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PROFILE: [RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ](#)

This is the first of a series of U.S. college and university profiles for 2011-12 and it will be continually updated as new information becomes available to prospective students and their families as well as the author. Statistics provided for this profile have been provided from a variety of sources, most notably the U.S. Department of Education and the school itself. Any use or reproduction of this profile without the expressed permission of the author is prohibited.

Background and History of Rutgers-New Brunswick

Rutgers-New Brunswick has the largest undergraduate enrollment, nearly 30,000 students, of any public institution in the New York or Philadelphia metropolitan areas. It has been a state university for less than sixty years and has resembled a traditional university with separate undergraduate divisions by academic programs for only four. This has caused some growing pains, but this school is well on its way to resolving them.

The Class of 2011 was the first to graduate as members of a single university. This class was a milestone that will begin to change the institutional memory of the university among alumni and parents. Past graduates have identified themselves not as Rutgers graduates but as sons or daughters of single colleges that have their own unique histories. Rutgers-New Brunswick was a system of five federated colleges, each with its own unique history and academic programs. Admissions and academic requirements differed from campus to campus, even for the same major.

Rutgers tries very hard to preserve its colonial heritage, especially on its College Avenue campus, but the campus is promoted as a greater community with multiple residential and academic options. Alumni who graduated prior to the mid-seventies are more likely to think of Rutgers as an “academic” school that competed against other academic schools in sports. They are more likely to recall past football victories over Princeton than the last Big East win over West Virginia. *(Full disclosure: the author is a Rutgers-New Brunswick graduate who has been involved with alumni activities and also attended both of those football games).*

Originally founded as Queens College in 1766, the current College Avenue Campus became Rutgers College in 1825 when Henry Rutgers, a Revolutionary War hero and college trustee, donated \$5,000 and a bronze bell to help keep the college functioning. Winants Hall, which houses the Alumni Relations offices, was the first Rutgers

dormitory. From 1825 to 1972, Rutgers College was an all-male school. By the mid-1980s, it was a co-educational liberal arts school with over 10,000 students spread on three campuses—College Avenue, the Busch science campus and Livingston-- including the majority of undergraduates enrolled in the schools of business, engineering and pharmacy. Much of the architecture of the original Queens campus, as well as the nearby Voorhees Mall, dates back to the early 19th century. While Voorhees is a grassy “quad,” similar to those on other colleges founded in the same era, there are more memorials than seating places. However, quads like this one which are surrounded by busy vehicular streets tend to be less attractive for outdoor reading and resting because they are noisy when classes let out.

Cook College, originally known as the Rutgers Scientific School, was founded in 1864 after Rutgers was granted federal status as New Jersey’s land grant college. The Morrill Land Grant Act, signed in 1862 by President Abraham Lincoln, enabled Rutgers, as the state’s land grant college, to sell over 200,000 acres of land in what is now Utah. The funds were used to purchase farmland to establish the campus in New Jersey. One hundred nine years later, the school was named Cook College after George H. Cook, its first president, and offered a liberal arts and engineering curriculum that also incorporated education in agriculture and environmental issues. Today, Cook is known as the School of Biological and Environmental Sciences.

Douglass College, originally known as the New Jersey College for Women, was founded in 1918 by Mabel Smith Douglass and the state Federation of Women’s Clubs. A graduate of Barnard College (NY), Douglass worked with the federation to establish a women’s college that maintained a relationship with an all-male school, much like Barnard had with Columbia College of Columbia University. Later renamed Douglass College, the school was the largest and one of the last publicly supported women’s colleges in the U.S. Today it is known as the Douglass Residential College, offering a combination of academic, leadership and residential opportunities for women who indicate their interest in Douglass after they are accepted by the university. And, unlike the College Avenue Campus, Douglass and Cook share a large restful outdoor spot around a pond called Passion Puddle. There is a legend that if a male from Cook and a female from Douglass hold hands and walk around the water three times, they will be engaged.

Livingston College, which opened in 1969 in the wake of the civil rights movement, was the first truly co-educational liberal arts school within Rutgers. Named after William



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Livingston, the first post-colonial governor of New Jersey, the school linked academic programs with cultural awareness and social activism. Ethnic studies programs at Rutgers were introduced on this campus as were programs in journalism, urban studies and labor studies. Located in Piscataway on the same side of the river as Rutgers' Busch science buildings, the Livingston campus also hosted classes in biological sciences, chemistry and computer science. By the late 1970s, Rutgers College students also lived on this campus in the Towers residence halls. The School of Business was placed on this campus, too, and a new \$85 million business school building is under construction. Over time the Graduate Schools of Education and Social Work will also be relocated to this campus. Like the business school, they have large numbers of evening students who need access to parking and a less congested campus setting.

Until 2007 entering freshmen had a choice of affiliating with one of these four liberal arts colleges, even if they were pursuing degrees in engineering, education, performing arts or pharmacy. For liberal arts students, this was a curriculum choice as well as a campus choice. Transferring between schools meant meeting a different set of degree requirements and in some cases lengthened a student's education beyond four years. Options for multiple majors were difficult when a subject was offered in one federated college, but not the others. The introduction of a uniform arts and sciences curriculum ended such frustrations and confusion. The class that entered in 2009 had a 92 percent retention rate, among the best among U.S. public research universities.

While the university has graduated only one class as "one Rutgers," it is reasonable to expect that graduation rates will improve over the next four years. The School of Arts and Sciences curriculum is set up to accommodate students interested in multiple majors or transfer to the other pre-professional schools. The reorganization of liberal arts education at Rutgers, however, makes any look at past graduation rates almost irrelevant, though the classes that entered in 2003 and 2004 had a six-year graduation rate of 77 percent, according to the university's [2010-11 Common Data Set](#). This was among the top 150 four-year colleges and universities, public and private, as well as among the top 30 public research institutions in the U.S. And, while most state universities do not graduate half of their students within four years, 53 percent of the Rutgers entering class in 2004, two years prior to reorganization, graduated on time.



