

# Constitution

*Of the*

## Rutgers University Student Assembly

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## **Preamble**

We, the undergraduate students of Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway, as an integral component of the University community, hereby establish through this Constitution a federated student government to ensure the vitality of student participation in the governance of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. To provide campus-wide advocacy on behalf of student concerns; to secure for students an active role in deciding official policies and priorities; to effectively disburse student activity fees; and to provide a forum for the open expression of student ideas and opinions, we establish the Rutgers University Student Assembly (hereafter referred to as the “Assembly”).

Continuing in a tradition of student government dating back to 1894, The Assembly shall serve as the official voice of the student body of Rutgers University New Brunswick/Piscataway.

## **Article I. Powers of The Assembly**

### ***Section 1.01 Purpose of The Assembly***

The Rutgers University Student Assembly shall act as the official liaison between the students and the faculty and administration of Rutgers University, the Cities of New Brunswick and Piscataway, and the State of New Jersey. The Assembly shall advocate and promote student interests and rectify concerns; shall serve as a resource center for students; and shall disburse student fees to registered student organizations through the Allocations Board.

The authority of The Assembly is derived from this constitution and its ratification by the undergraduate students of Rutgers University New Brunswick/Piscataway and from the recognition of the administration and faculty of Rutgers University as the primary student governing organization of the students of Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway.

## **Article II. Structure of Student Government**

### ***Section 2.01 Rutgers University Student Assembly***

#### **1. Legislative Body**

The Assembly shall be composed of Senators, Campus Representatives, Professional School Council representatives, and Residential College Council representatives. It shall operate through committees and general body meetings. The Assembly shall have legislative power representing the students of Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway.

#### **2. Executive Board**

The Assembly Executive Board shall be composed of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. A Parliamentarian shall advise, but not vote on the Executive Board, as a member ex-officio; he or she shall also serve as a member ex-officio of the

Internal Affairs Committee. The Executive Board shall manage the operation of The Assembly and set the agenda for The Assembly,

Additional positions may only be created by a 2/3-majority vote of all voting Assembly members present.

### ***Section 2.02 Campus Caucuses of The Assembly***

Busch campus, College Avenue campus, Cook campus, Douglass campus, Livingston Campus and off campus/commuter members, shall have a Campus Caucus, with an internally elected Chairperson. Each Campus Caucus shall be composed solely of membership from its respective campuses. The role of the Caucus shall be to represent the student body for that particular community, as well as the entire Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway campus.

Off campus and commuter students shall be jointly represented by an Off Campus Caucus that shall consist of students not living in University housing.

**Campus Caucus Chairpersons shall be elected internally at the first meeting of the Campus Caucus following Fall elections.**

Campus Caucuses shall meet at least once every month but are encouraged to meet more often.

### ***Section 2.03 Professional Schools and Residential Colleges***

#### **1. Professional Schools**

Professional schools may have their own respective representative councils, independent of The Assembly, having legislative powers and an executive board, and internally elected representatives to serve on The Assembly. Membership shall be comprised of the professional school constituency. These councils may determine their preferred governance structure. The Professional School Councils shall elect a number of Senators as determined by the University Senate. Professional School Councils shall include Engineering Governing Council, Pharmacy Governing Council, Rutgers Business Governing Association, Mason Gross Student Government Association, and the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences Council.

#### **2. Residential College Councils**

The Douglass Residential College shall have its own representative council. This council shall be independent of The Assembly and shall be able to write resolutions pertaining to Douglass Residential College. The body shall have an executive board, and internally elected representatives to serve on The Assembly. The council may determine its preferred governance structure. The Douglass Residential College shall receive funds from the RUSA Allocations Board for programming that relates to the mission of the

Douglass Residential College.

In addition, the University College Council (UCC) shall have the status of a Residential College. Its funding status shall be determined by the RUSA Allocations Board.

Should the students of a professional school or similar unit desire to form a new representative council that will be recognized by and hold seats on The Assembly, they must submit a petition signed by 10% of their student body and appeal to The Assembly. The Assembly must approve their formation by a 2/3 majority vote of voting Assembly members present.

