Constitution of the Rutgers College Governing Association

Preamble

We, the undergraduate students of Rutgers College, in order to provide the means for responsible and effective student participation in the affairs of Rutgers College and Rutgers University, do hereby establish this constitution of the Rutgers College Governing Association, herein referred to as the RCGA.

Purpose

The RCGA shall act to execute the will of the student body, to serve as a stable support and foundation for student organizations, activities, views, and information, and to represent the student body in College and University decision making. The goals of the RCGA's participation in University affairs are to define and represent student concerns and causes to the administration and to provide student services, to serve as a reliable information source for the student body, to provide resources and support to student organizations through the student activities fee and other programs, to build community among students, and to promote quality leadership on campus, both in the RCGA and in other organizations.

Article I - Executive Powers

Section 1 - Structure

The Executive powers herein granted shall be vested in the RCGA Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the RCGA President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Parliamentarian, and Chairperson of the Allocations Committee. The Advisor of the RCGA shall be a Rutgers College administrator nominated by the RCGA and approved by the Dean of Rutgers College. All but the Allocations Chairperson shall be granted a vote in the Executive Committee.

Section 2 - Election of Executive Committee Members

1. The RCGA President and Vice President shall be elected each year in a Rutgers College general election to be held in the first week of April. Every candidate who wishes to appear on the ballot for the office of President or Vice President must submit a designated petition to the special subsidiary Committee on Elections. This petition must bear the signatures and information as defined by this subsidiary committee in order to have his/her name appear on the ballot. The number of required signatures will be defined in the RCGA Standing Rules. A change to the number of petitions will not take affect until the following academic
year.* The aforementioned subsidiary committee will review all petitions for accuracy. Every Rutgers College and affiliated full and part time student is eligible to cast his/her ballot for the President and Vice President.

2. At the first official meeting of the President-elect and Vice President-elect after the spring elections, the RCGA President, after consulting the Vice President, shall announce his/her temporary appointments of the Executive Committee members. At the third official meeting after spring elections, permanent Executive Committee members will be elected as follows:
   a. Candidates shall be nominated by any member of the RCGA, including themselves, for any one given position.
   b. Another member of the RCGA must second nominations.
   c. Candidates who are nominated and seconded are required to give a speech not to exceed one minute.
   d. A closed ballot election will take place.
   e. The candidate receiving a majority of votes cast for that given position shall be named the new Executive Committee member for that position.
   f. In the case that no candidate receives a majority of the votes, a runoff election will take place between the two candidates receiving the most votes.

3. The Chairperson of the Allocations Committee is elected as follows:
   a. A committee consisting of RCGA members, outgoing Allocations Committee members and a representative from the Student Activities Office shall meet and interview all candidates. This committee shall have no less than five members and no more than nine.
   b. After said meetings, the committee shall vote by secret ballot.
   c. The candidate receiving the majority of votes cast shall be selected as the new Chairperson of the Allocations Committee.
   d. In the case that no candidate receives the majority of votes cast, a runoff will take place between the two candidates receiving the most votes.
   e. The RCGA general body shall ratify the selected candidate by a majority vote at the next general body meeting following selection.

4. A vacancy on the Executive Board will be filled with the same procedure as outlined in Article I, Section 2, Number 2.

* Except for the first year that this Section is in effect (2002-2003).

Section 3 - Role and Power of the President

The President of the RCGA shall serve a term of one-year beginning the second Tuesday after the annual spring elections. The President will act as the official representative of the Rutgers College student body. He/She will serve as a liaison between the student body, members of the RCGA and the administration. He/She will also serve as a representative or appoint a representative to all deliberative councils including those of the college and university, ceremonies and functions. The President shall also serve as a University Senator representing Rutgers College undergraduate students. He/she may,
however, decline to serve in the senate, at which time the vacancy will be filled in accordance with the procedure outlined in article II Section 3.

It will be the responsibility of the President to chair meetings of the Executive Committee and ensuring that the Executive Committee is a productive component of the RCGA. Further, he/she will be responsible for facilitating RCGA meetings and attempting to create a motivated and energetic RCGA dedicated to improving student life at Rutgers College. It will be the responsibility of the President to delegate duties to the various committees and executive officers. Further, he/she will be responsible for enforcing these duties and ensuring that all executive officers and committees are performing their respective duties and are productive.