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Admissions

Prospective freshmen apply to the School of Arts and Sciences, the largest undergraduate division, the School of Business, the School of Biological and Environmental Sciences, the College of Engineering, the Mason Gross School of the Arts, the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, and the College of Nursing. Students interested in the schools of communications and information, management and labor relations and public policy must first enroll in the School of Arts and Sciences. Students may apply to multiple schools; it is not unusual, for example, for a science-oriented student to apply to Arts and Sciences, Engineering and Pharmacy at the same time.

According to Rutgers [2010-11 Common Data Set](#), the university places the highest importance on the rigor of the high school program, grade-point average, class rank and standardized test scores. Auditions for the music and theatre arts programs are also given high priority. Most other factors, including recommendations, the essay, extracurricular activities and work experience, are given consideration. Students apply online and self-report their high school transcript.

Among all new students in the 2010-11 freshman class, 36 percent scored 600 or better on the Verbal (aka Critical Reading) portion of the SATs, while 55 percent scored 600 or better on the math section of the test. Forty-four percent scored 600 or better on the writing section. Scores below 500 on any section might be cause for concern for future applicants; only 17 percent of entering freshman scored below 500 in Critical Reading compared with only nine percent in Math and 13 percent in Writing.

While there is no such thing as a typical Rutgers student, it is probably safe to say that a combined reading, writing and mathematics SAT score of 1700 or better plus a grade point average of 3.5 or better in a strong college-prep program with demonstrated leadership or extracurricular talents should be sufficient for an in-state student to gain admission to the School of Arts and Sciences. Eighty percent of entering first-year students ranked in the upper quarter of their high-school classes.

While Rutgers' SAT range falls below the median for the higher-ranked schools such as Virginia or UC-Berkeley, these numbers are still in the top ten percent of all U.S high school students applying to college. In addition, other schools within Rutgers, especially performing arts, business, engineering, nursing and pharmacy, are much harder to get into.



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In addition, Rutgers’ combined verbal and math SAT ranges are quite comparable to other highly ranked state universities such as Penn State and Wisconsin that attract large numbers of students from New Jersey. In-state students who come into Rutgers with these numbers or better have applied to a variety of schools, not only the state-supported schools that rank higher and admit large numbers of out-of-state students. The table below lists other types of schools considered by students who have applied to Rutgers.

School Type	Examples of Considered Schools
Very good private research universities-not Ivy League-in the Northeast	NYU, GW, Boston University, Syracuse, Georgetown, Boston College, Notre Dame, Fordham, Villanova, Northeastern, Drexel
Ivy League schools	Cornell, Princeton, University of Pennsylvania
New Jersey schools	The College of New Jersey, Ramapo College of New Jersey, Seton Hall University, Rutgers-Newark, New Jersey Institute of Technology (science and engineering)
Eastern state flagship state universities	University of Delaware, West Virginia University, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of Vermont, Virginia Tech
Smaller schools with strong business and/or engineering programs	Bucknell, Lafayette, Lehigh
Pharmacy schools	University of the Sciences (Philadelphia, PA), University of Rhode Island, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy

While Rutgers is the least-cost option for New Jersey students who are seeking the educational opportunities offered by a large research university, a [task force report](#)



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commissioned by Chris Christie, the state’s governor, mentioned that more of New Jersey’s college students attend college out of state than college students who come from any other U.S. state. The [task force report](#) mentioned that the following universities, all but one being a national research university like Rutgers, enrolled the most first-time New Jersey students during the fall of 2008.

School	State	Number of First-Time New Jersey Undergraduates
University of Delaware	Delaware	815
Penn State-Main Campus	Pennsylvania	669
Drexel University	Pennsylvania	631
New York University	New York	579
St. Joseph’s University	Pennsylvania	473
Temple University	Pennsylvania	443
Syracuse University	New York	389
Boston University	Massachusetts	381
West Virginia University	West Virginia	369
Cornell University	New York	359

New Jersey also has more personal and family wealth and more college-educated residents than most states. According to the U.S. Census, New Jersey ranks third in per-capita income, behind only Washington D.C. and Connecticut, second in median household income (behind Maryland) and first in the percentage of millionaires. New Jersey’s compact size, combined with its concentration of wealth, may provide two reasons why the state’s best students go to college out of state. The well to do can afford the higher tuition and quite often prefer not to go to a school too close to home.

And, while New Jersey is one of the wealthier states, it is also one of the most diverse. The Garden State is among the leaders in producing African American, Asian and



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Hispanic high school graduates. Diversity is also reflected in Rutgers' population. According to the U.S. Department of Education, eight percent of Rutgers students at the flagship campus are African American, 10 percent are Hispanic and 25 percent are Asian. The brightest graduates from under-represented minority groups, like the wealthier students, have a large choice of educational options inside and outside New Jersey.

The quality of the students, combined with their historical desire to leave the state, as well as higher-than-average in-state tuition and fees, has led Rutgers-New Brunswick to become a less selective school than it might otherwise be. Rutgers admits approximately 60 percent of its applicants. By comparison, leading state universities such as the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, the University of Texas-Austin and the University of Virginia admit less than 40 percent, including in-state residents. However, unlike these schools, New Jersey does not have a second large state university such as a North Carolina State, Texas A&M or Virginia Tech to take in the good to very good (as opposed to excellent) students while allowing the flagship to be more selective. Rutgers, which is located in the middle of an ethnically diverse state, has had to be capable of being the least-cost option to a wider cross section of bright people.

Given the productivity of New Jersey's high schools as well as a national advertising campaign, *Jersey Roots*, *Global Reach*, Rutgers has decided to go in a different direction for its flagship campus to become more fiscally sound and continually diverse while attempting to improve its U.S. and international profile. The university administration increased enrollment. Since the university announced its reorganization in the fall of 2006, full-time undergraduate enrollment has grown from 24,900 to nearly 29,000 students. During some of the worst economic times from 2008 to today, Rutgers has added more than 1,000 full-time undergraduates per year. However, the university has added more students at a time it has not been able to significantly increase the size of the faculty.

