

Improving Graduate Employment
at Rutgers University

2018

A White Paper developed by Rutgers AAUP-AFT

on behalf of and with input from the Rutgers Graduate Community

THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF PRIORITIES AT RUTGERS

Public universities across the U.S. are experiencing a trend of mass corporatization, buoyed by the logic of economic austerity, and over the past decade Rutgers has shown itself to be very much a part of this trend. The following report enumerates quantitative (mostly financial) data and survey testimony from campus graduate workers shedding light on how the university's priorities are changing, and how material and experiential inequalities and worker precariousness are on the rise as a result. Our demands in the latter part of the report are a challenge to the University to reverse these trends and to revive its stated mission, specifically that "Rutgers is dedicated to teaching that meets the highest standards of excellence," which we believe Rutgers has largely abandoned in these years of economic restructuring.

In the 2016-17 academic year, 20.9% of Rutgers's total expenses were devoted to instruction, ranking near the bottom of the Big Ten.¹ Between 2004 and 2013 instructional expenses hovered around 35%; however, the figure began to plummet around 2010 (Figure 1).² In place of academics, Rutgers has dumped disproportionate amounts of money into its athletics program as well as into the salaries of a few elite administrators and toward the expansion of departmental administrative positions. While higher salaries for administrators is troubling as it demonstrates a growing positional hierarchy at our university (an unprecedented 247 administrators and sports coaches made over \$250,000 in 2017), the overinvestment in athletics represents a clear betrayal of the academic mission.³

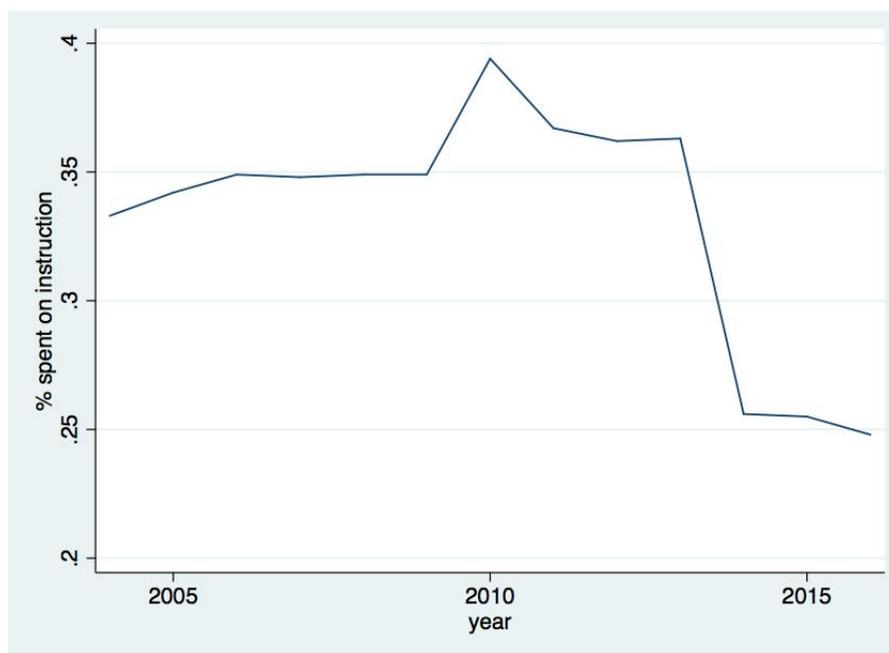


Figure 1. Percent spent by year on instruction between 2004 and 2016 at Rutgers.

Rutgers University Audited Financial Statements, 2004-2017 Found online at: <https://uco.rutgers.edu/financial-statements>

Financially speaking, Rutgers's operating budget for athletics has increased by 168% since 2008 -- while Rutgers spends about \$13,000 per student on instruction, for example, an extraordinary \$100,000

¹ Rutgers University (20 July, 2016). "Resolution Approving Fiscal Year 2016-17 Working Budget." Found online at: <http://budget.rutgers.edu/sites/budget/files/Final%20BOG%20FY17%20Budget%20Resolution.pdf>

² Rutgers University Audited Financial Statements, 2004-2017. Found online at: <https://uco.rutgers.edu/financial-statements>

³ Bunsis, H. (2017). "Open the Books" presentation. Rutgers University.

is spent per athlete.⁴ Inequalities within the athletics department are especially stark: Rutgers spends more than twice as much on men's sports (\$37 million in 2016) than it does on women's (about \$16 million), and a disproportionate amount of the money Rutgers does make on athletics is dependent on athletes of color, who not only go uncompensated but whose academic pursuits are actively undermined by pressure from sports programming.⁵ Most troublingly, investigative journalists at the New York Times and NJ Advance Media found that in 2016 Rutgers took out bank loans to sustain a failed football program, accruing tens of millions of dollars of interest every year while simultaneously keeping this information out of the public's eye.⁶ Moreover, 34% of Rutgers's athletics funding is paid for by student fees -- a sum much larger than student subsidies of athletics programs at any of the other 13 Big Ten schools.⁷

The most dire ramification of this economic realignment has been an adjunctification of both faculty and graduate instructional roles. There is a clear parallel between the replacement of tenure-track positions with non-tenure track positions in faculty and the replacement of TA and GA positions with less-than-full-time TAs or GAs and adjunct positions in classrooms. This parallel has expanded into research spaces as more graduate assistantships have been replaced with hourly laboratory positions. Essentially, the situation for full-time faculty and graduate student workers alike is an increased workload with a decrease in pay, overall benefits, stability, and respect. It should also be noted that the concentration of female instructors and faculty of color is greatest in more heavily exploited instructional positions -- namely PTLs⁸ ⁹. As Rutgers rushes to satisfy the bulk of its academic mission with PTL labor, it systematically increases racial and gendered inequality.¹⁰

Not only is this trend a disservice to our teaching staff as well as to the workers and families of the state of New Jersey, but also to undergraduates whose tuition, incidentally, has risen 40% since 2008.¹¹ Simultaneously, over these past ten years Rutgers has also increased its enrollment of undergraduate students by 36%¹², resulting in larger class sizes and the need for more teaching positions. In addressing this need, Rutgers has made its economic priorities clear by increasing PTL positions by 217% (from 925 to 2,008 hires) and non-instructional positions by 241% (from 6,351 to 15,332), while increasing full-time instructional positions by only 11% (2,777 to 3,076) and *decreasing* overall TA positions.¹³ The consequences of these hiring practices is the bureaucratization and fragmentation of academic departments, while piling on instructional loads. Complementing these changes in the classrooms is a precipitous drop in GA positions (historically for lab work); these positions have been replaced nearly wholesale with hourly, non-union, and non-healthcare receiving positions.¹⁴

