

## **Resolution on the University intercollegiate athletic program**

We hereby call on the University administration and the Board of Governors to increase the transparency of the intercollegiate athletic budget; to reduce the University subsidy of the intercollegiate athletic program; and to put the question of compulsory student fees for athletics to a student referendum.

During fiscal 2010 – the last year for which complete figures are available – the University's total subsidy to the athletic program was \$26.9 million: 42 percent of the total athletic budget. (\$18.4 million came from University discretionary funds; another \$8.4 million came from student fees.) This was over 50 percent more than the median for the 120 largest programs in the NCAA. Since fiscal 2005, the University has poured \$135 million in student fees and discretionary funds into the program, and has spent hundreds of millions more to build or upgrade athletic facilities. In September 2011, the administration announced that the University's subsidy from discretionary funds for fiscal 2012 would be \$1 million less than the fiscal 2011 figure. This is a step in the right direction, but it amounts to a reduction of only about five percent. Moreover, even after this cut, the fiscal 2012 subsidy paid via discretionary funds will be \$500,000 *higher* than in fiscal 2010; and student fees will push the budget up by at least an *additional* \$600,000 relative to fiscal 2010.

The Rutgers Athletic Director recently told Bloomberg that athletics doesn't make enough money to do without the University subsidies, and President McCormick has admitted that athletics will probably never make money for the University. This should come as no surprise: even previously obscure institutions like the University of Central Florida and Boise State now compete in athletics at the national level. As more and more institutions seek a piece of the pie, they drive up costs. And since other institutions don't want to be left behind, they ratchet up their spending on athletics still further. The result is an arms race with no nonproliferation treaty that imposes ever-higher costs on every school that participates.

In sum, as all these developments tell us, spending large amounts of money has not moved, and will not move, Rutgers to the top in athletics. Likewise, it is a delusion to think that the Rutgers athletic program would finally do better if only we spent still more money on it.

Even as the University has steadily increased its subsidies to the athletic program, both State government and the University administration have steadily reduced funding for the academic program. In the three fiscal years ending in June 2012, state funding for Rutgers fell by \$29 million. Faculty and staff salaries have been frozen; academic departments have had to take away professors' desk phones; tuition and student fees have increased; doctoral program enrollments have been cut; class sizes have gone up; course offerings and hiring have been curtailed. Since departments can't afford to hire regular faculty, they increasingly have to make do with part-timers, adjuncts, and graduate students to cover their swollen enrollments.

The consequences of the University's cuts to the academic program were entirely predictable. In 1997, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Rutgers sixteenth among undergraduate programs at major state-supported universities; as of Fall 2011, Rutgers had slipped to a two-way tie for #25. In the Academic Ranking of World Universities (the "Shanghai ranking"), Rutgers fell from #38 (in 2003) to #59 (in 2011). In 1995, the National Research Council ranked eleven of Rutgers' graduate programs among the top 25 in their respective fields; in the latest rankings, released last fall, there were only eight.

Thus, the University administration and the Board of Governors have led the University into the worst of all possible worlds: a costly but unsuccessful athletic program, and an academic program under severe threat.

We therefore call on our colleagues and on faculty and student organizations to join with us in asking for new priorities and procedures concerning the athletic program:

- There is a serious lack of transparency concerning the athletic program budget; this must change. At present, the athletic program budget is not disclosed for at least six months after the end of each fiscal year, and information on program expenditures and revenues is closely held. We ask the University administration to report annually to the faculty on its three-year plan for the athletic budget. The first such report, to be presented no later than February 1, 2012, would review the fiscal years 2011, 2012 and 2013, and would discuss, in particular, the projected University subsidy and student fee allocation for athletics in these years.
- It is time to recognize that the athletic program budget is unsustainable and – in this era of financial stringency – imposes unacceptably large demands on the University’s resources. We call on the University administration and the Board of Governors to freeze the dollar amount of the University subsidy for fiscal 2013 at the level planned for fiscal 2012, and to reduce the subsidy amount in every subsequent fiscal year until, as of fiscal 2016, the subsidy is no more than \$13 million (approximately \$1 million below the average level of the subsidy during fiscal years 2005-2007).
- We ask that the question of compulsory student fee allocations for the athletic program be put to a student referendum no later than March 1, 2012, and that in the absence of a majority vote these fee allocations be eliminated completely by July 1, 2013.