Bright students, whether they are from New Jersey or elsewhere, try to seek their best deal. It is quite realistic to expect Rutgers, given its location, plethora of housing options, and vast academic offerings, to take a shot at enrolling as many well-qualified students as it can. Students who earn Presidential Scholarships, which are essentially a free ride, as well as Scarlet Scholars, who receive a combination of merit-based and need-based assistance, will find Rutgers quite worthwhile.

Costs



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Rutgers in-state tuition and fees for 2011-12 run between \$12,800 and \$14,000 depending on the school selected. Approximately \$2,650 of this total is represented as a campus fee, which is not charged to commuting students. This fee covers on-campus services, including sports tickets and health services, which a commuter is less likely to use. Out-of-state tuition and fees, which run approximately \$26,000, are quite competitive with those charged by Delaware, Maryland and Penn State, among other leading state universities. For 2011-12, Rutgers limited tuition and fee increases to 1.6 percent and increased room and board by only 3 percent.

Prior to Rutgers' announcement of their tuition increase, the U.S. Department of Education had estimated that Rutgers' tuition and fees would increase by an average of slightly less than six percent per year for the next four years. Total estimated In-state tuition and fees for the next four years are approximately \$58,000. The four-year tuition totals for a New Jersey resident to attend other leading state universities were:

Delaware--\$128,000 or \$70,000 more than Rutgers in state
Maryland--\$113,000 or \$55,000 more than Rutgers in state
Michigan--\$162,000 or \$104,000 more than Rutgers in state
Penn State--\$122,000 or \$64,000 more than Rutgers in state
Wisconsin--\$108,000 or \$50,000 more than Rutgers in state
Virginia--\$159,000 or \$101,000 more than Rutgers in state

These cost differences equal, at the very least, the costs for an additional year at any school, public or private, in the country. This is something for students to consider if they are interested in declaring more than one major or attending a graduate or professional school.

However, not every student and the family pays the full sticker price for their education. Most pay a "net price," which, according to the U.S. Department of Education, is the total cost, including tuition, fees, books and a median level for room and board less scholarships and grants awarded through state, local, federal or institutional funds. The latest year that the Department has collected both tuition and fee information and net price information is 2008-09. In that year, the total estimated costs of a Rutgers education for a New Jersey resident living on campus were approximately \$26,300. However, the average net price was approximately \$20,700. The difference of \$5,600 represents an average discount of 21 percent. The average net price for students from



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low-income families, with earnings of \$30,000 or less, was approximately \$14,600, representing a discount of 56 percent.

Education Sector, a non-partisan, non-profit educational policy organization based in Washington D.C., cites a three-year (2006-07 through 2008-09) debt to credentials ratio for Rutgers-New Brunswick of approximately \$14,800. The ratio represents the total amount borrowed by all undergraduate students divided by the number of undergraduate degrees confirmed. It also reflects the average level of debt that students need to take on to complete their degrees. Publicly-supported schools that have excellent graduation and retention rates in states that respectfully subsidize higher education will typically have a lower ratio than those that do not. For example, the debt-to-credentials ratio at one of Rutgers' benchmark schools, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, was approximately \$7,650. But the ratio for Penn State, which charges higher tuition and fees, while receiving a lower percentage of state support than Rutgers, approached \$25,000.

Rutgers students are also more vulnerable to cuts in **federal** and state aid than students who attend many other leading state universities. **Twenty-five** percent of the undergraduate students are eligible for the federal Pell Grant, quite high for a leading state school. Ten percent receive assistance through the state-supported Educational Opportunity Fund, which is targeted to promising students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Rutgers has made aggressive commitments to support these students that date back more than four decades.

Institutional resources have been a large part of the problem. Rutgers' endowment at the close of 2009-10 was, according to the National Association of College and University Business Officers, approximately \$603 million, fourth lowest among *U.S. News'* top 25 public universities, ahead of only Clemson, Georgia Tech and The College of William and Mary, and the endowment covers all three of the university campuses in Camden, Newark and New Brunswick. This is significant, as leading colleges and universities tap into their endowments to make up for losses in financial assistance from other public and private sources. For comparison, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill has approximately the same number of students as Rutgers-New Brunswick, but its 2010 endowment was nearly \$2 billion.

Entering his last year as president of the university, Richard McCormick, son of a former Rutgers dean, and a former president of the University of Washington, is leading a \$1



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billion capital campaign to improve facilities, increase the number of scholarships and hire new faculty. Ten percent of this amount is dedicated to athletics as well. His administrative team and active alumni have raised approximately half of the goal. This is impressive considering that so much of the institutional memory is tied to the old federated colleges, including two formerly single-sex schools, that no longer exist. The success of this campaign should be reflected in a larger endowment for 2010-11 and 2011-12 as the new pledges go on the books. An increase in scholarship aid may either increase the number of students that the university can assist through their own funds, lower the average net price per student, or possibly both.

President McCormick has also called for a new state higher education bond issue to be placed on the state ballot in 2012 to help fund new facilities as well as the return of the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, now on the edge of the Busch campus, to Rutgers' administration. The medical school currently operates independently from the university. The addition of a medical school would make Rutgers a more important engine for job creation in New Jersey, as well as a venue for more significant academic and research opportunities, including the development of the undergraduate nursing and health professions programs.

McCormick, who also served as a provost at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, uses that school, as well as other leading public research universities, as benchmarks for Rutgers' future. This is prudent, as most of these schools have been able to deliver a quality education while better aiding their students.

Comforts

The availability of on-campus housing should be an important consideration for someone choosing a college, and it could lead many to choose Rutgers. Market rents in college towns such as Ann Arbor (MI), Austin (TX), Chapel Hill (NC) and Madison (WI) are higher than they would be for comparable on-campus housing. These communities are noted for a very high quality of life that attracts young working adults as well as retirees. These markets compete with the students for available space, and they have more money to spend. The most modern, and most expensive, private housing options in these towns are little different than the on-campus options available at Rutgers. Rutgers and similar schools have become better landlords for students. They can pass on lower costs and they do not ask for security deposits or full-year leases.



