

NBFC Ad Hoc Response Comte (AHRC): *Overview*

- **Purpose:** Established by Chair and EC to advise Chancellor on how current and emerging federal actions/policy shifts may affect Rutgers-New Brunswick's academic mission, operations, and community; and to offer timely, values-based, actionable recommendations.
- **Timeline & Process:** Meetings with Chancellor & leadership: Mar. 31 and May 16 | Chancellor focus points shared: Jun. 12 | Initial memo submitted: Jul. 29 | meeting with Provost: Sep. 3
- **Approach:** Members selected by NBFC Chair to reflect Rutgers-NB's range of schools, disciplines, faculty ranks, and areas of vulnerability to federal academic threats. AHRC worked through spring and summer to identify preliminary recommendations; certain recommendations have clear administrative buy-in; now ready for broader Council input and participation.
- **First initiatives under development:**
 - [Supporting Academic Freedom and Free Expression at Rutgers-New Brunswick](#)
 - [Faculty Partnership in Research Strategy](#)

Initiative 1: *Academic Freedom Resource Hub*

Purpose: To build a permanent, faculty- and content expert-curated online hub that helps the Rutgers community (a) understand the legal and other policy bases, and apply the principles of academic freedom and free expression; and (b) locate relevant Rutgers policies and other resources.

Objectives:

- Serve as a useful, reliable reference point for definitions, legal foundations, and Rutgers-specific guidance.
- Reflect a collaboration – of shared governance entities and other Rutgers units, with administration support.
- Highlight Rutgers scholarship, perspectives, and experiences re. academic freedom.
- Offer practical direction for faculty, students, and staff navigating related challenges

Possible content areas:

- Foundational texts | key legal precedents | Rutgers voices | links to policy statements
- Academic freedom in the classroom and faculty expression
- Student expression and academic inquiry as part of learning
- Institutional responsibilities and shared norms that sustain a culture of inquiry
- Support resources (informed by Initiative 3)

Initiative 2: *Academic Freedom Event(s)*

Purpose: To strengthen shared understanding of academic freedom and free expression as they apply to research, teaching, and student learning.

Objectives:

- Build clarity around legal, institutional, and political frameworks shaping academic freedom and free expression at Rutgers.
- Support faculty in navigating questions that arise in research, teaching, and student learning.
- Encourage open, informed, and principled dialogue within and across disciplines about how to uphold these values in daily academic practice.

Possible focus areas:

- Faculty research independence and external influence
- Academic freedom in the classroom and faculty expression
- Student expression and academic inquiry as part of learning
- Institutional responsibilities and shared norms that sustain a culture of inquiry

Initiative 3: *Rapid Response Planning & Support*

Purpose: Guide institutional responses to threats to academic freedom, freedom of inquiry, and/or freedom of expression by engaging faculty, with campus administration, in ongoing, proactive, scenario-based planning.

Objectives:

- Collaboratively identify what immediate advising, security, and communications support are needed following a targeting event (e.g., coordinated online doxxing, student campaigns to discipline faculty members).
- Map out roles and coordination among governance, legal, and other administrative units.
- Develop incident response templates as well as preventative practices to reduce vulnerability and improve institutional readiness.
- Create a foundation for an ongoing advisory structure that can anticipate emerging threats and recommend policy improvements.

Additional initiative area: *Faculty partnership in research strategy*

Purpose: To strengthen Rutgers-NB's ability to sustain research integrity and continuity amid shifting federal and political conditions, and the faculty's involvement in these efforts, in *2 tracks*:

- *Rapid response*: Advise on institutional support for researchers affected by disrupted funding or policy-driven restrictions.
- *Strategic planning*: Build faculty/administration capacity to anticipate, assess, and respond to emerging federal/political challenges to research.

Objectives:

- Develop a joint faculty/administration advisory group through the NB Office of Research, with broad disciplinary expertise and membership developed in consultation with NBFC.
- Improve communication and coordination when research activities are disrupted or politicized.
- Ensure faculty have an ongoing advisory role in shaping Rutgers-NB research resilience and integrity strategy.

Possible focus areas:

- Coordinated response to research interruptions or grant cancellations.
- Mentorship and peer support for revising proposals or navigating contested funder language.
- Faculty forums to discuss the impact of federal policies on academic research.
- Clearer channels for info-sharing and policy guidance across schools and governance bodies.