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On Wednesday, September 17, 1969, the Livingston College Mudslide reported: “A group of students from Professor Vesterman’s classes held an emergency meeting Tuesday night. The meeting was held after a walk out by several students during Vesterman’s ‘study of Literature’ course. It seems that Professor Vesterman has very definite ideas about the way his course is to be taught. If Professor Vesterman doesn’t believe in students having a voice, why,” asked the paper, “did he come to Livingston?” The Mudslide continued that the students had presented the professor with a “‘non-negotiable course,’ in which the students will decide on the books they will read, with faculty approval.” The newspaper congratulated the students for responding to Livingston Dean Ernest Lynton’s call for student-created courses. After five years of planning, Livingston College was up and running.

Lynton knew that “chaos and confusion” would mark the opening. In March 1965, the Rutgers Board of Governors (BOG) had appointed Lynton, of the physics department, as dean of the first of three anticipated new colleges on the 540 acres known as Camp Kilmer and acquired from the U.S. government. Lynton had worked tirelessly and with great enthusiasm for almost half a decade to develop the new college and to shape its academic and student life in innovative ways that broke with many of the traditions of American higher education. He had also increasingly come to worry that he did not have the resources he needed and,
because of that, lacked the brick and mortar and the personnel base to launch the college successfully. He was right. By the end of the second year, a number of Livingston’s firmest supporters conceded, although seldom publicly, that in some manner the college had failed. “Not totally, not irrevocably,” one faculty member wrote to the new president, Edward J. Bloustein, but this hopeful professor believed that Livingston had failed to meet the high expectations and good intentions of its founding generation.5

This article recreates the early educational landscape at Livingston College, assesses the reasons for its failure to meet the expectations of its founders, and looks, more briefly, at the college’s subsequent place in the Rutgers–New Brunswick and Piscataway configuration of colleges. We emphasize the planning years (1965–69) and the experiences of the first class of Livingston students (1969–73) and provide a brief follow-up on the college’s development though the early 1980s, when the Faculty of Arts and Sciences was formed, thus removing the faculty from the individual liberal arts colleges. We explore and attempt to explain how and why the college fell short of its founders’ expectations and argue that, nevertheless, Livingston was not the “dysfunctional disaster” that many of its outside critics called it. If all of the three colleges planned for the Camp Kilmer site had been built, perhaps the experimental campus would have had a greater chance of thriving. But of course this would have taken greater state support. Livingston could have offered a distinctive path for the development of the public research university that Rutgers has become today.6 Livingston could have led all of Rutgers to become known as a model for a state university that served poor and minority students using student-based learning. It was a fabulous dream. But that is not what happened.

Planning Livingston College

In the early 1960s, Rutgers president Mason Gross and the BOG began planning for three new colleges on a 540-acre tract, Camp Kilmer, acquired from the federal Department of Defense and situated north of the Raritan River.7 Since the early 1950s, Rutgers administrators had known and had frequently reminded the state government that the baby boom generation would be ready for college by the mid-1960s. If Rutgers was to keep up with demand, enrollments would have to double by the decade’s end, and that meant a major expansion in the size of the university. And
these were auspicious times in which to plan expansion. The public valued higher education. College education, many Americans had concluded, was a stepping-stone to the middle class, underwrote economic prosperity more generally, and strengthened America in its Cold War with the Soviet Union. In New Jersey this support for public higher education would be reflected in modest increases in Rutgers' state subsidy and, perhaps more importantly, in voter approval between the late 1950s and the early 1970s of a series of higher education state bond issues.8

Rutgers, however, was not a typical state university, and expansion was not necessarily a matter of simply adding more faculty, more classrooms, and more dormitories. Expansion had to take into account the geographical dispersal of the campuses in New Brunswick and Piscataway and the tradition of liberal arts education embedded in the men’s college (Rutgers) and the women’s college (Douglass), as well as the heritage of the agricultural college (soon to become Cook College).9 If Gross had initially thought of the new colleges simply as extensions of the existing schools, Lynton argued successfully for an entirely new, independent college, and he embedded his vision for Livingston in the careful arrangement of its site plan and architecture. Working with faculty and students at Rutgers and Douglass, he also developed an innovative set of educational and student life goals for the college. And, as the civil rights movement moved north in the late 1960s, he and the faculty made the recruitment and retention of minority students a priority.10 The story of the college’s creation begins with its architectural planning, which reflected Lynton’s idealist goal of creating a new type of academic community.