⁴ http://www.nj.com/rutgersfootball/index.ssf/2017/01/rutgers_athletics_subsidy_jumps_to_286m_after_year.html

⁵ For data on male-female sports funding, see Equity in Athletics Data Analysis (EADA) via U.S. Dept. of Education. <https://ope.ed.gov/athletics/#/>. Hawkins, B. (2013). *The new plantation: Black athletes, college sports, and predominantly white NCAA institutions*. Palgrave Macmillan; Clift, B. C., & Mower, R. L. (2013). Transitioning to an athletic subjectivity: first-semester experiences at a corporate (sporting) university. *Sport, Education and Society*, 18(3), 349-369; Upthegrove, T. R., Roscigno, V. J., & Charles, C. Z. (1999). Big money collegiate sports: Racial concentration, contradictory pressures, and academic performance. *Social Science Quarterly*, 718-737.

⁶ Powell, M. (2017). "Chasing Big Sports Goals, Rutgers Stumbles Into a Vat of Red Ink." *New York Times*. Retrieved at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/12/sports/rutgers-university-athletic-department-deficits.html>; Dunleavy, R. (2017). "Rutgers athletics subsidy jumps to \$28.6M as coaches' buyouts piled up in 2016." *NJ.com*. Retrieved at: http://www.nj.com/rutgersfootball/index.ssf/2017/01/rutgers_athletics_subsidy_jumps_to_286m_after_year.html

⁷ Bunsis, H. (2017). "Open the Books" presentation. Rutgers University. This data can also be found at Equity in Athletics Data Analysis (EADA) via U.S. Dept. of Education. Found online at: <https://ope.ed.gov/athletics/#/>

⁸ AAUP (2011). "Persistent Inequity: Gender and Academic Employment". Found online at: https://www.aaup.org/NR/rdonlyres/08E023AB-E6D8-4DBD-99A0-24E5EB73A760/0/persistent_inequity.pdf

⁹ Flaherty, C. (2016) "More Faculty Diversity, Not on Tenure Track" Found online at: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/08/22/study-finds-gains-faculty-diversity-not-tenure-track>

¹⁰ AAUP-AFT (2017). "Faculty Demographics, 1997-2017." Data collected internally.

¹¹ Bunsis, H. (2017). "Open the Books" presentation. Rutgers University.

¹² Rutgers University (2018). "Facts & Figures." Found online at: <http://www.rutgers.edu/about/facts-figures>

¹³ Bunsis, H. (2017). "Open the Books" presentation. Rutgers University.

¹⁴ Kukor, J. (August 26, 2018). "Decline in GAs on Research Grants at Rutgers." Graduate School of New Brunswick, Rutgers University.

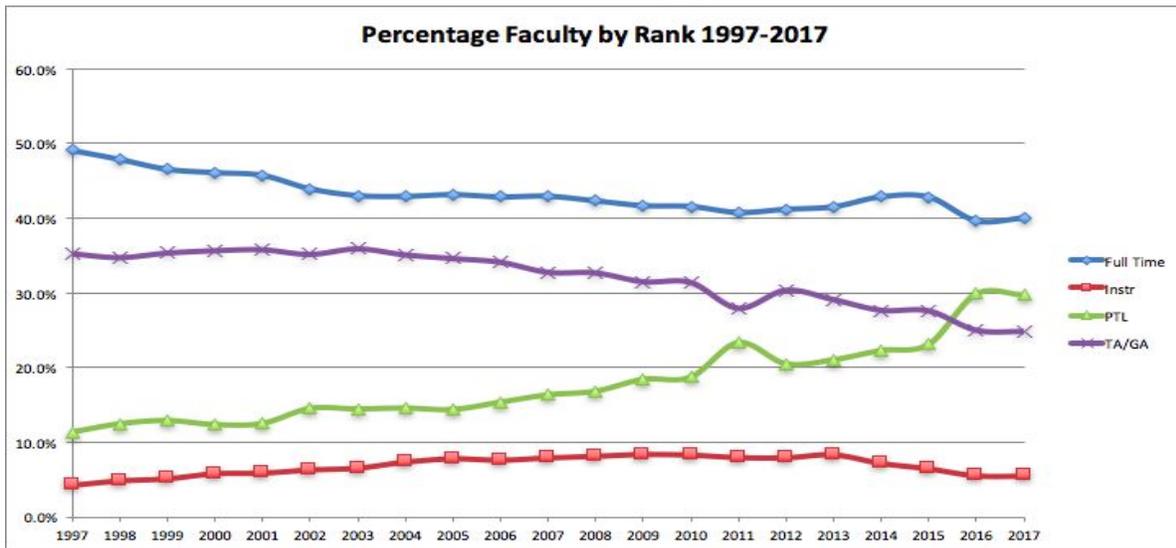


Figure 2. Changes in teaching positions between 1998 and 2017 for graduate workers and faculty.

Bunsis, H. (2017). "Open the Books" presentation. Rutgers University.

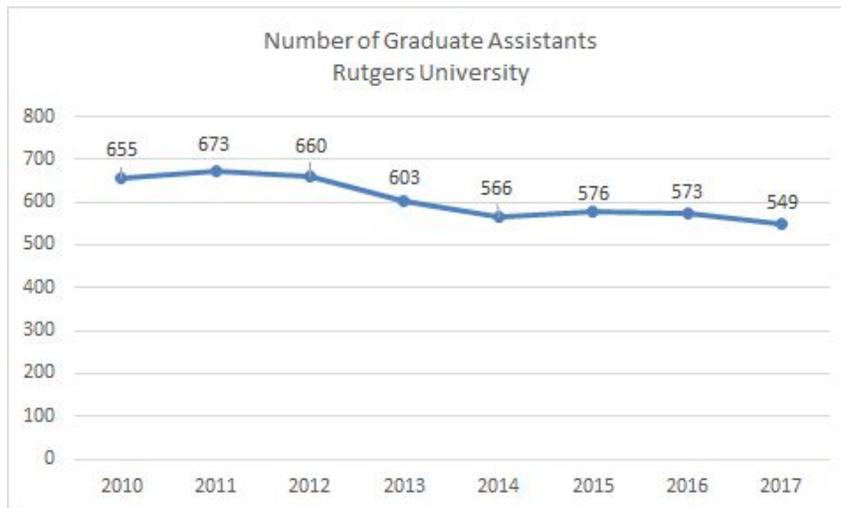


Figure 3: Graduate Assistantships at Rutgers University from 2010-2017.

