

Rutgers Board of Governors Meeting, December 14, 2011
Revised Agenda Item 8a: Rutgers/UMDNJ reorganization
Remarks by Ira J. Roseman, Professor of Psychology, Rutgers Camden

My name is Ira Roseman. I'm a tenured professor in the psychology department at Rutgers-Camden. Like several members of the Board of Governors I have a degree from Columbia, and I did my doctoral work at Yale. My work on cognition and emotion is widely cited in my field. This is my 20th year at Rutgers.

In 2003, I was a member of the Rutgers-Camden Faculty of Arts and Sciences' Ad Hoc Committee on University Restructuring. Dr. Jesse Whitlow and I conducted a survey on faculty attitudes toward issues raised by the 2003 restructuring proposal, and reported the results to the Faculty Senate in Camden. Among those responding to the survey, there was greatest agreement on the issue of our campus maintaining the Rutgers name: fully 92% said it was "extremely important" that our campus keep "Rutgers" in its name.

According to recent letters to Dr. Izzo from representative bodies of current Camden faculty in Arts & Sciences, and the schools of Business and Law--approved unanimously--there is strong faculty support today for keeping our campus within the Rutgers system. These letters emphatically state that professors at the top of their fields have come to and remain at our campus because we are a part of Rutgers, with its international reputation, strong research orientation, and world-class university-wide library resources. Severing these ties would significantly hurt recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty within the Rutgers system.

As illustrated by coverage in our campus newspaper, students are also extremely upset about the possibility that they could lose their connection to Rutgers, attained through much hard work and often significant financial sacrifice. As one student put it: "Who wants a degree from a college that doesn't exist anymore?" Thousands of Rutgers-Camden alumni would be alienated by loss of their Rutgers identity. Millions of dollars in donations to Rutgers by Camden alumni would also be jeopardized.

Breaking up the state university system would deny many citizens of South Jersey access to a Rutgers education and a Rutgers degree. Many of our students work full time, and many live at home--they do not have the money or the time to go to school in New Brunswick or Newark. As you well know as members of the Board of Governors, the first mission of Rutgers is "providing for the instructional needs of New Jersey's citizens." We are Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey--not the state university of North Jersey.

I was gratified to read President McCormick's letter to Professor Lees affirming that the administration and the Board view the Camden campus as essential to the university's mission, and are fully committed to its future as a part of Rutgers. For all the reasons I have mentioned, I urge you to take the four steps suggested today by Professor Golden and do whatever else is necessary to prevent the breakup of the state university system that is in your charge.