In 1965, university officials spoke of three colleges, each of which would house 3,000 students and serve a few thousand more commuters. By 1967, they zeroed in on Livingston College I and II. (The buildings that current students know as Lucy Stone Hall and the Lynton Towers were originally conceived of as part of Livingston II, and Livingston III was never begun.) The project was finally reduced to one college with a total of 3,000 beds, 1,500 of which were in the dormitories known as Quads I, II, and III. The values that stood behind Livingston College were such that the architecture had to be innovative and expressive of the challenges of the 1960s.

In November 1965, Dean Lynton and several others from Rutgers went on a tour of the University of California–Santa Cruz (UCSC), the University of California–Irvine, and the Claremont
Colleges. Clark Kerr, then the president of the University of California system, had appointed Dean McHenry to serve as chancellor of Santa Cruz in 1961. Kerr cherished the smallness of Swarthmore College, his alma mater, while McHenry valued the great library and cultural events at his alma mater, the University of California–Los Angeles (UCLA). They believed that they could combine Swarthmore and UCLA using the concept of the “cluster college.” Lynton kept a copy of an article by Kerr in his files. Published in the *Architectural Record* in 1964, “Building Big While Seeming Small” featured many buildings at UCSC. The article responded to Kerr’s own widely influential book, *The Uses of the University* (1963), in which he described the large research university as a remarkable invention but one perilously challenged by contemporary forces. He compared the vast offerings of the “multiversity” to those of an awe-inspiring city; like a metropolis, the multiversity could be overwhelming and dehumanizing. The ambitious plans for UCSC impressed Lynton, and McHenry of UCSC wrote to Lynton with equivalent enthusiasm after he had received Lynton’s proposal for Rutgers: “Thank you for sending along the statement for the development of the Raritan Campus. After reading the first paragraph, I was sure you were describing our plans here at Santa Cruz!” The plans at Livingston, then, were part of a national trend to use architecture to connect the faculty to the students.

The cluster college combined all the advantages of the research university (such as libraries, science laboratories, and venues for cultural performances) with the intimate scale of small colleges. At Rutgers a similar system called the federated college plan had much in common with the cluster college system: students would have all the advantages of the large university but would live and study together in smaller social groups with faculty fellows. Another key theme was the integration of academic and nonacademic activities—both in terms of administration and the way the facilities were designed. Most ambitiously, the individual colleges within the cluster college system were intended to be communities of students and faculty like those at Oxford and Cambridge and also like the houses and colleges that had been formed at Harvard and Yale in the late 1920s.

In the Livingston “Annual Report” for 1965–1966, the author (probably Lynton) summarized the chief goal of the college as combining the
flexibility and educational advantages of the medium-sized college with the intellectual strength and diversity of a large and growing university. … Rutgers is one of the very few major institutions which [is] tackling the problem of size in an intellectually meaningful fashion. … Two of these, the California campuses at Santa Cruz and at San Diego, are starting from scratch.  

But Rutgers did not have to start from scratch. Rutgers–New Brunswick already had individual undergraduate colleges, each with its own identity: Rutgers College, Douglass College, and the 

Livingston Dean Ernest Lynton (far left) and members of his staff (Adlerstein, Schaefer, and Miller) examine an elaborate model showing the full build-out of the Kilmer area all the way to the end of what is now the Busch Campus. North is to the right in this model; the viewer is looking west, from Livingston toward Busch. The golf course is visible on the left edge of the model. The warehouses are visible at the edge of the model closest to the photographer. At this stage, planners were imagining three liberal arts colleges in the Kilmer area. Route 18 had not been built yet, so today's sharp divide between the Livingston Campus and the Busch Campus is not legible in this model. Undated, probably in April 1967. Source: R-Photo, Buildings and Grounds, Box 33, Livingston College: Camp Kilmer, 1 of 2 folder.
agricultural and engineering schools. By adding a few more colleges, Rutgers would have an organization very similar to that of the highly regarded universities in California and, at the same time, mend fences with alumni of Rutgers College and Douglass, who feared that their private alma maters would be subsumed within a giant new state entity.

