pierce reported receiving a call from Jennifer McGruther from OGC, as her number was given from William Castner. An update was given that OGC is in the process of collecting similar guidelines across other Big Ten schools and then will follow up with a meeting later in the month along with a report that will be distributed to the EC.

Adjournment

The Executive Committee adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Taryn Cooper, Executive Secretary of the University Senate