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Rutgers is one of the few public research universities that will become capable of housing more than half of its students in on-campus dormitories and apartments after new construction totaling 2,000 beds is completed by the fall of 2012. According to Greg Blimling, vice president for student affairs, 86 percent of entering freshmen, a class of over 5,000 students, requested on-campus housing. Housing lotteries and hotel room assignments, both a bane of student life at Rutgers, will become history after new on-campus apartments, now under construction on the Livingston campus, become ready for occupancy.

Instead of being limited to the residence hall options at a single liberal arts college, which had been the case until the fall of 2006, freshmen now have the choice of living on the campus of their choice. They can live within walking distance of a cow pasture on the Cook campus or hop a train ride to New York City if they're living on College Avenue. Accepted students may choose up to five housing options. Advance preparation to learn the likely locations of classes and ride the campus bus routes is strongly advised. Rutgers also hosts orientation events where students may meet and choose roommates before they apply for housing. Students may choose new roommates after two weeks, though the change request may not be prejudicial.

The majority of freshmen live on either the Busch or Livingston Campus. There are also honors dorms, special interest floors and traditional housing options on the other campuses. The Douglass campus offers housing strictly for women that accommodates 1,800 students. All dorms are wired for cable television and will be set up for wireless Internet by the fall of 2011. All students, including freshmen, may have cars, but they must pay a parking fee that allows them to park in a limited number of lots, none immediately adjacent to dormitories.

The oldest housing is located on the College Avenue and Douglass Campuses. Some of these buildings, most notably the Old Gibbons houses on the Douglass Campus and Demarest Hall on the College Avenue Campus, have the charm that is often associated with small prestigious liberal arts schools. New Gibbons at Douglass and the Bishop Quad on College Avenue are also popular choices along with modern suites adjacent to the student center on the Busch Campus. However, there are also taller brick and chrome buildings, the Lippincott and Katzenbach dorms on the Douglass campus and the River Dorms on College Avenue, that are less attractive aluminum and chrome Sixties designs.



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With the exception of football weekends, the Busch campus is quieter than either College Avenue or Douglass, though it hosts the most students. A new 500-bed dorm, which will also involve science students in a year-long problem-solving exercise—the first will address the environmental issues surrounding the BP oil spill— will open in the fall of 2011. The Busch Campus is expansive; any walk to anything, including classes, the student center, dining hall and the main library is longer from the dorms than it is on any other campus. The campus could be more bicycle friendly. There are no bike paths along the major roads between buildings, though bike racks are available outside classroom buildings, labs, the library and the student center.

The Livingston Campus has a 19th century residential college layout using a 1960s design featuring brick concrete buildings and walkways, and little of the greenery that one might see on a colonial campus. The original dorms were organized into three low-rise quads, a similar layout to the more popular dorms on the College Avenue Campus. The campus was also designed so that dorms, including a pair of residential towers constructed in the late seventies, and academic buildings were all within walking distance. Livingston students can walk to all but the athletic center, the health center and the gym without crossing a road. The apartment complex, now under construction, will also feature retail stores and a movie theatre. As a result, this campus will become a much larger social center than it is now.

Off-campus rents in New Brunswick and neighboring Highland Park range from \$1,200 to \$1,800 per month for a two-bedroom apartment; the higher priced units can accommodate as many as four students, the lower priced ones cannot. The City of New Brunswick will aggressively enforce an ordinance that mandates that no more than three unrelated people can live in an apartment, whether it is in an apartment building or a single floor of a house. Another off-campus popular housing option is older—pre-World War II homes closer to the College Avenue and Douglass Campuses that vary tremendously in quality. Homes that are located more than a ten-minute walk from the College Avenue Campus as well as those bordering the Douglass and Cook Campuses should be avoided.

Community

While not everyone who lives on a particular campus majors in a subject that is offered on their campus, living close to classes is a very practical thing for freshmen and sophomores. Otherwise they become dependent on the largest campus bus system on



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any university campus in the country. Day-time commuting students who do not live on campus are also asked to park in satellite lots and ride the buses on campus.

Rutgers is heavily reliant on buses because the campuses are divided by a river (the Raritan), two state highways (Routes 18 and 27) and an urban downtown business center (George Street in New Brunswick). Only one of these crossings is wide: the John Lynch Bridge that crosses the Raritan between the College Avenue campus and the Busch and Livingston Campuses. The rest are one or two lane roads that become extremely congested at morning rush hour (between 7:30 and 9:00 AM) and the evening rush hour (between 4:30 and 6:30 PM). For this reason, students learn to avoid first and last period courses away from the campus where they live.

Except for students who are fortunate to have all of their classes on one campus, Rutgers is not a “roll out of bed and head off to class” experience. The divisions between campuses and the dependency on buses force Rutgers students into one of two mindsets. Either they try to live close to classes and work and return home in between, or they think like commuters to a big city where you spend your entire day at classes and work and return home only at the end of the day to sleep and socialize. It is very difficult to split a day between two or more campuses.

First-semester freshmen get to know the buses because they get the last choice of available classes. After choosing courses at a spring orientation, they are assigned classes based on available space and the time required to travel between campuses. It is not unusual for them to have classes on more than one campus on the same day. Travel between campuses on crowded buses while juggling a laptop and a latte becomes tiring quickly. After the first semester, more courses become open to freshmen, including night classes that meet once a week and online classes via the internet.

Because Rutgers has been formed out of multiple schools and the campus is so expansive, the collective university lacks big-campus traditions, including “never say die” support for athletics. Yet while Rutgers is not a “sports” school along the lines of those that have played regularly for national titles in basketball or football, students and alumni will turn out in large numbers for winning teams.

The Rutgers Scarlet Knights, coached by Greg Schiano, a former NFL, University of Miami and Penn State assistant, have appeared in post-season bowl games in five of the past six seasons, while maintaining one of the NCAA’s best academic performance ratings.