The influence from UCSC appeared in two ways—on the philosophical level of making the big university seem small and on the more finely grained level of the way certain dormitories were planned. When Lynton visited California in November 1965, UCSC’s Cowell College was under construction. Cowell College, designed by Wurster, Bernardi & Emmons, opened in September 1966, well before the Livingston Quads, which opened in September 1969. Cowell recalled the quadrangles of Oxford and Cambridge. Thus, in spite of the novelty of the educational philosophy, both UCSC and Rutgers returned to a historic plan, that of the low-rise quadrangle.
In early documents regarding the residential complexes on the Kilmer site, the architects were instructed to think of the dorms as “essentially quadrangles” grouped around the college center, which would include classrooms, a dining commons, and a library. The aim was “to provide spontaneous contact between students and staff without formally organizing this and without destroying individual privacy.”\textsuperscript{13}

The \textit{New York Times} quoted Lynton in June 1969, a few months before the college opened, saying that the new college would have “a very swinging faculty, an exciting student body, a real degree of orientation to everyday problems.”\textsuperscript{14} The residences at Livingston were planned by the architecture firm Anderson, Beckwith, and Haible. At the same time, other architects were designing the Kilmer Library, the chemistry building (later Beck Hall), and an academic building combined with a dining hall (Tillett).

The quads were meant to be approached on foot, not by car. The three buildings that made up the quads were not true four-sided rectangles; rather, their shapes were irregular C shapes.

Photograph of Quad III, Livingston Campus, showing the courtyard. The quads were intended to be experienced on foot rather than by car. Source: Laura Leichtman, 2014.
The courtyard of each quad was an intimate outdoor space. This planning strategy was very close to the one used at Cowell College. In both cases, the residential buildings were relatively low (from three to six stories), shaped as informal Cs or Us, and purposely varied. The diverse plans of the dormitories were meant to reflect the wide range of students. The smallest social group was between seven and 11 at UCSC and between nine and 11 at Livingston. At both campuses, an academic building with a dining hall was set a short walk from the housing.

The planners designed the residence halls to accommodate increasingly more intimate groups: from 1,500 to 500 to 50 to about 10. All three quads together housed 1,500 students, but that was too large a number to form a coherent group. Quads I, II, and III each provided shelter for 500, which was a small enough number so that students could at least recognize each other. A single quad was then divided into 10 “houses” of 50 students each, and within each house there were so-called floors for nine, 10, or 11 students. The floors were originally called “Small Living Groups.” While it was not possible to move from quad to quad without going outdoors, a student could move from house to house in the same quad through underground tunnels. These tunnels provided access to a spacious lounge, laundry rooms, ironing areas, and storage. By placing large congregate rooms underground, the designers could keep the overall height of the residence halls down. And the facilities in the basement were meant to serve the entire quad, not just one house, so (in theory) the tunnels would act as social glue that would hold together the variously sized social groups. Lynton took the problem of size seriously, noting in a Targum interview that Livingston would be “small where the dignity of the individual requires it.” Regrettably, the idealism behind the tunnels did not work in practice—they allowed intruders and theft. The interiors of the quads were extremely complex. There was no clear view down any hallway, and the plan was totally incomprehensible to a first-time visitor. Steps and ramps were scattered throughout the structure. All of these design decisions were made to create community by causing unplanned interactions.

There was no difference between the plans for the housing of men and those for the housing of women, and the dormitories at Livingston were coed by floor. (In comparison, women were not allowed in the River Dorms at Rutgers College until 1964, and even then they were permitted in upstairs lounges on weekends only.)
The program produced by the Raritan Policy Committee in February 1965 specifically required that the residences be designed to accommodate men or women. An early programming guide stated, “In the residence unit every effort must be made to avoid the hotel-like atmosphere so common in large universities today.”

Student life experts considered short, compact halls for 10 or 12 people to be desirable for the social development of students, who would form family-like bonds. The preference for such small groups was a direct attack on the 56-man corridors and looming skyscrapers that had burst into the sky at almost all state universities, including Rutgers. An expert on college residence halls opined, “If uninterrupted, the typical double-loaded corridor can look like a tunnel and sound like bedlam.”

The interior arrangements of the quads reflected an antipathy toward typical institutional forms such as the long corridor.