The President shall ensure that all RCGA members are active members of at least one RCGA standing Committee. The President shall designate the chairpersons of the RCGA standing committees. The President shall appoint members to all special subsidiary committees and designate the committee chair when appropriate.

The President shall make it his/her responsibility to meet at least bimonthly with the Dean of Rutgers College to maintain a healthy dialogue between the RCGA and the Rutgers College administration. Beyond these meetings with the Dean of Rutgers College, the President shall make it his/her responsibility to meet with the Dean of Rutgers College whenever pertinent or necessary. The president shall be required to give an up to date report of his/her activities at each RCGA meeting. In addition, the President shall be expected to meet with the RCGA advisors on a regular basis. The President shall be required to report on all such meetings to the RCGA.

Section 4 - Role and Power of the Vice President

The Vice President shall serve a term of one-year beginning the second Tuesday after the annual spring elections. The Vice president will act as the representative of the RCGA, and the student body whenever the President is unable to do so and shall assist the president in all of his/her duties whenever possible and/or necessary. The Vice President shall assume the powers and responsibilities of the President in the event of a temporary vacancy of the office of the President. In the event of a permanent vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice-President shall become President. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Vice President the position will be filled in the same manner as is described for a senate vacancy in Article II Section 3.

The Vice President shall be in charge of the operating of the RCGA Committees. As such the Vice President shall make it his/her duty to meet with the various committee chairs at least bi-weekly to ensure that the Committees are operating in a productive manner and to take the necessary actions to ensure that the committees are productive. The Vice-President shall review all Committee reports and committee attendance reports weekly to further ensure the efficiency of the committee system.
The Vice President shall be responsible for seeing that the proper resolutions are prepared for submission to the RCGA and shall be responsible for reporting to the RCGA on the disposition of all resolutions approved by the RCGA. The Vice President will be responsible for maintaining accurate records of all resolutions approved by the RCGA and the disposition of such. The Vice President will be required to give an up to date report of his/her activities at each RCGA meeting.

**Section 5 - Role and Power of the Treasurer**

The RCGA Treasurer shall handle all financial transactions of the RCGA and keep accurate, up to date records of such transactions. The Treasurer shall give the RCGA updated information on all-financial transactions and business, including the balance of funds, at every RCGA meeting. The Treasurer shall keep all RCGA monies in the Rutgers College Student Fund Accounting Office. Only the President, Vice President, and Treasurer shall be authorized to withdraw funds from the account. The treasurer shall be responsible for submitting an annual budget to the RCGA Allocations Committee. The Treasurer shall be required to give an up to date report of his/her activities at each RCGA meeting.

**Section 6 - Role and Power of the Recording Secretary**

The RCGA Recording Secretary shall establish and maintain all non-financial records of the RCGA. It will be the responsibility of the Recording Secretary to prepare the minutes, agenda, and attendance report for each meeting of the RCGA and shall be responsible for filing them in an accessible and efficient manner. It will also be the responsibility of the Recording Secretary to prepare the roster of the RCGA and maintain it throughout the year. The Recording Secretary shall be required to give a report of his/her activities at each RCGA meeting.

**Section 7 - Role and Power of the Corresponding Secretary**

The Rutgers College Governing Association Corresponding Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining all non-financial correspondence of the RCGA and maintaining current and accurate records of such. The Corresponding Secretary shall be required to give a report of his/her activities at each RCGA meeting.

**Section 8 - Role and Power of the Parliamentarian**

The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for interpreting the Constitution and Robert's Rules of Order to maintain order, advising the RCGA on Parliamentary Procedure, and facilitating the smooth running of the RCGA.

**Section 9 - Role and Power of the RCGA Allocations Committee**

The RCGA Allocations Committee shall be an affiliated committee of the RCGA that operates separately from the RCGA. Its purpose shall be to objectively recommend the
distribution of student activities fees to student groups properly registered at Rutgers College, or as a New Brunswick-wide organization. The chairperson of the committee makes allocation recommendations on a semester to semester basis to the RCGA legislative body for final approval. If the RCGA legislative body does not approve the allocation recommendations, the committee is responsible for submitting revised recommendations in a timely manner. Funds are distributed in accordance with the RCGA Allocations Committee Guidelines for Funding.