Kukor, J. (August 26, 2018). "Decline in GAs on Research Grants at Rutgers." Graduate School of New Brunswick, Rutgers University.

The Bottom Line: Tuition for undergraduates has increased approximately 40% since 2008 and -- complemented by the rise in enrollment in the university over the past several years -- generated 25% of the university's \$3.6 billion revenue in 2016 alone.¹⁵ Increased enrollment means increased demand for teachers. To meet this increased demand for instructional services Rutgers is creating Half TAs/GAs positions, adjunct positions, and hourly positions. An increase in undergraduate instructional services should afford Rutgers the opportunity to expand doctoral programs due to a greater need for Ph.D. student employment; instead, Rutgers is cutting graduate employment positions, offering incoming doctoral

¹⁵ Bunsis, H. (2017). "Open the Books" presentation. Rutgers University.

students fewer guaranteed years of funding, and turning to hourly, part-time positions to satisfying academic labor demands. Due to changes in Rutgers accounting practices under a new fiscal model, Responsibility Centered Management (RCM), the union anticipates this trend worsening -- Rutgers will continue eliminate TA positions as a means of balancing its budget. Indeed, Graduate Program Directors (GPDs) have indicated as much in survey questions the TA/GA Steering Committee solicited during summer 2017.¹⁶

RCM FURTHER JEOPARDIZES TA LINES

The implementation of RCM¹⁷ incentivizes departments to turn TA/GA positions into depreciated, often times non-union positions. For example, in many departments under the School of Arts and Sciences, doctoral student funding packages are being increasingly marked by more years in a fellowship position than a TAship or GAship. While many doctoral students might be enticed by the ability to focus solely on their research without a teaching obligation, switching from a TA/GA position to a fellowship is ultimately a demotion that entails a considerable pay cut (students in the Graduate School of Education report fellowship funding is 35% less than TA lines), loss of eligibility for the NJ State Health Benefits Program (NJSHBP), and loss of union eligibility. When considering this pay cut and the fact that the need for teachers is rising with undergrad enrollment, it is probable that fellows will ultimately be pushed to take on PTL positions in addition to their fellowship -- both to make up for the pay cut they received when downgrading from TA to fellow but also to meet the needs of their department for teaching staff. Advocates for RCM and economic austerity claim that fellowship-heavy funding packages for doctoral fellows will help make five years of funding more of a certainty for those workers. Though the union commends this step towards five years of funding as positive, it is ultimately a hollow promise if fellow pay rates, benefits, and union eligibility are not commensurate with TA and GA positions. Without matching pay and benefits, turning assistantships into fellowships is merely another means of targeting graduate workers in this austerity-driven charge to maximize worker productivity while depreciating their benefits and pushing them into positions with no union representation.

Ultimately, RCM promotes the adjunctification of graduate workers. In a recent union survey of one quarter of the TA/GA members of the bargaining unit, 6% reported that they are working as PTLs and 3% reported that they are unfunded^{18 19}. Graduate PTLs hired at the union-prescribed minimum of \$5,600 per 3 credit course/class receive zero remission the semester that they teach, thus they wind up paying all the money they make back through tuition (upwards of \$15,000). Another form of adjunctification comes through the creation of Half TA or GA positions. According to union-generated data, for fall semester 2017 there were a total of 129 part-time TA and GA positions²⁰: this accounts for almost 10% of the unit of 1,675 TAs and GAs. Half TA or GA positions generally indicate that a graduate student works as a TA or GA for one semester, making ~\$13,000, receiving both tuition and course fee remission for the semester that they teach, and university healthcare benefits for the year. The semester that they are not working is completely unfunded, so the money they make (~\$13,000) ultimately finds its way back to Rutgers in the form of tuition payments for the semester that they are not working.

¹⁶ AAUP-AFT. (2017). Graduate Program Director (GPD) Survey. Data collected internally.

¹⁷ Rutgers University (15 December, 2014). "An Overview: Responsibility Centered Management." http://ombuds.rutgers.edu/policy-copy/RCM_HFM_FG%20for%20TTH_20141215.pdf

¹⁸ AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union. (no date). "Graduate Employee Survey." Data collected internally.

¹⁹ These numbers are presumably even higher because the union is not provided contact info for unfunded graduates or graduate PTLs so it is harder to reach them.

²⁰ AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union. (no date). "Graduate Employee Survey." Data collected internally.

When graduate students are demoted to part-time TA/GA positions or work as PTLs, they not only lose nearly \$10,000 in benefits by losing eligibility for NJ state employee health insurance, but also pay out of pocket for thousands worth of tuition and fees. According to School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) estimation, a full graduate TA/GA funding packages amounts to \$44,147²¹ when salary, tuition, and fees are included. The aggregate pay earned by either a graduate PTL or Half TA or GA leave students with very little to no take home pay as that money is going directly back to Rutgers in the form of one or two semesters worth of tuition payments. In many cases, Rutgers loses no money paying graduate workers as PTLs or Half TAs and GAs: people in these positions are literally paying to work.

BARGAINING GOALS

For graduate student workers, trends of corporatism and consequential austerity measures imposed upon individual departments boil down to graduate work that is increased in responsibility combined with decreases in pay, benefits, and basic respect. While the new RCM policy portrays graduate students as “costing” the university money, the hard facts of Rutgers’s budget and a deeper accounting of its economic priorities demonstrate that Rutgers depends on graduate instructors and low-wage, under-benefited PTLs to carry out its academic mission.. The fact that Rutgers’s administration does not keep track of data on the number of PTLs and TAs teaching courses and is relying on the graduate union to do so is alarming and raises the question of what Rutgers is trying to hide in this regard. **That PTLs collectively make 0.75% of total salary earnings at Rutgers (\$32.6 million out of \$4.372 billion operating budget altogether)** further demonstrates the extreme disproportionality of employee compensation and instructional investment at this institution.

