

UNIVERSITY SENATE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

June 15, 2012: 1pm Rowan Hall Auditorium

The University Senate conducted an emergency meeting to adopt a position statement on the New Jersey Medical and Health Sciences Education Restructuring Act (“the Restructuring Act”).

Eric Milou introduced Andrew Lees, Ph.D., Professor of History and President of the Rutgers-Camden University Senate, who read a brief statement commending the efforts of Rowan University to combat the Restructuring Act and insure the independence and self governance of both institutions. He also expressed concern that, while revisions to the proposal indicate the third “super” board will oversee only joint programs established by Rowan and Rutgers-Camden, language limiting its authority in that regard is not included in the proposal.

The University Senate then considered the position statement, which in essence endorses the position taken by the Board of Trustees in its meeting last Monday, June 11, 2012. During the discussion, several Senate representatives expressed their opposition to having the third board and their reluctance to appear to lend approval to such a scenario. Eric explained that the Board of Trustee resolution was in essence a request for political compromise to insure the independence of each institution and that, while it was not without risk, taking a hard line on the issue would likely backfire.

The University Senate position states: “We endorse the following clause in the Rowan Board of Trustees Resolution: Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Rowan Board of Trustees that it endorses the efforts to create a joint board with authority over new joint initiatives between the two institutions while retaining the individual autonomy of both institutions and their respective governing boards.”

The position statement was approved by a vote of 38 in favor, 2 opposed, and no abstentions.

Sandy Tweedie will represent Eric Milou and the University Senate next week when the Rutgers-Camden University Senate considers a similar proposal.

ROWAN UNIVERSITY SENATE

Position Statement on

The New Jersey Medical and Health Sciences Education Restructuring Act

Rowan faculty and staff have consistently demonstrated restraint concerning the speculation and controversy regarding the possibilities of a reorganization of higher education in New Jersey. However we, the Rowan University Senate, representing the institution's faculty, professional staff, librarians, and coaches, now believe it is time for our voices to be heard.

The Rowan University Senate opposes in general the *New Jersey Medical and Health Sciences Education Restructuring Act* and specifically we **oppose** provision 25, which gives the Joint Board of Governors "full authority over all matters concerning the supervision and operations of Rowan University and Rutgers University-Camden." While claiming to improve governance structure for Rowan and Rutgers-Camden, this legislation will instead diminish the autonomy and potential growth of both universities. As a result, no action taken by either campus board will have any authority until reviewed by the joint board. Not only will this process delay implementation of decisions by months, it subverts the campus boards' explicit legislative directive to make decisions in the university's best interests, which can be in conflict with the two universities' interests.

We **endorse** the following clause from the June 11, 2012 Rowan Board of Trustees' resolution #1, The Proposed Restructuring of Higher Education in Southern New Jersey:

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Rowan Board of Trustees that it endorses the efforts to create a joint board with authority over new joint initiatives between the two institutions while retaining the individual autonomy of both institutions and their respective governing boards.

The Rowan University Senate awaits changes to the legislation reflecting that Rowan will retain autonomy and that any new joint Board will **only** have authority over new joint ventures between Rowan and Rutgers-Camden. We also await details regarding funding for potential joint ventures such as a health sciences initiative.