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## **The Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences Baseline Report on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The School of Arts and Sciences is the largest and most comprehensive school at Rutgers University with history that goes back to the university's founding as Queen's College in 1766.

As the school begins the university diversity strategic planning process, we acknowledge the seriousness of the mission. We recognize that our school's historic connection to Rutgers' earliest days places upon us a great responsibility to proceed with absolute honesty and candor.

For in 2015, the Committee on Enslaved and Disenfranchised Populations in Rutgers History began research for the Scarlet and Black report and book series that would forever change the way we think about Rutgers' early history in colonial-era America. The findings, in part, show that Rutgers founders and prominent early leaders were slave owners, that some of their families profited from the slave trade, and that the university benefited from the displacement of the Native Americans. The research also showed that the foundation for the iconic Old Queens Campus was laid by a slave known only by his first name, Will.

Much has happened over 255 years, and Rutgers University today is a globally engaged teaching and research institution with one of the most diverse student populations in the nation. The School of Arts and Sciences, and its legacy undergraduate colleges played a major role in shaping the modern Rutgers, expanding access to underserved populations, and launching pioneering and nationally recognized programs in women's history, Africana studies, and Latino and Caribbean studies. The school's creation in 2007 spurred the development of an innovative Core Curriculum that requires students to take courses in which they will study topics involving human difference, global issues, and social justice. Our Signature Courses address specific challenges from "Black Lives Matter" to "Inequality" to "Human Nature and Human Diversity."

We welcome the 2020 arrival of Rutgers President Jonathan Holloway and support his challenge to build a Beloved Community in which all members work together and are heard, respected, and valued.

But our past, as detailed in the Scarlet and Black, should never be far from our minds as we move through this process. For despite signs of progress, Rutgers continues to face significant challenges in its efforts to become a diverse and inclusive institution. The percentages of both Black and Latino faculty at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, for example, [remain under 4 percent](#). In SAS, one of the major science divisions reports just one Black and one Latino among its tenured and tenure-track positions.

There remains, also, much work to do to provide access to a Rutgers education and extend other forms of support and service to marginalized communities throughout New Jersey. The most recent U.S. Census data shows Hispanic/Latino and Black people [account for 20.9 and 15 percent](#) respectively of the

New Jersey population. Yet among full-time students at Rutgers New Brunswick in 2021, they made up [13.2 and 7.3](#) percent respectively.

In addition, we cannot develop a strategic plan in isolation from our contemporary moment, with its continuing crisis of police violence against Black people, the increasing visibility of expressions of white supremacy, and the policies recently adopted in other states that many believe will disenfranchise voters of color.

The Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences comes to this process with strong resources: a renowned faculty, talented staff, and world-class academic programs. Our goal should be nothing less than becoming a national model for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This involves setting bold policies while recognizing the role that structural racism plays in creating deep societal disparities. We need to establish a schoolwide culture that will foster a diverse faculty and staff workforce, provide students the knowledge they need to become positive forces in their communities, and continuously expand access to our programs in a society beset by chronic inequality, including in New Jersey where school districts are among the most segregated in the nation.

What follows in this baseline report is a summary of where the School of Arts and Sciences is at this moment, 2022, as it seeks to reach its highest potential as a diverse, inclusive, equitable community of students, staff, and faculty. This baseline report follows the five categories established by Rutgers University for the strategic planning process and adds breakout sections to showcase some of our most innovative and effective programs

Because it is focused on programs and policies that are in place, the report does not include some of the very promising actions taken by deans, faculty, and faculty fellows since this strategic planning process began in early 2021. We acknowledge the work that is taking place, including plans to develop academic support systems aimed at improving retention rates in sciences. In addition, humanities and social and behavioral sciences are looking at cluster hiring proposals that will improve faculty diversity and are coming up with bold new ways to promote inclusive teaching and scholarship. We look forward to full and through discussions across the school as we develop the strategic plan in 2022.

Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences comprises a large community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members organized around a structure where the research and teaching of academic divisions intersect with the units that provide support for our mission. Administrators and skilled staff in the offices of the Executive Dean, administration, advancement, undergraduate education, research and graduate education, and academic affairs provide the underpinning for work done by educators, administrators, and skilled staff in the four academic divisions: Humanities, Life Sciences (DLS), Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS), and Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS).

Through these offices and divisions, the School of Arts and Sciences engages in numerous activities that serve the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at Rutgers and in their respective fields more broadly. These initiatives target undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty and staff members. Below, we have organized those efforts in line with the five priorities outlined in the Rutgers Strategic Plan and included breakout sections with examples of current programming and initiatives.



## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY: RECRUIT, RETAIN, and DEVELOP A DIVERSE COMMUNITY**

Across the four academic divisions, there is awareness of the need to recruit diverse faculty for tenured and tenure-track positions.