As the Rutgers administration continues its systematic erosion of academics at our university, graduate employees demand that the administration redouble its overall investment in the core academic mission of the college. The administration must reverse this exploitative trend where individual departments and their intellectual communities -- faculty and students -- are nickel-and-dimed for a scandal-ridden athletics program and a bloated administration. Graduate employees demand that administration ensure its ranks of graduate instructors and assistants are given basic professional, social, and economic affordances. This includes:

Resurrecting Raises

Rutgers is home to the second oldest graduate labor union in the nation meaning the Rutgers has long maintained a reputation for providing its graduate workers with some of the most comprehensive and competitive graduate worker packages in the nation. However, in 2008, when the recession struck, the university invoked a clause allowing the negation of contractually established annual raises for all faculty including graduate workers. In 2008, Rutgers implemented salary freezes that the university imposed upon the salaries of all teaching staff. While full-time faculty bargaining unit regained strength by 2014 and fought hard to win an approximate 40% raise for non-tenure track faculty minimum pay, the graduate student’s bargaining unit had yet to rebound. Consequently, graduate workers settled for a 2.7 million dollar Professional Development Fund. The aggregate “price tag” on the most recent graduate contract (2014) pales in comparison to previous contracts won by graduate students, with aggregate costs finishing up at closer to \$30 million dollars.

²¹ Rutgers University, School of Arts and Sciences. (2017). “Appendix 1: SAS Guidelines for Graduate Support Under RCM in FY18.”

HISTORY OF SALARY RAISES SINCE 2007

As of July 1,	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Salary: AY	\$19,815	\$21,400	\$23,112	\$24,961	\$24,961	\$25,460	\$25,969	\$25,969	\$25,969	\$25,969	\$25,969
Percent Change		8%	8%	8% *	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Salary: CY	\$22,589	\$24,396	\$26,348	\$28,455	\$28,455	\$29,024	\$29,605	\$29,605	\$29,605	\$29,605	\$29,605
Percent Change		8%	8%	8% *	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*Table 1. History of salary increases for AY (Academic Year) and CY (Calendar Year) appointments dating back to 2007. *This 8% was split as 4% and 4% between July 1st, 2010 and June 30th, 2011.*

Today, TAs and GAs are making the same in nominal dollars as they were five years ago. Had Rutgers provided the minimum support to keep pace with inflation and consumer price indices, graduate employees would be earning ~\$27,800 dollars now²². Essentially graduate employees have \$1,800 less in purchasing power now than five years ago while rent for a one-bedroom apartment increased 28% in New Brunswick²³ (up \$338) and 52% in Newark²⁴ (up \$461) during the same period.

The numbers compiled regarding the financial conditions faced by Rutgers graduate students tell a story of scarcity, financial instability, and sacrifice which is why financial concerns were rated Important or Very Important by 91% of Rutgers graduate employees in 2017²⁵. Upon entering a graduate program at Rutgers, 40% of the graduate employees have student debt from prior degrees. Some 34.5% will go on to acquire loans or anticipate taking out loans over the duration of their graduate studies. Using credit cards as a stopgap measure to make ends meet is a tactic used by 31.6% of graduate students and 32.7% of fully-funded students receive insufficient support from their programs which will result in their paychecks going towards program related expenses. Another 41% report foregoing conferencing and networking opportunities due to lack of funds.

Rutgers's mission claims students are at the heart of what they do. Now Rutgers needs to demonstrate that financially by supporting graduate employees with meaningful pay increases that reduce the financial hardship imposed on graduate employees over the previous two contracts. To bring TA and GA salaries to levels commensurate with what they would have been if fair and reasonable raises were applied over over the previous four years of the contract, we will be negotiating for a very substantial salary increase in the first year of the contract. And we will continue by demanding fair and reasonable raises for the remaining years of the contract.

²² CPI Inflation Calculator. Found online at: https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm

²³ "Average Rent in New Brunswick, NJ" Found online at: <https://www.rentjungle.com/average-rent-in-new-brunswick-rent-trends/>

²⁴ "Average Rent in Newark, NJ" Found online at: <https://www.rentjungle.com/average-rent-in-newark-rent-trends/>

²⁵ AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union. (no date). "Graduate Employee Survey." Data collected internally.

Guaranteed, Long-Term Funding

Due to the artificial austerity imposed on schools and departments by the central administration, an increasing number of graduate workers are being taken out of TA and GA positions and forced into PTL, co-adjutant, hourly, and other positions. These positions are used to undercut the better compensated and protected TA and GA positions and also extend the time required to complete the degree²⁶. **It's time to level the playing field in terms of pushing for uniform salary, benefits, and union recognition for all positions occupied by doctoral workers.** In response to and in alignment with the university's own strategic plan, we are demanding that doctoral workers receive a guaranteed five years of funding as either a TA, GA, or equally compensated fellow.

These issues become all the more pressing in light of the union-generated Graduate Program Directors survey revealing that the average percentages of graduate employees that are unfunded in their departments stands at a very high 12.6%²⁷, an issue that reflects the austerity foisted on departments by the central administration, but also reiterates the fears programs should have about extending a graduate worker's time to degree completion.

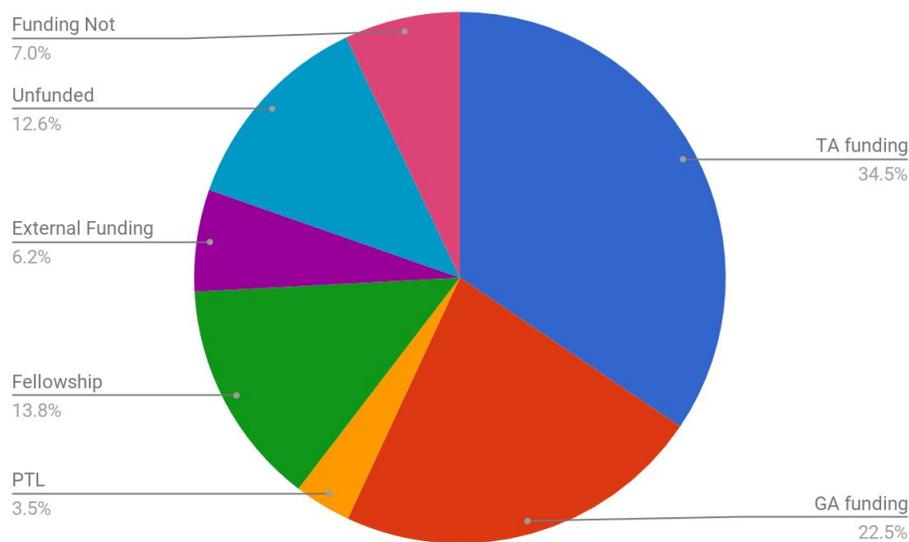


Figure 4. Funding situations for 885 graduate students across 19 Graduate Programs based on data provided by Graduate Program Directors.

AAUP-AFT. (2017). Graduate Program Director (GPD) Survey. Data collected internally.

