

A Plan for An Urban Studies at a Small Urban College

Prepared for: The Black  
Students Unity Movement

By: Michael C. Edwards  
Resource Asst.,  
Sociology Department  
Rutgers University

### Background:

Rutgers, College of South Jersey, is a relatively new addition to the State University system. Since it became a part of the State University Community in 1950, Rutgers-College of South Jersey has followed the educational example set by the mother institution in New Brunswick. This example was one of the traditional liberal arts college. As a result of this position, Rutgers-College of South Jersey primarily provided a liberal arts education for the people of the surrounding suburban communities in Camden, Gloucester, and Burlington counties.

Rutgers-College of South Jersey was for all purposes not an integral part of Camden's social, economic, or educational endeavors. The following paper is therefore an attempt to integrate a liberal arts college into the needs and priorities of an urban community.

The paper was written with the following problem areas in mind:

1. small student body
2. limited size of existing departments
3. lack of fiscal resources
4. lack of staff expertise in Urban Affairs

### Approach:

The best approach to Urban Affairs at Rutgers, College of South Jersey's present stage of development is the Urban

Core Studies approach. Briefly, this approach states that no new department be created, but each participating department offers a core curriculum of 18 credits above the introductory level in urban affairs. A student could major in Political Science with an emphasis on urban affairs by taking the eighteen core credits in Urban Political Science plus twenty-four additional credits taken from the areas of urban sociology, religion, economics, history, etc.

The student would have at this point forty-two credits in urban courses and field work in urban affairs. The field work for the prospective urban political scientist could include work at ward level as well as work with the established politicians.

The Urban Core approach's chief asset is that it can be instituted fairly rapidly and it can be expanded as fiscal assets, staff skills, and the student body grow.

The following is an attempt to show the requirements for a major in Political Science with an urban emphasis.

#### Core Studies in Political Science

6 credits I. Urban Politics-A study of politics in the city examining existing political institutions and political styles.

6 credits II. Contemporary Problems in Urban Politics-An examination of the major problems facing city

administrators with emphasis on fiscal problems, housing, race, and labor management problems.

6 credits III. Field Work in Urban Politics-Guided field work in the area of urban politics using local, and county governmental institutions and community political groups.

#### Economics

6 credits I. Urban Economics-A survey of the major fiscal problems facing city administrator and the plans advanced by economist to solve them.

#### History

6 credits I. The History of the City-An exploration of the growth and development of the city and its impact on modern America.

#### Sociology

3 credits I. Urban Sociology-The growth of the city in western society; the influence of urban environment upon personality. The analysis of social relationships in urban areas.

3 credits II. Urban Affairs Seminar-An integrated, i. e., Sociology, Education, Political Science seminar course, studying a single urban problem from a multidiscipline perspective.

The preceding paper will hopefully draw constructive criticism, stimulate thought and work, and serve to bring Rutgers on to the Urban stage in a meaningful manner.