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Students even organized a tent city called “Schianoville” in advance of their 2006 game against then second-ranked Louisville, the most important victory in the program’s history, and the coach rewarded them by buying pizzas. The university also set up temporary student stands for the game; a permanent section, the “Chop Shop,” has been built since. Prior to receiving their invitation to play in the 2005 Insight Bowl, the Scarlet Knights had played in only one post-season bowl, and that game, the 1978 Garden State Bowl, a 35-18 loss to Arizona State, was played in New Jersey. In 2006 the Scarlet Knights went 11-2 and finished 12th in the AP and *USA Today* polls. Ten members of that team, including Pro Bowlers Devin McCourty and Ray Rice, still play football on Sunday.

Rutgers has also enjoyed success in women’s basketball. Hall of Fame coach C. Vivian Stringer has taken her team to eleven NCAA tournament berths in 14 seasons, including two appearances in the national championship game. Stringer, who had previously taken Cheney University (PA) and the University of Iowa to the finals, was nationally lauded for standing by her team in the wake of racist comments by radio “shock-jock” Don Imus on the night before a national championship game in 2008.

Men’s basketball has hopefully ended its downswing with the hiring of Mike Rice as head coach in 2010. While Rice had a losing season in his first year at the helm, he has recruited one of the top freshman classes in the country. The men won a Big East tournament game, and they nearly upset St. John’s, a six seed in the NCAA Tournament, in the next round. The men have not appeared in the NCAA tournament in two decades while they play in one of the most competitive conferences in the country. Eleven of the 16 Big East teams appeared in the 2011 NCAA bracket, while Rutgers fans, with the team on the verge of a winning record, packed the Rutgers Athletic Center aka “The RAC” deep into the season.

But the Rutgers community will also shy away from watching losers. While Coach Schiano, for example, has been given credit for his team’s good fortunes, his compensation has been a focal point of criticism in bad times. Coming off a 4-8 season, alumni and the public have been offered mini-season packages and single game discounts for home football games. But, while other state universities that are traditional football powers ask alumni to make \$1,000+ donations when renewing their season tickets, Rutgers does not ask for such contributions. This past year, students contributed \$8 million to intercollegiate sports through their campus fee; the university added \$13 million. While these subsidies have served as an interim step to finance a 22-



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sport varsity athletic program, they have also generated resentment from the faculty union leadership and angry remarks through the New Jersey press. A counter-argument is that the revenue sports help to cover the costs of the facilities, equipment and medical resources that are also used by athletes who play non-revenue sports. Without football and men's basketball providing revenues, more of the costs of the non-revenue sports might be covered out of donations and student fees.

There is also more sensitivity to promote academic achievements to counterbalance athletic excellence at Rutgers than at most other state schools that have long sports traditions. Faculty are recognized at every home football game. During the 2007 season, the university hosted "Huddle with the Faculty" programs before home games, emulating a seasonal practice at Penn State. However, Rutgers does not have an on-campus hotel to host such programs, as Penn State does. This problem will be remedied when a new hotel-conference complex is constructed on the Livingston Campus over the next two years.

Outside of homecoming and Octoberfest, both associated with football weekends, Rutgers has no fall multi-campus events. And, after 39 years, Rutgers has cancelled its spring festival, Rutgersfest. In 2011, effective social media brought over 40,000 people to the event. There was an overflow of non-students, including underage high school students, onto Easton Avenue, the major college-oriented retail strip near the College Avenue Campus. The overflow, as well as two off-campus shootings, neither on the campus itself nor involving Rutgers students, led President McCormick to cancel future Rutgersfests. However, an annual Rutgers Day for students and alumni, which includes a well-attended Ag Field Day on the Cook Campus, takes place in late April.

The university community comes together at times when compassion or activism is required. In October 2010, nearly 1,000 students gathered in a candlelight vigil for Tyler Clementi, a gay student who committed suicide after his sexual encounter with another man was secretly viewed by others. The vigil led to widespread calls for more civility on campus by President McCormick, among others. At the end of the same month, the campus held a rally for Eric LeGrand, a football player who became paralyzed from the neck down after making a tackle on a kick-off against Army. Led in part by Coach Schiano, the university community has organized many fundraisers to help LeGrand, who is making a faster-than-expected recovery from his injuries.



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The Rutgers community has proven capable to unite around silly things, too. In April, 2008, 786 students broke the Guinness World Record for the “Largest Gathering of People Dressed as Ninja Turtles.” And, a year later, over 1,000 students and alumni, among others, captured the Guinness World Record for the “Largest Gathering of People Dressed as Waldo” to raise money for New Brunswick public schools.

In addition, students and alumni are not shy to raise their voices when student organizations bring in controversial speakers. For example, students voiced displeasure in the *Daily Targum*, the campus paper, as well as the state media over a decision to invite Snooki Polizzi, star of the television show *Jersey Shore* and pay her and an interviewer \$32,000 for their appearance on campus. There are feelings among students and alumni that Rutgers is “too academic” a school for speakers such as Polizzi, who still attracted more than 1,000 students to her program.

Unlike most flagship state universities which have a central student memorial union, each Rutgers campus has its own student center with university shops inside, auditoriums and meeting spaces inside—the College Avenue Campus has two—as well as its own student health center. Since the university’s campus layout has remained the same since reorganization, a Rutgers identity is still, at least for the short term, likely to be tied to the question, “Which college?” As a result of having multiple campuses, Rutgers has a vast selection of student events as well as programs open to the public. While The RAC, with 8,000 seats, is too small to be a concert facility, larger venues in Newark and New York City are less than an hour away by train.

But although the individual campuses have a vast selection of events, the College Avenue Campus still fills the role of social center. It is close to Easton Avenue, the most student-oriented street in downtown New Brunswick, and the fraternities which are scattered mainly between College Avenue and Union Street, a block away from the major campus buildings. College Avenue is the smallest of the five campuses, so it is also the most congested. Downtown parking is very scarce when Thursday night and weekend parties hit full steam.