Securing Availability of TA/GA Lines

To adequately respond to the issues above, many TA and GA lines need to be created and/or restored. To give an indication of the scale required, consider two observations: first, TAs and GAs have declined from about 35% of total faculty to below 25% since 1997 (Figure 2), so returning to the number of TA

²⁶ Jaschik, S. (July 17, 2007). "Why and When Ph.D. Students Finish." *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2007/07/17/phd>

²⁷ AAUP-AFT. (2017). Graduate Program Director (GPD) Survey. Data collected internally.

and GA lines to proportionate levels in this sense would require at least a 40% increase, or at least 670 more lines. Secondly, the Rutgers undergraduate population has increased 36% over the past ten years²⁸; the same percentage increase in TAs and GAs from 2008 levels would approximately be an additional 650 lines. To meet these figures, we are proposing the creation of 165 TA or GA positions each year of a four year contract. Central to this demand is that a portion of these TA and GA positions be allocated for increasing diversity amongst graduate workers.

Maintaining the Integrity of TA/GA Work

Securing TAs and GAs, however, is more than increasing the number of available TA and GAs. While the addition of 660 TA and GA positions is certainly a pillar of our demands, the very nature of graduate student packages requires re-evaluation as our demand for guaranteed, long-term funding reflects. To counter the trend of replacing TA and GA positions with more contingent positions, any work performed by a graduate employee must be compensated fairly.

Accordingly, job responsibilities for graduate employees needs to be clearly outlined in the appointment letter, which would include, for example, the number of office hours required each week. And further we are demanding that a centrally managed fund be created, from which tasks assigned to the graduate employee beyond those indicated in the appointment letter will be compensated. These tasks for example may include, but not be limited to exam supervision, supplementary grading, additional offices hours during exam periods, and any other duties or additional time required to complete duties required by the class professor or department that go beyond what is expressly outlined within the appointment letter.

Furthermore we want to replace the current contract language which stipulates that a TA or GA cannot be asked to work more than 15 hours a week on average over the length of the appointment, with language stating that a graduate employee cannot be asked to work for more than 15 hours a week. Any work beyond 15 hours would require additional compensation for the graduate employee. As it stands, the current language is practically unenforceable in large part because it requires documenting hours worked over the course of a semester and is vague as to whether breaks are counted towards the total number of weeks in the appointment. Removal of the “on average” will make a large step towards reducing the workload required of graduate workers.

Free Tuition for Doctoral Students

As previously discussed, the number total number of GAs at Rutgers is declining, and while the number of TAs has stayed relatively stable, their percentage of total faculty is decreasing as the number of PTLs is increasing dramatically. And, as also previously discussed, Rutgers has been forcing decrease in TA positions by requiring schools and departments to meet individual budget requirements. Similarly, the decline in GA positions is in part due to the costs charged by the university from a PI’s grant whenever that PI hires a GA.

Tuition is a significant portion of the cost of a TA or GA to a department or PI. So even after a successful campaign last year to strike the tax on tuition remission from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, removing tuition from the university’s toolbox for creating austerity would be a boon to graduate employees as well as faculty.

Race and Gender Equity

²⁸ Rutgers University (2018). “Facts & Figures.” Found online at: <http://www.rutgers.edu/about/facts-figures>

Rutgers is similar to most elite universities across the United States in that it normalizes the exclusion of students of color, faculty of color, and discrimination against women. A self-reported survey of graduate workers, for example, showed that at present 1% of our ranks identify as African American and 2.6 percent identify as Latinx.²⁹ In 2017, 7.7% of full-time faculty and 5.1% of PTLs self-identified as black/African-American or Latinx. Women, too, are underrepresented at Rutgers, especially among full-time faculty (in 2017, 59% were men). Of the top 17 salaried employees in 2014, only the head coach of the women’s basketball team was female.

Clearly Rutgers has a long way to go in creating an educational space that is not only inclusive and socially equitable (i.e., in demographic representation), but that values the knowledge of black and brown peoples to the same extent that it has always privileged white epistemologies and white bodies. Though a demand for racial equity in representation and curricula would be a good start, we must push the administration further in its support for departments more heavily staffed and sought out by women and folks of color. In addition to educating a student body that actually reflects the larger regional and national population (for actual racial demographics of NJ cities, Appendix, Figures 1 and 2A-C), educational activists across the country have called for new admissions criteria and procedures, new measures of achievement, as well as free tuition for black and indigenous students. Other ideas include demanding that university administrations divest from prisons and neoliberal commercial development that has historically (and, currently, in places like New Brunswick and Newark) pushed and priced communities of color out of cities, as well as retraining and disarming campus police.³⁰

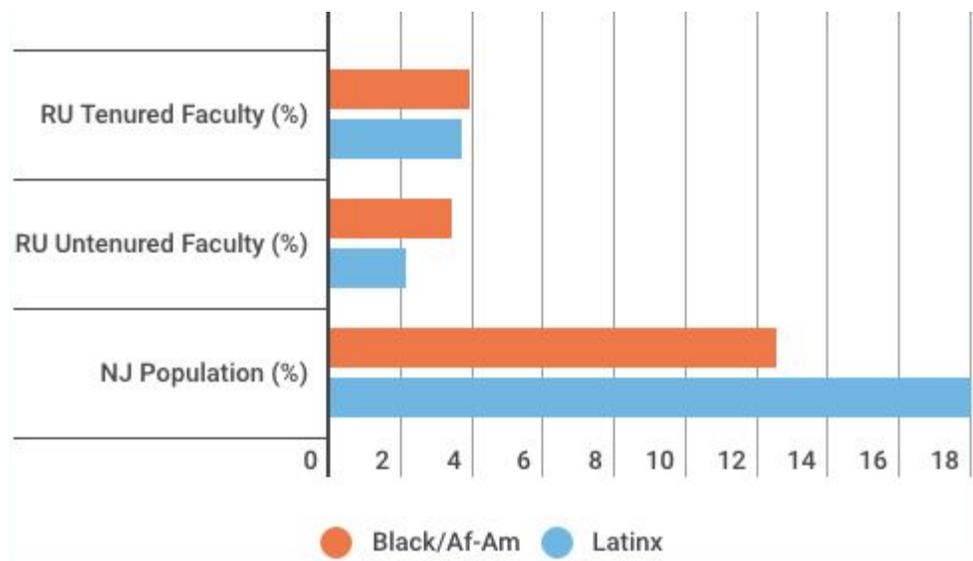


Figure 5. Black and Latinx representation within faculty at Rutgers.