## **Article III. Committees**

### ***Section 3.01 Required Committees***

#### 1. Core Committees

The Core Committees are Academic Affairs, Legislative Affairs, Public Relations, and University Affairs. Their responsibilities shall be outlined in the Standing Rules.

Committee membership shall be open to all Rutgers University students but voting shall be limited to Assembly members.

#### 2. Standing Committees

The Assembly may create additional committees, which are called Standing Committees.

These committees may be created by a 2/3-majority vote of all voting Assembly members present.

#### 3. Internal Affairs

The Internal Affairs Committee shall be open to only voting members of The Assembly who are not members of the Executive Board.

The Internal Affairs Committee shall be responsible for all investigations of The Assembly, and when necessary, impeach members of The Assembly. **It shall be comprised of at least one member of every Campus Council. To remove a member from office, The Assembly shall follow the procedures outlined in the Standing Rules.**

## **Article IV. Eligibility, Elections, Impeachments**

### ***Section 4.01 Eligibility***

Eligible candidacy shall be open to all undergraduate Rutgers University undergraduate students

and must comply with federal laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, military service, political affiliation, and veteran status, and any other category protected by law. Students that do not successfully attain a seat on The Assembly through the election process shall not be prohibited from participating in any open meeting.

All undergraduate students enrolled in a professional school may vote and run for office in their respective Professional School Council or The Assembly.

Eligibility for class representative seats shall be based on credits earned correlating with University definitions of class year.

No member of the Assembly may serve in more than one externally elected position on the Assembly. No member of the Assembly may serve in more than one voting position in the Assembly. A member of the Assembly accepting appointment to a voting position in the Assembly shall immediately cause the member to vacate that member's previous position. Only students enrolled in the School of Arts and Sciences may vote for Senators representing the School of Arts and Sciences. Only students enrolled in the School of Arts and Sciences who reside on a particular campus may vote for the Senator representing the School of Arts and Sciences for that campus. Only students enrolled in the School of Arts and Sciences who do not live on campus, may vote for the Off Campus Senator representing the School of Arts and Sciences. Only students who are of a specific class year may vote for RUSA Representatives for that specific class year. Only students who reside on a particular campus may vote for RUSA Representatives for that campus. Only students who do not live on campus may vote for Off Campus Representatives. If an elected student switches campus or school during his or her term, he or she has the option of finishing the remainder of the term in his or her original position. In the event a seat becomes vacant, the representatives from that body may internally elect a new representative.

In the Fall elections, eligible students may vote and run for positions respective of their campus.

In the Spring elections, eligible students shall vote and run for office respective of the geographic campus on which they will reside in the following year. Students on a waiting list for housing shall be considered off-campus students. Graduating seniors shall not run for office in the Spring Campus Council elections.

### ***Section 4.02 Elections***

The President, Vice President, and Treasurer of The Assembly shall be directly elected in the Spring by the undergraduate students of Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway in accordance with all eligibility requirements enumerated in this constitution and elections guidelines. All other officer positions shall be elected internally. All Campus Caucus elections administered by The Assembly shall be determined by a plurality.

The Assembly Committee on Elections shall administer Fall and Spring elections for The

Assembly. Professional School Councils and Residential College Councils may administer elections in conjunction with The Assembly Committee on Elections. Professional School Councils and Residential College Councils may independently administer any additional elections to fill vacancies throughout the year.

The Assembly shall create a standard set of Elections Guidelines for use in Assembly elections. Assembly class representatives, except for first-year representatives, and senators shall be elected in the Spring. First year representatives and at large representatives shall be elected in the Fall. Eight Off Campus Council at large representatives shall be elected in the Spring, the remaining four shall be elected in the Fall. If a seat is left open during the Spring elections, it shall be treated as an at large representative seat in the Fall elections; if it remains open after the Fall elections, the campus council chair may appoint a student to fill it.

