

Recruiting and admitting more women to the Rutgers School of Engineering



RUTGERS

Center for Organizational Leadership

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Abstract: Women remain underrepresented in engineering at no more than 25% of all students in engineering. This gender gap can be attributed to various factors, including changes in majors, transfer out of college, and stop-outs. Research studies have also identified other barriers such as limited educational routes, including out of prerequisite STEM classes in high school. This proposal aims to contribute to closing the gender gap and promoting diversity and inclusivity in engineering at Rutgers University. A task force will be formed comprise of individuals with diverse backgrounds and expertise to develop comprehensive, effective, and measurable strategies that address the needs of undergraduate women at the application, admission, and enrollment stages. By creating a more diverse and inclusive student body, e opportunities for women in engineering will be enhanced in a supportive environment.

Primary Stakeholders:

- Current and newly admitted women in engineering
- School of Engineering faculty and leadership
- Partners at Rutgers working to increase diversity
- Rutgers Undergraduate Admissions leadership
- Industry representatives
- Professional Engineering Societies
- High School STEM teachers and counsellors

Key Steps/Activities:

- Collect and present
- National data for women in engineering
 - Ratio of Rutgers applicants to admissions and to enrollment rates for men and women in engineering.
 - Best practices for the recruitment of women in engineering.
 - Conduct qualitative and quantitative studies
 - Form a task force with the mission to increase women in Rutgers School of Engineering
 - Develop a strategic communication plan
 - Engage stakeholders
 - Implement recommendations

Effectiveness Measures:

- 3-year comparison of the number of women who applied, were admitted, and enrolled in Rutgers SOE
- Quantitative climate survey for all students enrolled in the School of Engineering and review the data by gender. Identify significant differences.
- Qualitative survey of women from each class year in the School of Engineering to identify experiences.
- Compare retention and graduation rates (and years to graduation) for all women in engineering with the women enrolled in the Douglass women-only community.
- Future comparison of the above measures after interventions based on task force recommendations.

Communication/Engagement: Importance and benefits of diversity Strategies

- Website showing more women engaged in project and graduating from the School of Engineering
- Key messages that resonate with the various stakeholders.
- Communication channels that are most effective for each stakeholder group. (e.g.: Social media for prospective and current students vs. email for industry partners and alumni)
- Develop engaging content including photos, videos and testimonials from women in engineering

Proposed Timeline: by month:

- 1: Form task force
- 2-5: Data collection and research
- 6-9: Develop and present recommendations
- 10-12: Develop and implement communication plan
- 13-15 Implement recruitment and enrollment strategies
- 16-18: Evaluate effectiveness of strategies
- 19-20: Prepare and present final report

Current Status: Women comprise only 25% of students in the Rutgers School of Engineering.

Future: Enroll more women in Rutgers School of Engineering

- ✓ Implement feasible recommendations from the task force.
- ✓ Institute common application to increase the number of applicants
- ✓ Admit more women to the School of Engineering
- ✓ Incentivize women to commit to Rutgers for Engineering (possible fundraising for scholarships)
- ✓ Evaluate effectiveness of strategies