

Rutgers Council of AUP Chapters

American Association of University Professors ~ American Federation of Teachers

Dear Ms. Oates:

We are writing to inform you about some important developments at Rutgers University that are eroding professional standards for faculty and threatening the quality of education for undergraduate students.

In anticipation of the impending budget cuts the number of courses assigned to some of our most dedicated teachers is already being increased. Teaching more classes and more students is bound to impact on the vitality of classroom instruction and the quality and quantity of assessment and evaluation. That translates into less time per student, more standardized assignments and less student writing. High quality language and liberal arts instruction in particular requires one-on-one attention to writing. We can also reasonably expect that increased teaching loads will disrupt mentor and advising relationships essential to learning communities and distract an already fully committed faculty away from curriculum development and long term planning.

Approximately 260 faculty members at Rutgers are non-tenure track annual professors. Non-tenure track faculty already teach a growing number of undergraduate courses and the proposed increases in course assignments means that they will teach even greater numbers of students. At Rutgers fulltime non-tenure-track faculty make up 6% of the teaching faculty yet currently teach 12% of the courses (many on an introductory level with hundreds of students).

Non-tenure-track faculty of all types (for example, 350 are researchers that do not teach) make up 24% of the fulltime faculty. Between 1997-2005 the number of tenure-track faculty at Rutgers has decreased by 3%, while the number of fulltime non-tenure-track positions has increased by 69%.

We encourage the Governor to work with the Legislature to restore funding to faculty salaries. If the cuts continue and workload is increased the cost will ultimately be shouldered by the teachers and students of New Jersey.

Sincerely,

The Steering Committee of the Non-Tenure Track Caucus of the Rutgers AAUP-AFT

Dave Hochfelder (Edison Papers)
Martha Haviland (Life Sciences)
Don Siegel (Chemistry and Chemical Biology)

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