Eating and drinking places along nearby George Street, the business center of downtown New Brunswick, cater more toward the daytime office workers—downtown New Brunswick is the headquarters for Johnson and Johnson as well as a county seat—until it meets up with Livingston Avenue where there is a Rutgers student apartment complex (Rockoff Hall) close by as well as three off-Broadway theatres, two affiliated



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with the university, which host student and professional productions. The theatres have successfully brought evening crowds into the downtown as well as providing performance, employment and internship opportunities for Rutgers students. In 1999, one theatre, the Crossroads, received a Tony Award for lifetime achievement in supporting the African-American stage.

Guided by Johnson and Johnson's decision to keep its corporate headquarters in the downtown in the 1970s, New Brunswick has witnessed a major commercial revitalization over the past 35 years. While its impacts on the downtown's physical appearance have been effective and the theatre district has brought in a new night life, there are still pockets of discount-oriented shopping on George Street mixed between high-end restaurants and luxury apartments, as well as retail vacancies. While there are student-oriented restaurants on George Street, there is little to no student-oriented retail shopping.

Rutgers built its public safety building in downtown New Brunswick, close to the Douglass Campus. The building's visibility, combined with a 24/7 Security Escort Program and a 100-student equestrian and bicycle Community Officer Program have helped to improve the perception of safety. The department also runs late-night shuttle bus programs. The Public Safety Department posts three crime reports on its website: two mandated by the federal Clery Act of 1998; the other, an internal affairs report, is posted by the department. The reported numbers of property, alcohol and drug-related crimes have unfortunately been on an upswing, according to the [school's Clery Report for 2006 through 2009](#). The report also mentioned 13 reported forcible and non-forcible sex offenses during 2009, though there had been eight total over the previous two years.

The City of New Brunswick also witnessed an upturn in violent crimes, including rapes, strong-arm robberies and aggravated assaults during 2008 and 2009. They have enforcement powers over students who share large homes immediately off-campus by College Avenue, Cook and Douglass. The university police and the local police forces for the six communities that surround the campus investigate crimes together and post daily crime alert reports on the Rutgers Public Safety website.

Curriculum

Rutgers-New Brunswick provides freshman-sophomore offerings that enable underclass students to work more closely with full-time faculty, but most introductory courses are



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in a large lecture format. This, combined with the campus buses, can make Rutgers seem less personal and more intimidating to first-semester freshmen.

Students in the School of Arts and Sciences are required to take only one course: “Expository Writing.” They must also complete 30 credits of distribution requirements in these areas.

- Writing (6 credits)
- Quantitative Reasoning (6 credits)
- Natural Sciences (6 credits)
- Social Sciences & Humanities (12 credits)
- Diversity (3 credits)
- Global Awareness (3 credits)

These distribution requirements make up approximately one-quarter of the credits needed to complete a degree. While a 12-credit math and science requirement may seem daunting at first to non-scientists, the offerings among the quantitative courses and sciences include accounting and statistical methods courses in the social sciences. One need not be forced into a large laboratory and lecture course in biology, chemistry or math for example, unless it is required for the major.

While there may be academic debate about the value of a “customized” course for non-majors, especially in mathematics or the sciences, versus a traditional lecture and laboratory approach supported by out-of-class tutorials, an effort to relate these subjects to other fields of interest or current events also helps non-majors to become better educated citizens. It also contributes to higher graduation and retention rates.

Rutgers-New Brunswick also offers unique honors programs and small seminar classes designed to bring students together with accomplished full-time faculty around topics of mutual interest. Honors programs are available within each school and include small-group honors courses and seminars, opportunities to conduct original research and senior-year capstone projects, and honors-only academic advising, faculty mentoring, residence life options, and other special services. There are also options to participate in learning communities that do not require admission to an honors program.

The School of Arts and Sciences also offers, among other opportunities, 100- and 200-level “Signature Courses” that have no pre-requisites and carry degree credit towards major or distribution requirements. These classes are designed, in part, around the



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research interests of the professor. Courses offered in the spring of 2011 included: “Eating Right—The Ethics of Global Food Policy”; “Global East Asia,” and “Sea Change—the Rise and Fall of Sea Level and the Jersey Shore.” Byrne Seminars, one-credit first-year courses, are offered by many university departments, including those at every professional school, cover special topics and are graded pass-fail. Limited to 20 students, each seminar is taught by a full-time faculty member. Byrne Seminars often incorporate field trips, guest speakers and lunchtime discussions.

Sixty percent of Rutgers undergraduates elect to conduct research with faculty members working in collaborative groups or as independent scholars, and these opportunities are not limited to students by major or grade-point-average. There are also more than 60 programs for those who wish to study abroad as well as a partnership with the United Nations Department of Public Information that focuses on diplomacy and foreign affairs.

The reorganization of the university by schools also made internship and cooperative education opportunities once available only to students at individual schools accessible to all students. As a complement to these offerings, the university is developing a one-credit pass-fail seminar taught by Career Services professionals as well as faculty members.

Beyond the freshman year, it is quite possible to enroll in smaller classes and get to know the more accomplished professors, especially in the liberal arts majors. However, business, engineering and pre-med courses all tend to continue in large lecture formats. While the ability to learn with minimal faculty interaction could be considered valuable, the more rewarding experiences come when students and faculty share creative or research interests. The opportunities to do this at Rutgers are many, but they are not forced upon all students. They are promoted, but it takes a little effort to seek them out. The most popular majors at Rutgers are psychology, economics, political science, communication and biological sciences.

According to the university’s [Common Data Set](#), 65 percent of the more than 3,700 faculty members at Rutgers are full time. Nearly all (99 percent) faculty members, full time and part time, hold a doctorate. The university calculates its student-faculty ratio of 13.6 to 1 based on the total number of undergraduate and graduate students (38,700) and the number of full-time faculty plus one-third the number of part-time faculty.



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Connections

Rutgers' Career Services center maintains offices on the College Avenue and Busch Campuses. Counseling services are available at both offices, while on-campus interviewing is conducted at Busch. In 2010, the Career Services staff met with nearly 15,000 unique student visitors—more than half of the undergraduate student body—in over 40,000 appointments.