In the event of the President's resignation, the Vice President shall assume the Presidency, and the position of Vice President shall be put forth to an internal election. If the Vice President chooses not to assume the Presidency, the position of Presidency shall be put to an Internal Election at the next meeting of The Assembly.

### ***Internal Elections***

Each Campus Council shall have an internally elected Chairperson. The Chairperson of each Campus Council and Assembly Committee shall have been an elected member or an active participant of student government for at least one semester prior to his or her candidacy.

### ***Section 4.03 Impeachments***

To remove a member from office, The Assembly, Professional School Councils, and Residential College Councils shall follow the procedures in this section, and may adopt additional procedures.

The Assembly, Professional School Councils, and Residential College Councils shall utilize the Internal Affairs committee to review the membership of The Assembly. After a thorough investigation, this committee has the exclusive power to recommend a member of the council be impeached for omission of duty, violation of the council's governing documents, more than the allowed amount of absences, malfeasance, or mismanagement of funds. At the committee's discretion, a member of the council may be recommended for expulsion for additional reasons.

The accused member being impeached shall be tried at a closed meeting of The Assembly, and shall be given an opportunity to defend the charges brought against him or her. Said member shall not have a vote and shall not be counted amongst the number of voting members present. A 2/3-majority vote of all voting members present is required to remove a member from office. If the President is the member being impeached, the Vice President shall chair the proceedings.

## **Article V. Membership and Responsibilities**

### ***Section 5.01 Responsibilities of Members***

1. Campus Caucus Representatives:

- a. Represent the interests of their campus and its students.
  - b. Represent the interests of the entire Rutgers community.
  - c. At least one member from each Campus Caucus shall be a member of each of the core committees. All members shall sit on an Assembly committee.
  - d. The responsibility of the Chairpersons is to maintain contact with the administrators of their specific campus and organize and chair Campus Caucus meetings.
2. School of Arts and Sciences University Senators
    - a. Represent the interests of the New Brunswick/Piscataway campus at-large.
    - b. Shall serve on The Assembly.
    - c. Shall serve on their respective Campus Caucus.
    - d. Shall serve on an Assembly committee.

### ***Section 5.02 Voting Members***

1. Campus Councils
  - a. Each Campus Caucus shall consist of eight (8) representatives, with one (1) per academic year, and five (5) elected at-large. Students residing on-campus shall only serve as Representatives on the Campus Council for the campus on which they reside. Students living off campus shall only serve as Representatives of the Off-Campus Council.
  - b. The Off-Campus Council shall have fifteen (15) representatives, all elected at large.
2. Professional School Councils and Residential College Council Representatives
  - a. Professional Schools shall send one representative per nine-hundred (900) students enrolled in the school, or major fraction thereof, plus one.
3. University Senators
  - a. All School of Arts and Sciences University Senators shall sit on The Assembly. The number of University Senate seats is determined by the amount allocated to the School of Arts and Sciences, as outlined in the University Senate Handbook.
  - b. The President and Vice President of The Assembly may not serve as a Senator.
  - c. School of Arts and Sciences University Senators shall be distributed evenly across campuses and Campus Caucuses.
4. Cultural Umbrella Organization and Special Population Representatives
  - a. One representative from each cultural umbrella and special population organization, as listed in the standing rules, may sit on The Assembly as a full voting member.
  - b. The selection of these representatives shall be determined by said organizations.

### ***Section 5.03 Responsibilities of the Executive Board***

1. President of The Assembly
  - a. Serve as the official representative of The Assembly.
  - b. Shall have at least one year of experience on The Assembly.
  - c. Call special meetings of The Assembly when necessary.
  - d. Create subsidiary and ad-hoc committees when necessary.
  - e. Preside over meetings of The Assembly, Executive Board, and the Leadership Cabinet.