The committee shall consist of at a minimum, a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, and New Brunswick-wide representative, and may include other such positions as deemed necessary by the Chairperson. The appointment of officers will follow the election guidelines as set forth in Article I Section 2 paragraph 3. The Allocations Committee shall be the standing committee of the RCGA Treasurer. No other member of the RCGA may serve on the committee, nor may the Allocations Committee Chairperson currently be serving as an officer in a student group receiving mandatory student fees. The Committee must maintain a constitution setting forth its bylaws, and will be a separate and distinct functioning body of the RCGA.

Article II - The Legislative Branch

Section 1 - Structure

The RCGA general body will have legislative power. The RCGA general body shall consist of six Representatives per class year, a number Senators proportionate to the total number of Rutgers College students as determined by the registrar's office, a Representative of the Residence Hall Association (RHA), the Off-Campus Students' Association (OCSA), and the Educational Opportunity Program Student Association (EOPSA). All members of the legislative branch shall have one vote in the body. All organizations and other governing associations in the Rutgers community are encouraged to send non-voting liaisons to RCGA general body meetings.

Section 2 - Elections

The Representatives, with the exception of the incoming first-years, and the determined number of Senators shall be elected by a general election held in the first week of April every year. Each candidate for the position of Senator and Representative must get a designated petition signed by a number of students as defined in the RCGA Standing Rules. A change to the number of petitions will not take affect until the following academic year.* When this criteria is met and verified by the Elections Chairs on the Internal Affairs Committee of the RCGA, then the candidate will be placed on the ballot for election.

Candidates may run for a position as a write-in. The write-in candidate's name will not appear on the ballot. The candidate who receives the most votes for a position, regardless
of whether they are a write-in or on the ballot, wins the position. Write-in candidates are required to follow the rules of fair play outlined in the election guidelines. The six representatives of the incoming first year class will be elected in the same manner, a first year election to be held no later than the last week in September. Representatives of Rutgers College affiliated governing bodies shall be elected according to the bylaws of their respective organizations.

In the event of a tie, there will be an in-body election to decide which candidate will hold the position. The election will take place during the first meeting after elections. The election will follow the procedures set forth in Article II Section 3, with the exception of part (a).

* Except for the first year that this Section is in effect (2002-2003).

**Section 3 - Filling of Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy in the office of representative, the following procedure shall be used.

a. The RCGA must publicize the vacancy for at least two weeks before the intended date of election.
b. A quorum of RCGA members must be reached at the time of the election.
c. Each candidate will be allowed to speak for no more than one minute, and answer all questions posed by the body that meet all federal, state, local, and University laws and regulations.
d. The members of the RCGA body will vote by secret ballot.
e. A candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast to be elected.

In the case that no candidate receives a majority of the votes, a runoff will take place between the two candidates receiving the most votes.

In the event of a vacancy in the position of Senator, the following procedure will be used:

a. The RCGA must publicize the vacancy for at least two weeks before the intended date of election.
b. A quorum of RCGA members must be reached.
c. Each candidate will be allowed to speak for no more than one minute, and answer all questions posed by the body that meet all federal, state, local, and University laws and regulations.
d. The members of the RCGA body will vote by secret ballot.
e. A candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast to be elected.

In the case that no candidate receives a majority of the votes, a runoff will take place between the two candidates receiving the most votes.

**Section 4 - Legislative Powers**
The RCGA should publicly assemble at least once a week during the fall and spring semesters. Special meetings will be held when requested by the RCGA President, the advisor, or ten percent of the RCGA members. The RCGA may declare a meeting closed to the public by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present. Only members of the RCGA and invited guests, who are determined by two-thirds vote of the present members, may attend closed sessions.

The RCGA may only conduct business should a quorum, a majority of voting members, be present. However, the RCGA may authorize a smaller number to conduct business in the absence of a quorum.

The RCGA may determine the rules and proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and with the concurrence of two-thirds of the members, expel a member. These behavioral disciplines may be used to compel members to attend meetings. University Senators expelled from the RCGA must also vacate their University Senate seat. No resolution or motion shall pass unless there is at least a majority of the members present agreeing thereto. Voting by proxy shall be prohibited.