Fifty-five percent of recent graduates work in New Jersey while an additional 10 percent work in New York City. In the 2011 senior survey, 31 percent reported offers before graduation, including students who participated in on-campus recruiting. Twenty-five percent continue their education after completing their bachelor's degree.

Rutgers hosts twelve on-campus job fairs and participates in an online event with the other Big East schools. Two on-campus events are the January and May New Jersey Collegiate Career Days, which are open to all New Jersey residents, including students and alumni who attend or graduated from out-of-state schools. Between 150 and 175 employers participate in these events. The Career Services team also hosts a graduate and professional school fair. The Rutgers Athletic Department also offers a career development event for student-athletes, who, due to their training and practice commitments, do not always have time to attend the other events.

[A September 2010 survey](#) of college recruiters conducted by the *Wall Street Journal* ranked Rutgers 21st among all large universities, public or private, and fifth among Eastern universities behind Penn State, Maryland, Carnegie Mellon and Cornell. The survey also ranked Rutgers third as a source for business and economics majors, higher than New York University or the University of Pennsylvania, both of which have been perceived to have more prestigious business programs. The results of this survey have value as they are based on comments from people who actually interview the students.

According to Richard White, director of career services, the university has also added majors with the needs of the state's business community in mind. For example, Rutgers' bio-medical engineering program was designed in part to serve the needs of the pharmaceutical and medical device industries. By 2010, the program graduated 93 seniors and become one of the 20 most popular courses of study at the university. The major, which started as an offshoot from electrical engineering now has the 2nd largest



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enrollment for a program of its kind within an U.S. engineering school. Rutgers has also launched an undergraduate degree in supply chain management that has caught attention from employers as well as an information technology and informatics program that combines information and business skills, as opposed to computer technology.

Through these events, workshops, counseling, online services, on-campus recruiting, as well as credit and non-credit bearing internship and cooperative education programs, Rutgers-New Brunswick offers students choices that only a large school can offer. They are also typical what students would find at universities that charge more than twice Rutgers' tuition. It also helps that the campus is within a 45-minute train ride from New York City, one of the largest job markets in the country, and is approximately an hour and a half from Philadelphia. New Jersey is also known as the "medicine chest" of the nation; pharmaceuticals and health care are two of the leading industries in the Garden State.

Following the graduation of the class of 2011, Rutgers has an estimated 400,000 living alumni from the Camden, Newark and New Brunswick campuses. Two-thirds reside between New York and Philadelphia while Chicago and Atlanta also have large young alumni communities.

All graduates are life members of the Rutgers University Alumni Association (RUAA) and may join any of over 100 charter groups by school, region or special interests. Interest groups range from former band and glee club members who gather regularly for their own concerts and reunions to dance and sports-oriented groups where students and alumni can row crew or play roller hockey. Similar to the alumni groups structured at prestigious schools such as Stanford, the charters provide a way for alumni to keep in touch with their alma mater through the activities they enjoyed as students.

Conclusion

Rutgers-New Brunswick has the academic breadth one would find at the most selective public universities such as Michigan or Virginia, both traditionally popular options for New Jersey's best and brightest, while also offering a larger selection of undergraduate housing options than these and other peer institutions.

Rutgers is also one of the most ethnically diverse flagship universities in the country, owing in large part to the diversity of New Jersey. And, being near New York City and



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Philadelphia, it is one of the best-located state universities for students and alumni seeking internship and career opportunities.

No state university is perfect. While Rutgers may be a least-cost option for bright New Jersey students, in-state tuition is high compared to similar schools, and so is the average net price, though the out-of-state charges are quite competitive. And, while Rutgers' student affairs and alumni relations teams, helped by recent sports successes, work exceptionally hard to develop a sense of community, the campus is spread out to the point of being an intimidating place for students who are not enrolled in an honors program. While the appearance of the nearby downtown has improved dramatically over the last three decades, and Easton Avenue has the some of the same eating and drinking places one might find in Berkeley or Madison, New Brunswick does not have most of the student-oriented shopping options found in these and other college towns that host a large state university, and the city may be unsafe after hours.

But overall, the quality of education, as well as the quality of life, at Rutgers has improved year-by-year under President McCormick's leadership. A freshman retention rate of 95 percent and a six-year graduation rate of 85 percent are not beyond possibility, given improvements in student life, less confusing academic requirements and the various honors and research opportunities. These numbers represent performance standards for a "best" state-supported research university.

The leading state universities, including Rutgers, also try to protect the history of their campus to ensure that it will wear well over decades, generations, and for Rutgers, centuries. Alumni identify with the history; the happiest expect to pass on that identity to their offspring. Rutgers is not the only large public university that has tried to protect its roots while managing expansion at the same time. However, it may be the only one that has had to try to preserve so many of the remnants of a heritage drawn from much smaller schools.

While the media coverage of the football program has highlighted some of the growing pains of the transition to a single flagship university, support for the reorganized academic objectives of President McCormick, faculty, administrators and alumni leaders is widespread, based upon the university's success in the first year of its \$1 billion capital campaign.



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The leading state universities never remain static as they fulfill their missions in education, research and public service, making it difficult for any one school to move up any type of national ranking. Even in the wake of reduced public subsidies, they must maintain academic excellence more than any publicly supported institution. The commitments to excellence are noticeable when you travel between the campuses at Rutgers--even when you are looking through the window of a crowded campus bus.



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THE REPORT CARD: [RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK](#)

Costs B+ 16/20 points

Pluses

Competitively priced tuition and fees for out-of-state students—around \$25,000—considering location.

Least-cost option for New Jersey residents seeking a research university education.

Presidential Scholarship Program a great deal—for students who qualify—as are Scarlet Scholar awards.

Limited tuition increase for 2011-12 to only 1.6 percent and the fee increase to three percent.

Raised half of \$1 billion commitment for seven-year capital campaign in only one year.

Ten percent of entering freshmen assisted through state Educational Opportunity Fund.

Average need-based scholarship or grant assistance is approximately \$12,000, nearly full-tuition.

Minuses

High in-state tuition for a state university.

Vulnerable to cuts in federal Pell Grants and state Tuition Aid Grants, which have been cut per student over past two years.