- f. Assign charges to The Assembly committees with the assistance of the Vice President.
  - g. Serve as an ex-officio member of all Assembly committees, excluding the Internal Affairs Committee.
  - h. File an annual report with the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education.
2. Vice President of The Assembly
- a. Assist the President with reports, meetings, and other appropriate tasks.
  - b. Serve as presiding officer in the absence of the President.
  - c. Oversee The Assembly committees.
  - d. Assign Assembly members to committees.
  - e. Serve in the capacity of the Presidency in case of vacancy or the President's inability to perform his or her duties.
  - f. Assume the position of the President upon impeachment or resignation.
3. Treasurer
- a. Develop and submit a semester budget for The Assembly to the Allocations Board.
  - b. Serve as a voting member on the Allocations Board.
  - c. Keep an accurate account of all funds of The Assembly and submit a regular report to The Assembly.
  - d. Oversee distribution and management of funds within The Assembly in accordance with the Allocations Board Guidelines.
  - e. Guide and support Professional School Council and Residential College Council treasurers.
4. Secretary
- a. Record the minutes of Executive Board and Assembly meetings.
  - b. Maintain a list of Assembly members and committee members and make the list available upon request.
  - c. Facilitate internal communication of The Assembly.
  - d. See that notices of all Assembly meetings, resolutions, and proposed amendments to this constitution are made available to the public.
  - e. Maintain attendance records.
  - f. Distribute all paperwork for The Assembly.
  - g. Ensure that documents get to the proper administrators or departments.
  - h. Outreach to various clubs on campus and report to them about The Assembly Activities. Maintain all correspondence with media and other external parties.
  - i. Responsible for The Assembly email correspondence.

***Section 5.04 Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members***

- 1. Non-voting, ex-officio members shall not be required to leave Assembly meetings during closed sessions, except impeachments, and shall be treated as equivalent to voting members during debate.



2. All Deans of Students and Student Involvement professional staff shall be non-voting, ex-officio members of The Assembly.

## **Article VI. Allocations Board**

### ***Section 6.01 Purpose of The Assembly Allocations Board***

The Assembly Allocations Board shall be the primary allocating board that distributes funding each semester to organizations registered with The Assembly. It shall have auditing power over these organizations, and it shall allocate funds for special events to these organizations.

The Assembly Allocations Board shall allocate funds to any registered student organization at Rutgers University or any special event fulfilling special event status, but shall not allocate to any organization affiliated with a Professional School Council funding board.

The budget prepared by the Allocations Board shall be submitted to The Assembly for approval. Once approved, the groups shall be notified within one week of their total allocation for the following semester.

### ***Section 6.02 Assembly Allocations Board Membership***

The Assembly Allocations Board shall consist of the following voting members:

1. Five officers of the Allocations Board, selected through an application process
2. Five at-large Rutgers University students, selected through an application process
3. The Treasurer of The Assembly, elected directly to The Assembly by the student body

Of the voting members, at least one member must be a student enrolled in a professional school or residential college, and at least one must be a student enrolled in the School of Arts and Sciences

The officers of the Allocations Board shall include the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Auditor, and Treasurer. A selection committee consisting of a Faculty/Staff Member, the outgoing executive board, and a member of The Assembly shall recommend candidates for these positions. If an Assembly, Professional School Council, or Residential College Council representative is selected to be an officer, that person shall vacate their Assembly or Professional School Council position. All officers must be confirmed by a majority vote of The Assembly.

The chair of the Allocations Board may not serve as an executive member of another student organization. Members of the Allocations Board who are also members of another student organization shall abstain discussing or voting on that organization's budget.

### ***Section 6.03 Allocations Guidelines***

The Assembly Allocations Board shall create a Guidelines document to facilitate the allocation of student fees to registered student organizations affiliated with The Assembly. These Guidelines, and any amendment to them, shall be approved by a 2/3-majority vote of all present voting members of The Assembly before taking effect.

### ***Section 6.04 Professional School Allocations***

The Professional School Councils shall receive eighty percent (80%) of the student activity fee of the students enrolled in that professional school, after any direct disbursement referenda fees are subtracted. The remaining twenty percent (20%) shall be given to the RUSA Allocations Board for distribution. Professional School Councils shall have the ability to waive this allocation, and instead have the student activity fee of students in the respective professional school allocated to The Assembly Allocations Board.