- The Division of Humanities has hired 12 tenured and tenure-track faculty of color since 2018 across several departments, including English, French, history, philosophy, and Spanish & Portuguese.
- The Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) has made faculty hires from underrepresented groups in criminal justice, political science, psychology, Latino & Caribbean Studies (LCS), anthropology, geography, and LCS/Africana Studies. The Department of Economics, through strategic hiring decisions, has one of the best gender equity ratios in this traditionally male-dominated field.
- In the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS), the departments of Mathematics, Earth & Planetary Sciences (EPS), Statistics, and Physics & Astronomy have adopted protocols to ensure broad, DEI-compliant searches for faculty hiring and student recruitment. In EPS, five of the last seven faculty hires have been women.

- In the Division of Life Sciences (DLS), the last round of T/TT hiring has improved gender equity in the departments of Molecular Biology & Biochemistry and Genetics. The division hired its first Muslim faculty member (in Cell Biology & Neuroscience), an important milestone as a large percentage of the undergraduate population in DLS is Muslim. All chairs and the divisional dean attended a workshop of the Division of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement.

## **BREAKOUT SECTION: DEVELOPING A DIVERSE COMMUNITY: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

The School of Arts and Sciences and its legacy schools have developed in-house programs over time that stand as national models for building and supporting a diverse community.

- **The Office of Diversity and Success in the Sciences:** ODASIS, which began in the mid-1980s, is an academic support unit situated in DLS focused on increasing the number of underrepresented students that are admitted to and graduate from Rutgers and enter medical school and graduate/professional schools and the health workforce. Over 1,400 students have graduated from the ODASIS program since its inception: Rutgers ranks #3 nationally in the total number of medical school applications by African Americans to medical school and 30<sup>th</sup> out of 125 institutions for Latinx applications.
- **Computer Science Living-Learning Community for Women:** The Computer Science Living-Learning Community for Women in MPS seeks to increase the low percentage of women in technology fields by providing an immersive educational and community experience for first-year women to live, learn, and connect with others in their field.
- **Classics M.A. Program:** The Department of Classics launched a pilot M.A. program for students from historically underrepresented groups, creating a bold new model for making the field more diverse, helping students who have likely come to Classics late in their undergraduate careers strengthen their credentials for a Ph.D. program.
- **Early Childhood Development Center:** SBS supports the Rutgers Psychology Child Development Center, which provides affordable, convenient, and high-quality childcare to address the diverse needs of faculty, post-docs, and graduate students and puts Rutgers on par with other Big 10 and R1 universities.
- **Voices of Diversity Rutgers Student Stories:** The SAS Office of Undergraduate Education has developed a panel series in which students share their experiences and identities with faculty, providing an opportunity for Rutgers faculty to learn about their students' diverse perspectives and experiences.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY: PROMOTE INCLUSIVE SCHOLARSHIP & TEACHING

- The Division of Humanities is home to #1-ranked programs in women’s history studies and African American history and has recently added an Asian American minor and expanded Native and indigenous studies. There are numerous courses throughout the division allowing students to explore the histories and cultures of underrepresented groups and gain deeper understandings of our nation’s diversity, including “Race and Ethnicity in America,” “History and Culture of Hip Hop,” and “Islam in/and America.”
- SBS units do extensive teaching and research on issues of race, gender, and inequality. Latino and Caribbean studies is developing a certificate program in multicultural competence; political science offers a graduate minor in race, ethnicity, and politics. Economics started a new course in inequality and geography has developed courses such as “Black Geographies” and “Geographies of Race and Ethnicity.”
- In MPS, computer science and earth and planetary sciences have provided research internships, offered fellowships, and organized inclusive cohort activities for diverse undergraduate and graduate students.
- In DLS, the Department of Kinesiology and Health offers the course “Movement Experiences for Individuals with Disabilities,” in which students who aspire to the health professions receive extensive exposure to disabled people through course work, voluntarism, guest speakers, visits to rehabilitation centers, and more. The Disability Studies Minor is another effort in conjunction with multiple departments and schools to implement a universitywide effort to promote equity and inclusion of the population.

## BREAKOUT SECTION: Inclusive Teaching and Scholarship

The School of Arts and Sciences and its legacy schools have created compelling majors, minors, courses, and graduate programs that are set a very high bar for inclusive teaching and scholarship. Below are two examples, including one of the most recent and one established in the 1980s that continues to have a powerful and widespread impact.