U.S. Census Bureau (1 July, 2017). “Quick Facts: New Jersey.” <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NJ>; U.S. Census Bureau (1 July, 2016). “Quick Facts: United States.” <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045216>; College Factual (no date). “Rutgers University - New Brunswick Diversity: How Diverse is it, Really?” <https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/rutgers-university-new-brunswick/student-life/diversity/>

²⁹ Since a large number of graduate workers chose not to self-report race in this survey, we estimate that these figures are somewhat higher, though still not anywhere close to commensurate with the demographics of the state of New Jersey.

³⁰ Kelley, R. (2016). “Black Study, Black Struggle.” *Boston Review*. Found online at: <http://bostonreview.net/forum/robin-d-g-kelley-black-study-black-struggle>

Towards addressing these issues in our contract, we are proposing first that a portion of the new TA and GA positions demanded above be allocated to increasing diversity amongst graduate employees to reflect New Jersey demographics. In addition, we are calling for the creation of a new category of positions having the compensation and all the benefits of a graduate employee, whose responsibilities would be to work for a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus similar the strategic plan for diversity, equity and inclusion recently won at University of Michigan³¹. This incredibly important work is often performed by members of vulnerable groups on a volunteer basis and this undervaluing of work done by marginalized people itself creates social disparities. It is our stance that these new positions would be a necessary step towards institutionalizing diversity work as central to the operation of the university.

International Students

Graduate workers choosing to pursue graduate degrees abroad by relocating to the United States face multiple barriers in the form of additional fees related to travel and visas, isolation from community and support-networks, racism in our politically-tense climate, and increased fees imposed by the university.

Particularly when relocating to the United States, international graduate students will often choose to live on campus in Rutgers provided housing that charges fees disproportionately greater than within its surrounding communities. Rutgers graduate housing fees should be tied to local rent-control rates. From data provided by current graduate workers, the average contribution to rent is \$872 (33%).³²

Currently, half or more than half of graduate students enrolled on the New Brunswick and RBHS campuses are international students. Thus either these employees, or their departments, are paying the out-of-state tuition rates. This not only disincentivizes faculty from hiring out-of-state and international students, but also leaves international students in a disproportionately difficult position because they are not only covering higher tuition rates, but as international students cannot work outside the university per their F-1 visa status, leaving their funding options severely limited³³. While having higher fees imposed on out-of-state and international undergraduate students is used to justify non-New Jersey residents from receiving state-funded education they have not contributed to, as employees, graduate workers pay taxes meaning they are directly contributing the state's economy and thus should not be treated in the same manner. It is the union's position that Rutgers adopt **a single tuition rate of \$0 for all PhD students:** in-state, out-of-state, and international³⁴. Finally, there needs to be mandated clear language used in terms of funding offers for all students, but especially for international students

Furthermore to further eliminate additional economic barriers experienced by a subset of Rutgers graduate employees, the University should establish a fund to cover for 1-20/visa renewals on F-1, J-1, HB1 -- with special consideration and matching department guidelines for those students who are recipients of DACA and those students from countries targeted by Trump's "Muslim Ban" and any similar future discriminatory efforts to close American borders to students seeking advanced degrees from abroad. This funding should also extend to covering emergency situations in cases where funding has fallen through for international student.

And as a last point, we are demanding that Rutgers pay international students for the additional labor required of them. A prime example of this is the English language lab, a course required of all

³¹ AFT (2017) "Grad employee union wins full pay for diversity work." Found online at: <https://www.aft.org/news/grad-employee-union-wins-full-pay-diversity-work>

³² AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union. (no date). "Graduate Employee Survey." Data collected internally.

³³ International Student Insurance. "F1 Student Visa". Found online: <https://www.internationalstudent.com/immigration/f1-student-visa/>

³⁴ "Rutgers University Estimated Cost of Tuition." Rutgers University. Found online at: <https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/cost-of-attendance/rutgers/>

international students who do not pass a qualifying exam. Participation in this problematic program should at least be fairly compensated.

Graduate Parents

As the barriers to those seeking advanced degrees continues to drop, the stereotype of the white male in his early-to-mid 20s is increasingly less representative of the modern population of graduate workers. Today's graduate student may be in their 20s or 30s (or 40s in some cases); female, non-binary/third gender, or male; and caregivers for parents or children. An increasing number of graduate workers, are parents balancing family and academic responsibilities. Due to the "leaky pipeline" and institutional barriers, particularly at research intensive universities, women are disproportionately forced to choose between careers and family³⁵.

The Graduate Parents Committee of the TA/GA Steering Committee surveyed graduate workers whom are also raising families. One of the main concerns articulated was access to and cost of child care. Those who are paying for child care spend an average of \$11,000 per year (range: \$2,000- \$35,000) while 69% of graduate parents spend more than 10% of their family income on child care expenses and 30% spend more than 20% of their total family income³⁶. Meanwhile 29% have no access to child care³⁷.

To pay for these expenses, about 15% of graduate parents have acquired a second job, potentially decreasing their rate of progress toward their degree. Even more alarming is the fact that about 11% of respondents are using grant money -- funding intended specifically for research purposes -- on child care expenses.

Importantly, none of the graduate students we surveyed are using government assistance to pay for child care³⁸. The Rutgers University Human Resources page directs students to links for state-funded child care benefits. Given that many graduate student families make more the income eligibility requirement, this advice is outdated and unhelpful reiterating that Rutgers's understanding of the needs of its graduate worker community is out of touch and outdated.

Similarly, the majority of responding graduate parents neither use a Rutgers-operated child care center nor take advantage of the 10% child care discount offered by some Rutgers centers³⁹. Most graduate parents do not find the Rutgers employee discount to be a helpful reduction in child care expenses (Figure 6). It is clear that the university must do more to better understand and meet the actual needs of graduate parents in order to eliminate the barrier faced disproportionately by female graduate workers who have or are choosing to begin families during graduate school.

³⁵ Mason, M.A et. al (no date) "Keeping Women in the Science Pipeline" Found online at: https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/Keeping_Women_in_the_Science_Pipeline-sloan.pdf

³⁶ AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union (2017). "Child Care Funding for Graduate Students Rutgers University AAUP-AFT TAs/GAs" Data collected internally.

³⁷ AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union (2017). "Child Care Funding for Graduate Students Rutgers University AAUP-AFT TAs/GAs" Data collected internally.

³⁸ AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union (2017). "Child Care Funding for Graduate Students Rutgers University AAUP-AFT TAs/GAs" Data collected internally.

³⁹ AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union (2017). "Child Care Funding for Graduate Students Rutgers University AAUP-AFT TAs/GAs" Data collected internally.

