

March 23, 2015

President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The Grand Challenges Engineering Program at Rutgers University involves partnerships between the School of Engineering, the Rutgers student chapter of Engineers Without Borders, and community organizations whose missions connect with the Grand Challenges. Grand Challenges Engineering will be established as a curricular/co-curricular track that integrates with, and may be selected by students in any of, the eight engineering majors offered at Rutgers (biomedical, bioenvironmental, chemical, civil, electrical, industrial, materials, mechanical).

Students will learn about the program during their first-semester engineering orientation course, where the Grand Challenges will be introduced, discussed, and incorporated into an assignment. We anticipate that the award-winning Rutgers chapter of Engineers Without Borders will be a major source of service learning projects. We will build on ties with the local community to provide additional opportunities for students to engage in creative engineering design projects in a multidisciplinary team environment that address engineering problems in a social context.

An important cornerstone of the program is to foster global and cross-cultural perspectives. Students will have multiple opportunities to meet this goal, including participating in Engineers Without Borders, taking advantage of Rutgers' study abroad program to spend a semester abroad, and short-term immersion experiences such as those offered by the GREEN Program. In addition to one or more of these experiences, the diverse student body at Rutgers and a robust engineering student exchange program with a number of international universities will enhance students' cross-cultural competencies through group work with their peers within the engineering curriculum at Rutgers.

Grand Challenges students will also acquire a background in entrepreneurship and innovation by taking the "Innovation and Entrepreneurship for Science and Technology" course offered by the School of Engineering.

Student response to the creation of the Grand Challenges Engineering program has been enthusiastic. We anticipate that formal rollout of the program in Fall 2015 will be well received.

Sincerely,



Thomas N. Farris
Dean