Section 5 - Legislative Committees

The Legislative Committees shall be structured as follows: the RCGA shall maintain an Internal Affairs Committee, at least four standing committees and any special subsidiary committees it deems necessary. The roles and powers of all committees shall be explicitly stated in the RCGA Standing Rules. All committees shall submit a semester report to the Vice President.

The President shall appoint a member of the RCGA to be the Chairperson of each separate committee. The Chairperson shall direct the activities and operation of the committee. The chairperson shall be responsible for designating the duties of the committee to the committee members and for ensuring that these duties are performed. The Internal Affairs Committee is responsible for insuring that members act in accordance with the Constitution. This committee will be responsible for overseeing any investigations into any members of the RCGA and issuing a report to the RCGA and the public. The Chair of this committee will be the chair of any investigative hearing of the RCGA.

The Special Subsidiary Committees will be formed when deemed necessary by either the RCGA President or Committee Chairpersons to address any issue that affects the students of Rutgers College. The Committee on Elections will be formed at least one month prior to the scheduled elections.

Article III - Removal from office
A member of the RCGA can be removed from office, through the process of impeachment. Impeachment proceedings may be brought against any member of the RCGA. Grounds for impeachment shall be defined as incompetence, misconduct of duty, misfeasance, mismanagement funds, omission of duty or violation of the RCGA Standing Rules as established by the RCGA. Any three- (3) members of the R.C.G.A may bring the charges. The three- (3) members must file charges with the Internal Affairs Committee of the RCGA. The Internal Affairs Committee of the RCGA will thoroughly investigate the charges. If the Internal Affairs Committee of the RCGA finds the charges to be valid the committee will approve the charges. If approved, the Internal Affairs Committee will charge the individual with an offense worthy of impeachment and present the case against the individual to the RCGA in a closed session within two weeks of the initial filing of the charges. At this meeting the individual being considered for expulsion shall have the opportunity to present his/her case. The impeachment vote shall be taken at this meeting. The individual being considered for expulsion shall not have a vote and shall not be counted amongst the number of voting members present. A two-thirds vote of the voting members is required to remove a member from office. If the President is the member being considered for expulsion, the Vice President shall run the proceedings.

**Article IV - Referendum**

**Section 1 - Structure**

The referendum is the highest decision-making instrument available to Rutgers College students. It may be used to challenge any decision or course of action of any organ of student government. It must be used to raise or lower student activity fees or any fee assessed to support student organizations recognized by Rutgers College. A majority vote will decide a referendum question and may only be overturned by a subsequent referendum in the same manner. Referendum questions must be explicitly written and once approved by the RCGA shall not be revised in any way. No referendum results shall be construed to limit the functions of any organ of student government except as explicitly stated in the referendum question. The referendum shall be administered and validated by the RCGA special subsidiary Committee on Elections. This committee shall determine rules and regulations for conducting the referendum. All rules and regulations must be approved by the RCGA. Any referendum concerning the RCGA that is not administered by the RCGA Committee on Elections shall be null and void.

**Section 2 - Procedure**

For a referendum to be valid, five percent (5%) or more of the total combined number of Rutgers College and affiliated students must participate in the voting. The overall combined number of Rutgers College and affiliated students shall be determined by utilizing the most recent figures from the Office of the Registrar. A referendum question shall be placed on the ballot if two-thirds (2/3) of the RCGA members present approve it to be, or if at least five percent (5%) of the total number of Rutgers College and affiliated students petition the congress for such. The referendum question must be held no later
than fourteen (14) school days after the RCGA approves it, unless the RCGA decides to extend that deadline by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

**Article V - Class Officers**

**Section 1 - Establishment**

Each Rutgers College class shall elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer to serve as class officers. The election of class officers shall take place at the same time as those for the positions of the RCGA. The elections for the class officer positions shall be administered by the RCGA Committee on Elections and will follow the same rules and regulations established for the election of RCGA positions.

**Section 2 - Class Officer Powers**

Each class caucus shall be charged with establishing a Constitution and Standing Rules for their each class, which shall specify the authority, powers, and responsibilities of all class officers and class caucus members.

Any proposed class constitution must be reviewed and ratified by the RCGA. The RCGA will review the class constitution once the class is organized. After the class constitution is ratified by the RCGA, only amendments to the class constitutions shall be reviewed and ratified by the RCGA.