- **Black Lives Matter Signature Course:** Responding to the racial reckoning that took hold across America in 2020, the School of Arts and Sciences created a bold new Signature Course: “Black Lives Matter” taught by prominent scholars of African American history and covering the epic sweep of Black history in the USA.
- **Program in Women in Politics, Department of Political Science:** Since the 1980s, Rutgers has been known as the “motherhood” of graduate studies in women and politics, training generations of influential scholars who brought their knowledge to colleges and universities nationwide.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY: DEFINE SUSTAINABLE AND SUBSTANTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- In the Division of Humanities, a professor of classics has been teaching in New Jersey prisons and creating a series of public events in which she and formerly incarcerated students discuss the epic works and apply them to contemporary social justice issues. In the Department of History, the program in public history enlisted students in a project to explore and document immigrant workers' lives in New Jersey. Meanwhile, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese developed the "Spanish for Community Engagement" course in which students explore issues such as housing, health, and education while volunteering in community service organizations in New Brunswick.
- The Department of Kinesiology and Health in the Life Sciences has several centers that engage specific members of the community. The Center for Disability Sports, Health, and Wellness works with students, staff, and community partners on disability issues that educate students while enhancing the community of individuals with disabilities in New Jersey and at Rutgers. The Center for Exercise and Aging has built relationships with senior communities across the region, holding exercise classes, bringing students to assisted living facilities, and helping out in the New Jersey Senior Olympics and the Middlesex County Department of Aging Senior Walk.
- The Department of Computer Science (MPS) works with the Graduate School of Education to provide teacher training and outreach to New Jersey school districts with the goal of improving computer science education for underserved communities and bringing diversity to the field.
- The Social and Behavioral Sciences have many outreach programs: anthropology works to preserve the Lenape language in partnership with Lenape tribal members; psychology faculty participate in suicide prevention community education; HIV/AIDs support programs, and programs supporting victims of sexual trauma and abuse. In addition, psychology faculty created and continue to direct the NJ Autism Center for Excellence to support the study and treatment of individuals living with autism spectrum disorder.

## BREAKOUT SECTION: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Departments, programs, and centers in the School of Arts and Sciences are involved in many forms of community engagement, from K-12 teacher training to student volunteerism in food pantries, community health centers, and other social service agencies. Below are four examples that show how strong scholarship is channeled to benefit an array of communities.

- **Breaking New Ground on NJ Latino Research:** Although Latinos in New Jersey number nearly one in five residents, their experience settling down and building lives in the Garden State have not received much attention from historians. But thanks to a professor in Latino and Caribbean Studies and a team of energetic students, that is changing. The New Jersey Latino New Jersey History Project, a multi-media research effort that draws from census data, public archives, and interviews to provide a rich, detailed, and sometimes surprising picture of New Jersey Latinos.

- **Keck Center Open House:** On the first Friday of every month, the W. M. Keck Center for Collaborative Neuroscience opens its laboratory to the public and presents its latest scholarship to visitors who are often in wheelchairs and accompanied by loved ones. This open house event draws people with spinal cord injuries from across the region, who come to learn about the potential treatments that the center studies.
- **New Jersey Partnership for Excellence in Middle School Mathematics:** This initiative developed by a professor of mathematics has Rutgers working with public school districts, including those in economically challenged communities, to support teachers and enhance the mathematical achievement of their students.
- **Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy:** The institute was started two decades ago by Rutgers philosophy professors who wanted to provide outreach to undergraduates on a nationwide basis, and increase the number of underrepresented minority students headed into philosophy graduate programs and faculty positions.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY: BUILD THE CAPACITY OF LEADERS TO CREATE INCLUSIVE CLIMATES**

- The School of Arts and Sciences is establishing a cohort of Faculty Fellows for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to work on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Fellows will work closely with a vice dean or divisional dean on projects identified by the dean. In addition, the cohort of fellows will coordinate with the Division of Equity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement on the university-level project Charting Our Inclusive Path Forward.
- Coalition for Anti-Racism, Social Justice, and Equity (CASE) in the Office of Undergraduate Education supports DEI conversations, scholarship, initiatives, and opportunities within SAS and the broader Rutgers community. Current initiatives include working with SAS-HR on efforts related to onboarding; compiling a bibliography of social justice/equity-related work by SAS scholars and building relationships with other groups across campus.
- Humanities units self-assess climates to identify gaps in diversity and inclusion efforts and articulate new commitments and intentions.
- MPS and SBS units have articulated commitments to diversity on department websites, brought diverse speakers to research seminars, and engaged in internal DEI department training.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY: DEVELOP AN INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO DRIVE CHANGE**

- MPS units are developing faculty and student committees dedicated specifically to formalizing DEI self-study, establishing goals and strategies, and defining a path towards goals with milestones to assess progress.

- Nearly every SBS department has a DEI faculty committee working to create a more inclusive infrastructure that integrates DEI in multiple facets of the SBS units (e.g., curriculum, mentoring, hiring, promotion, and bylaws).
- The Humanities Dean's office is organizing faculty-led discussion groups in fields targeted for diversity hiring. This will allow faculty already working in these fields to contribute to conversations about hiring priorities and to collaborate across units to welcome/mentor new hires once they arrive. Several Humanities units have or are developing faculty-student committees dedicated specifically to identifying and addressing DEI needs of the unit. HUM units are revamping department structure and bylaws to foster DEI.
- The Office of Administration has engaged staff employees to form their own DEI Committee. The committee has already begun work on several fronts, including providing education and awareness on DEI issues, forging working relationships with school and university leadership, and acting as a resource and safe space for staff employees, many of whom are members of communities that have been historically discriminated against.