Student organizations must choose to affiliate and receive allocations from either the RUSA Allocations Board or a Professional School Council's funding board. Organizations may not change their affiliation more than once per academic year, and cannot affiliate with both the RUSA Allocations Board and a Professional School Council's funding board.

Each professional school organization must register with Rutgers University, through the Rutgers online registration process; however, the respective professional school may approve/deny that organization's application for registration.

One hundred percent (100%) of student fees collected from the graduate students of School 31, the School of Pharmacy, shall be directly dispersed to the Pharmacy Governing Council's Allocations Board. (The members of School 31 are students within their 5th or 6th year of the pharmacy program.)

## **Article VII. Standing Rules**

### ***Section 7.01 Establishment of Standing Rules***

The Assembly shall establish a document of Standing Rules to facilitate its operations. The Standing Rules shall function as an extension of this Constitution. All Standing Rules must be consistent with this Constitution, and where discrepancies exist, this Constitution takes precedence.

### ***Section 7.02 Amending the Standing Rules***

A 2/3-majority vote of the members present shall be required to approve and amend standing rules. Any member may submit an amendment to the standing rules. Amendments must be submitted in writing to the Internal Affairs committee, which may prepare the amendment for the executive committee to approve for an Assembly vote.

## **Article VIII. Constitutional Amendments**

### ***Section 8.01 Amendment Procedure***

Any member of The Assembly may submit an amendment to this constitution. Amendments must be submitted in writing to the Internal Affairs committee, which may prepare the amendment for the executive committee.

### ***Section 8.02 Amendments by Petition***

Two percent (2%) or more of the total combined number of undergraduate Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway students, as determined by the Office of the New Brunswick Registrar,

may propose amendments to this Constitution via petition.

The petition must be certified by the Internal Affairs Committee and may then be submitted to the students in the manner provided in Article IX.

## **Article IX. Referendums and Ratification**

### ***Section 9.01 Structure***

The referendum is the highest decision-making instrument available to Rutgers University students. It must be used to raise or lower student activity fees or any fee assessed to support student organizations recognized by The Assembly. A majority vote shall decide a referendum question and may only be overturned by a subsequent referendum in the same manner. Referendum questions must be explicitly written and once approved by The Assembly shall not be revised in any way. No referendum results shall be construed to limit the functions of any organ of The Assembly except as explicitly stated in the referendum question. The referendum shall be administered and validated by the Internal Affairs Committee. This committee shall determine rules and regulations for conducting the referendum. All rules and regulations must be approved by The Assembly. Any referendum concerning The Assembly that is not administered by the Internal Affairs Committee shall be null and void.

### ***Section 9.02 Procedure***

For a referendum to be valid, ten percent (10%) or more of the total combined number of undergraduate Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway students as determined by the Office of the New Brunswick Registrar must participate in the voting. A majority vote is required to pass a referendum. A referendum question shall be placed on the ballot if two-thirds (2/3) of The Assembly members present approve it to be, or if at least two percent (2%) of the total number of undergraduate Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway students petition The Assembly for such. The referendum question must be held no later than fourteen (14) school days after The Assembly approves it, unless The Assembly decides to extend that deadline by a 2/3-majority vote.

### ***Section 9.02 Ratification of the Constitution of The Assembly***

Ratification of this constitution requires the approval of a majority of at least two percent (2%) of the undergraduate student body of Rutgers New Brunswick/Piscataway. Upon ratification, this constitution will go into effect at the beginning of next Fall semester. Elections for that term will follow this constitution.

## **Article X. General Provisions**

### ***Section 10.01 Federal, State, and Local Laws***

The Assembly shall abide by all laws of the State of New Jersey and the United States as well as any local statutes, which may affect the actions of The Assembly.

### ***Section 10.02 University Regulations***

The Assembly shall abide by all rules and regulations of the University, including those that

apply to non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

This Assembly shall abide by all applicable rules and regulations of the University and under the privileges granted by the Department of Student Affairs and by the rules and regulations of the Board of Governors.