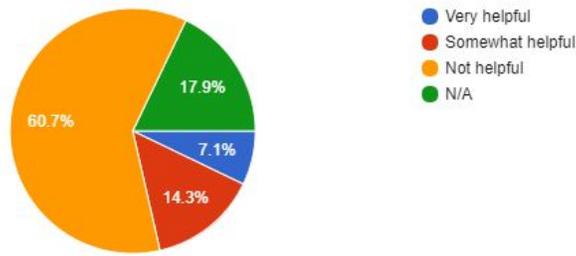


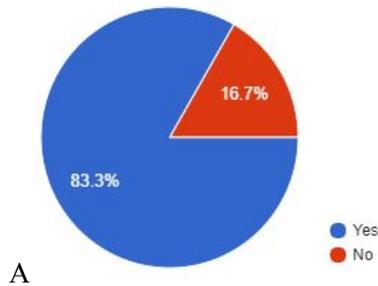
Figure 6. Graduate Parent responses regarding the helpfulness of the 10% Rutgers employee discount at Rutgers-operated child care centers.

AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union (2017). “Child Care Funding for Graduate Students Rutgers University AAUP-AFT TAs/GAs” Data collected internally.

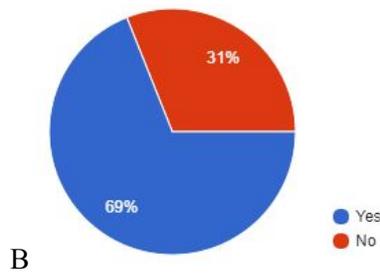
Finally, the cost of child care has detrimental impacts on the research, job completion, and professional progress of graduate parents (Figure 7). Anonymous testimonies showed that child care expenses contribute to food insecurity, prevent students from purchasing essential research materials, and slow overall progress toward degree completion.

Consequences of financing child care on graduate parent experience:

Ability to produce research/make progress:



Ability to apply to/attend academic conferences:



Experienced a negative impact on teaching:

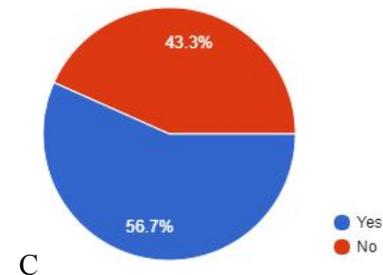


Figure 7A-C. The barriers faced by graduate parents pursuing advanced degrees at Rutgers while raising families.

AAUP-AFT TA/GA Union (2017). “Child Care Funding for Graduate Students Rutgers University AAUP-AFT TAs/GAs” Data collected internally.

All of these are issues with which the university should be concerned. Current university policy does little to help doctoral parents afford adequate child care. The cost of child care should create a barrier resulting in the diminishment of a graduate employee’s quality of work, nor should it be a financial risk for graduate workers. **Therefore, the university should provide free child care for all doctoral workers.**

Fellows

Many graduate student funding packages at Rutgers includes a guarantee of at least one year of fellowship funding, ideally to be dedicated solely to research. Currently, graduate employees on fellowship are eligible for a stipend, tuition (but not fee) remission, and student healthcare through the university.

To incorporate years on fellowship as part of our demand for five year guaranteed funding, we are demanding that fellows be included in the AAUP-AFT bargaining unit. Central to this inclusion is that fellows would have the same benefits and protection as a TA and GA, including, but not limited to access to state healthcare benefits, course fee remission, and a university-wide minimum salary.

Graduate Employees as PTLs

Our first priority for graduate employees working as PTLs is tuition and fee remission. When graduate students are demoted to PTL contracts, their PTL status trumps their role as a graduate student. As such currently PTLs graduate workers may apply for 50% tuition remission after twelve semester working consecutively as PTLs⁴⁰. We aim to rectify this situation by demanding free tuition for all doctoral students. Furthermore no graduate worker should be provided with a PTL contract until they have received a minimum of five full years of funding as a TA, GA, or fellow.

Half TA and GAs

Winning our demand of long-term year contracts for graduate employees would eliminate Half TA/GA positions for the first five years at Rutgers. After this period, we are demanding that Half TA/GA positions would be available only as a final measure to be implemented at the graduate student's request due to unusual nature of the graduate student's research.

Graduate Workers Experiencing Extraordinary Circumstances

The establishment of a Student Emergency Fund available for all graduate students who experience a financial emergency or unanticipated expenses causing financial hardship. This funding would not be intended to replace or supplement existing financial aid and would not require repayment. Eligible financial hardship may be the result of (but not limited to)

1. Medical or dental bills not covered by insurance
2. To fund travel or transportation of a student or a student's belongings home due to family emergency, crisis, death, or other important family matter
3. Support shelter for a student in a dangerous situation due to acts of violence or other victimization
4. Displacement due to environmental hazard, natural disaster, fire damage or other need for temporary housing
5. Childcare expenses

⁴⁰ AAUP-AFT Rutgers. "Part-Time Lecturers Benefits." Found online at: <http://www.rutgersaaup.org/members/part-time-lecturers/part-time-lecturers-benefits>

CONCLUSION

The fiscal patterns demonstrated by Rutgers over the last decade prioritize athletics and administration over academics and the adjunctification of instructional positions to offset the burgeoning non-academic costs. In transitioning to RCM, Rutgers has chosen to further embrace corporatization as it sweeps across American educational institutions ignoring that the purpose of Rutgers centers entirely around academics, research, and service. In doing so, Rutgers forsakes its mission as both the land grant college and the state university of New Jersey. Land grant institutions and public universities exist to serve their communities: indigenous, immigrant, LGBTQ+, female, black, and brown. As a university built on stolen Lenape land with slave labor, Rutgers continues centuries of prioritizing profit over people. To this end the TA/GA unit of the Rutgers AAUP-AFT has proposed the above demands centering social and economic justice for all members of its workforce to the benefit of Rutgers, its community, and the state of New Jersey.

As the premier comprehensive public research university in the state's system of higher education,
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey,
has the threefold mission of

providing for the instructional needs of New Jersey's citizens
through its undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education programs;

conducting the cutting-edge research that contributes to
the medical, environmental, social, and cultural well-being of the state,

as well as aiding the economy and the state's businesses and industries;

and performing public service in support of the needs of the citizens
of the state and its local, county, and state governments.

Each component of the university's mission reinforces and supports the other two. Rutgers is dedicated to teaching that meets the highest standards of excellence, to conducting research that breaks new ground, and to providing services, solutions, and clinical care that help individuals and the local, national, and global communities where they live.⁴¹

⁴¹ Rutgers University. Found online at: <https://www.rutgers.edu/about>

Appendix 1: The Racial Demographics of Rutgers campuses as broken down by community and city.