Fourth lowest endowment among top 25 public universities—difficult to go into institutional resources to make up student losses of federal or state assistance.

While some scholarship programs are generous, only a third of all students receive merit or need-based scholarship aid.

Comforts: A 20/20 points

Pluses

\$215 million investment in mixed-use development—retail/theatre/1,500 beds



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apartments on Livingston Campus, opening Fall 2012.
New 500-bed dormitory on the Busch science campus, opening Fall, 2011.
More than half--16,000 of 29,000 undergraduates-- can be housed on campus by Fall, 2012, a very high percentage for a public university. Today Rutgers has the 2 nd largest campus housing operation in the U.S. (after Michigan State).
Huge assortment of housing and campus options: dorms, houses, suite arrangements, special interest groups, honors program students. New construction should mark end of the practice of housing lotteries for continuing students.
All dorm rooms should be Wi-Fi enabled by Fall, 2011. Previously common areas were Wi-Fi while rooms required Ethernet cable connections. Also refrigerator and microwave ovens in rooms.
Price difference between suites and traditional dorm room arrangements is very low, about \$200.
RU Express portion of student ID allows meals to be purchased at student center and off-campus restaurants as well as the dining halls.
Global Village Communities and Learning Communities offer advising, student development and academic credit.
Minuses
Not all dorm rooms have air-conditioning, especially older College Avenue and Douglass residence halls and houses built in 1960s and earlier. However, three of the older College Avenue Campus dorms will be taken off-line for renovations during the 2011-2012 school year, while another will be repurposed for a non-residential use.
While all students may have cars on campus, dorm residents may not park them by their dorms.
Apartment units have been built on the edge of each campus making access to a car more necessary for major food shopping.
Comforts come at a price. \$11,000+ is high cost for room and board. However, off-campus two-bedroom apartments in New Brunswick or Highland Park run between

\$1,200 and \$1,800 per month and require security deposits and full-year leases. The option exists for larger groups (four or more students) to share older homes within walking distance of the College Avenue campus.

Student health buildings have not modernized though each campus has a large student population. The one on the Livingston campus faces the busy access roads to the basketball arena and is a long walk from the campus residence halls.

Community: B 12/20 points

Pluses

One of the most diverse state universities in the country. Nearly one-third African-American, Asian and Hispanic.

Diversity contributes to larger selection of cultural and news-related events as well as dynamic political activism on campus.

Tickets to all sports events are free on first-come, first served basis.

Student centers recently modernized on all campuses.

Modern athletic and workout facilities, except for the College Avenue Gym and the basketball arena.

Choosing the campus that is the best fit can present rewarding opportunities (examples): Douglass Women's Leadership program, Busch science dorm.

Fraternity membership unnecessary for having a social life.

Over 50 club sports as well as NCAA Division 1 intercollegiate athletics.

Minuses

Although separate colleges no longer exist, reliance on buses and tight parking lead to perception of separate campus communities. It's important for students to find "anchors," clubs or activities where it is possible to make friends, in a university setting where everyone has to travel.

Convenient location—near two commuter rail stations and two NJ Turnpike exits as well as being at center of a small state—makes it too easy for people to pack-up and leave



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on the weekends.
Although students have supported successful football and basketball teams, there is not the school spirit that one would find at schools with a stronger athletic tradition and a past history of championships where fans turn out in droves, win or lose.
New Brunswick lacks the retail mix and feeling of safety found in other college towns that surround some of the leading flagship state universities.
Need to be careful to plan home and school around majority of classes. Try to live on same campus as vast majority of classes or plan to be a bus commuter each day.
Campus buses, while running every 10 minutes on class days, run every 40 minutes on weekends. Weekend trips across campus can be tedious.
Curriculum: A 20/20 points
Pluses
Broad selection of honors and special interest programs, including some tied to housing.
Arts and Sciences distribution requirement lets students explore choices that do not force them into large lecture courses for subjects they may be weakest.
Bryne Seminars offer close contact with senior faculty for freshman on a less risky pass-fail basis
Sixty percent of the student body takes advantage of opportunities to do research with professors.
Over 60 study abroad programs.
Eagleton Associate Program in practical politics available to juniors in all majors.
“Signature Courses” available at 100 and 200 level to freshman and sophomores.
One-credit Career Services course offering encourages early career planning.
Winter session and summer session options available to enable students to add majors or graduate earlier.



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Minuses
Aside from expository writing and seminars, most introductory freshman and sophomore courses in natural, physical and social sciences are large lecture classes.
No offerings in architecture or industrial and product design.
Connections: A 20/20 points
Pluses
Estimated 400,000 living alumni. One of the largest networks in the country.
Alumni more active and engaged through social media as well as recent successes of the football team.
Alumni are members of the Rutgers University Alumni Association for free and for life. They also receive a comprehensive alumni magazine three times per year.
Estimated 15,000 unique users of Career Services in 2010, more than half the undergraduate student body. Colleges typically engage one-third of their students with career services.
Twelve in-person on-campus job fairs including New Jersey Collegiate Career Days in the winter and spring following the conclusion of classes.
Excellent access to New York City and Philadelphia job markets through mass transit.
On-campus interviewing program attracts over 200 employers per year recruiting for full-time positions and internships. Especially strong recruiting in accounting, business, economics, engineering, life sciences, information systems, physical sciences and pharmacy.
Career services makes extensive use of online and social media as well as in-person appointments for student advising.
Alumni relations charter groups enable alumni to remain active in their favorite student activities or join regional clubs that organize events close to home. In addition to NYC and Philadelphia, Rutgers has strong young alumni base in Atlanta and Chicago areas.



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Career Services conducts a virtual job fair with other Big East schools.
Minuses
University has few athletic or social traditions considering its history.
Alumni network in Boston and Washington D.C is small.
Institutional memory of a very different university, presenting future alumni relations challenges to engage classes that graduated in the sixties through the eighties.
The RU Screw, a symbol for incompetent customer service, is also a large part of the university's institutional memory.
TOTAL SCORE: 88/100