**Article VI - General Provisions**

**Section 1 - Federal, State, and Local Laws**

The R.C.G.A shall abide by all laws of the State of New Jersey and the United States as well as any local statutes, which may affect the actions of the RCGA.

**Section 2 - College and University Rules**

The RCGA shall abide by all rules and regulations of the University and according to the privileges granted by the Office of the Dean. The RCGA shall also abide by all rules and regulations of Rutgers College and the University as specified by the Dean.

**Article VII - Standing Rules**

**Section 1 - Establishment of Standing Rules**

The RCGA shall establish a body of Standing Rules to govern the operation of the RCGA, the RCGA committees, and the RCGA members in their duties of office.
The body of Standing Rules shall be a singular body of rules. The Standing Rules may be specific to one position, committee, or activity, but are not limited to such.

Section 2 - Proposal of Standing Rules

Any member of the RCGA may submit Standing Rules to the RCGA Internal Affairs Committee. The Internal Affairs Committee will write the Rule and propose it to the RCGA within ten (10) days of a request being submitted for the said rule. The RCGA must hold a vote on the proposed Standing Rule no later than one meeting after being proposed the rule by the Internal Affairs Committee, but may vote on it at the time of proposal or any time thereafter but before the deadline.

If a proposed Standing Rule is approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members, then it shall be adopted into the existing body of Standing Rules and shall take effect immediately.

Section 3 - Altering Standing Rules

To add to, change, or delete a Standing Rule or any part thereof, any member of the RCGA may submit an alteration to the Internal Affairs Committee. Said committee will then propose the revision to the RCGA in the same manner as a Standing Rule is proposed in Article VII, Section 2. The proposed alteration will be made official should two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members approve it.

Section 4 - Constitutionality of Standing Rules

All Standing Rules established by the RCGA must be allowable as defined by this Constitution. It is the duty of the RCGA Internal Affairs Committee to review all proposed Standing Rules prior to their being proposed to the RCGA and to ensure that all are indeed allowable under this constitution.

If an existing Standing Rule is found to be unconstitutional after it has already been approved by the RCGA (in the manner provided for in Article VII, Section 2), the Internal Affairs Committee may propose the deletion of the Standing Rule (as provided for in Article VII, Section 3 or propose an amendment to the Constitution as explained in Article VIII, Section 1) in order to make the rule constitutional.

Article VIII - Amendments

Section 1 - Proposing Amendments

Any member of the RCGA may submit a proposed constitutional amendment or amendments to the RCGA for its consideration.
The amendment or amendments must be printed and distributed to each member of the RCGA Executive Committee at least ten (10) school days prior to the amendment or amendments being introduced to the RCGA. The RCGA Recording Secretary shall print and distribute the proposed amendment or amendments to every RCGA member at least five (5) school days prior to being introduced to the RCGA.

The RCGA must consider the proposed amendment or amendments no earlier than ten (10) school days after the introduction of the said amendment or amendments.

The proposed amendment or amendments shall be entered into the minutes along with the number of yeas and nays of the members voting thereon. If the proposed amendment or amendments or any part of them shall be agreed upon by two-thirds (2/3) of all the voting members, the same should be submitted to the Rutgers College and affiliated students for approval no later than fourteen (14) school days after the RCGA ratifies the same, in the manner and form provided by the RCGA.

If two or more amendments are submitted, they shall be submitted to the students in such a manner and form that the students may vote for or against each amendment separately. If the majority of the students voting thereon should approve the proposed amendment or amendments or any part of them, the same shall become part of this Constitution immediately, unless otherwise provided in the amendment or amendments.

No amendment or amendments shall be ratified unless five percent (5%) or more of the Rutgers College and affiliated students participate in the voting thereon. The combined total number of Rutgers College and affiliated students will be determined by utilizing the most recent figures available from the Registrar.

Section 2 - Amendments by Petition

Five percent (5%) or more of the total combined number of Rutgers College and affiliated students as determined by the Office of the Registrar may propose any specific amendment or amendments to this Constitution.

The petition will be certified by the RCGA Internal Affairs Committee and will then be submitted to the Rutgers College and affiliated students in the manner provided for in Article IV.

Article IX - Ratification

This Constitution should take effect when two-thirds (2/3) of the RCGA vote to propose it to the students and the student body ratifies the same in the manner provided in Article VIII.