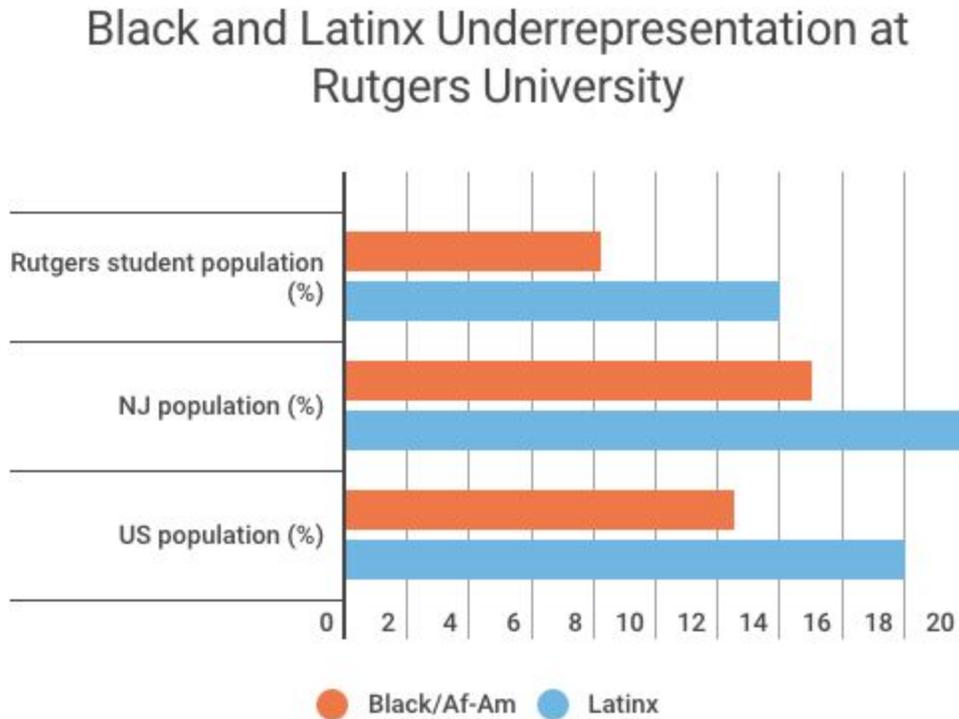


Figure 1. Underrepresentation of black and latinx communities within the Rutgers student population compared to the state and national population.

U.S. Census Bureau (1 July, 2017). "Quick Facts: New Jersey." <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NJ>; U.S. Census Bureau (1 July, 2016). "Quick Facts: United States." <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045216>; College Factual (no date). "Rutgers University - New Brunswick Diversity: How Diverse is it, Really?" <https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/rutgers-university-new-brunswick/student-life/diversity/>

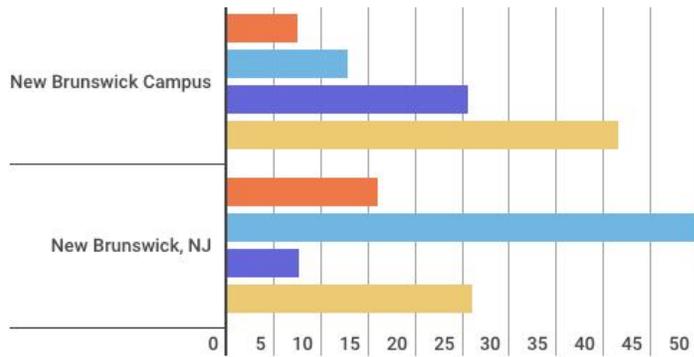


Figure 1A. Percent of Rutgers community by racial demographics on the New Brunswick campus in contrast to the city of New Brunswick.⁴²

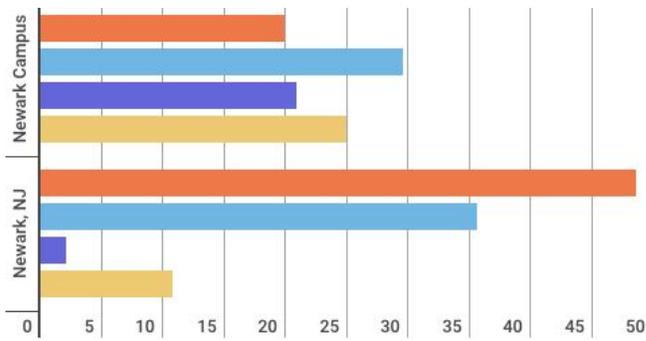


Figure 1B. Percent of Rutgers community by racial demographics on the Newark campus in contrast to the city of Newark.⁴³

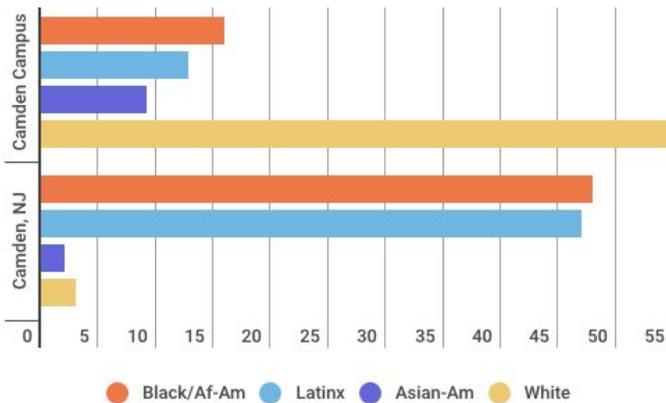


Figure 1C. Percent of Rutgers community by racial demographics on the Camden campus in contrast to the city of Camden.⁴⁴

⁴² U.S. Census Bureau (1 July, 2016). Quick Facts: New Brunswick, New Jersey. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/newbrunswickcitynewjersey/PST045216>; College Factual (no date). "Rutgers University - New Brunswick Diversity: How Diverse is it, Really?" <https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/rutgers-university-new-brunswick/student-life/diversity/>;

⁴³ U.S. Census Bureau (1 July, 2016). Quick Facts: Newark, New Jersey. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/newarkcitynewjersey/PST045216>; College Factual (no date). "Rutgers University - Newark: How Great is it?" <https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/rutgers-university-newark/student-life/diversity/>

⁴⁴ U.S. Census Bureau (1 July, 2016). Quick Facts: Camden, New Jersey. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/camdencitynewjersey/PST045216>; College Factual (no date). "Rutgers University - Camden Diversity: How Diverse is it, Really?" <https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/rutgers-university-camden/student-life/diversity/>