Coupled with Lynton’s (and Gross’s) commitment to build small to get bigger was an educational vision of a nontraditional college. Lynton argued that humanity was at a point where
questions could be raised about “the viability of our civilization, because fundamental social, economic, and human problems are growing faster than their potential solutions.” Lynton believed, and a college’s academic disciplines should direct their work and teaching to finding solutions. In his initial iteration of what this might mean, Lynton wrote that scholarly and academic work at the college should focus on “the rapid, uncontrolled, and unbalanced growth of urban complexes,” the development of the “former colonial countries,” and “unassimilated scientific and technical progress.” He wanted a curriculum that assured every student would address at least one of these problems and that interdisciplinary majors would be created that would connect students and faculty across traditional boundaries for problem solving. Concretely, he had begun discussions about interdisciplinary language programs (encompassing the languages

Rutgers President Mason Gross with Livingston Dean Ernest Lynton, who is about to dig the ceremonial first shovel of soil to begin the construction of Livingston, April 28, 1967. Lynton’s educational ideas shaped Livingston, but planning for the new college could not have moved forward without the full commitment of Gross to those same ideas. Source: R-Photo, Buildings and Grounds, Box 33, Livingston College Building, Progress 3 of 4 folder.
of Asia, Africa, and Latin America), an urban studies program, and a liberal arts science degree, not for traditional majors but for future civil servants, lawyers, and businesspeople to inform them about the history, philosophy, uses, and implications of scientific endeavor. Just as importantly, Lynton argued that students should be empowered to shape their own educational experiences. Faculty members would serve as mentors, teachers, and advisers for their students, but the traditional hierarchical relationship between professor and student would be set aside.23

Somewhat later in the planning process, another concern came to the fore. After the Newark disturbances of 1967 but before black student protesters occupied Conklin Hall on the Newark Campus in 1969, the Rutgers administration generally, and Lynton and the newly formed Livingston faculty in particular, had made a commitment to the recruitment of “disadvantaged students.” But, beyond that, Lynton was committed to the shaping of the college as a whole in a way that would support the education of black and Puerto Rican students. Both the faculty and the staff, of course, would also have to include a significant number of African Americans and Puerto Ricans. The 1969 Newark campus protests by black students gave the Rutgers University faculty a “new urgency,” in the words of Richard P. McCormick, in addressing questions about the admission and retention of minority students, but at Livingston College that commitment was already evident in the planning for the school.24

The Opening of Livingston College

By the spring of 1969, the college had taken shape academically. Five departments, new to Rutgers, that fulfilled one of Lynton’s and the planning committee’s three goals (making the college urban and international and offering science for liberal arts students) had been organized or were in the final steps toward being so. Anthropology, computer science, and comparative literature were all new. Anthropology had an urban component, comparative literature focused on “non-Western” literatures, and computer science held out prospects of practical application. The hallmarks of the new college, however, were two departments in the division of urban studies: one in urban planning and policy development and a second in community development, the latter with high expectations that it could attract faculty with significant practical experience working in urban neighborhoods.
"GI Joe to Joe College," January 17, 1969. Livingston arising from the leveling of old army barracks and warehouses at Camp Kilmer. In the background are the future Tillett Hall and the three quad dormitories. Some of the remaining army buildings would be used by college officials in the fall 1969. The photo, taken less than a year before the college opened, gives a good sense of the campus's isolation. Source: R-Photo, Buildings and Grounds, Box 33, Livingston College, Aerial Views folder.
A third department, geography, was soon added to the division. Like geography, some departments replicated those at Rutgers and Douglass: Livingston had an English department but not a classics program, a biology program but not a physics department. Livingston students could, however, pursue any major offered at the federated colleges. Moreover, a traditional field like biology was expected, by Lynton and its chair, W. Robert Jenkins (later to become Livingston’s dean), to be nontraditional by teaming with the medical school and developing new approaches to urban health care. Less visibly—as many people outside Livingston mistakenly thought of it as solely an undergraduate college—Livingston had accepted doctoral program applicants in anthropology and urban planning and would have a graduate program in computer science within the year.25

Initially, the college offered a set of majors in “Afro-American Studies and African Studies.” As these made up a program of studies but not a department, the curriculum was drawn from offerings in many departments—music, history, political science, urban studies, foreign languages and literature (including language instruction in Hausa), and sociology, as well as introductory college courses. Lynton expected that many of these courses would be taught by black faculty but that most black students, while using electives to explore black history and culture, would major in areas relevant to their career goals.26

The college had also managed to attract a number of young but already accomplished scholars, many of whom would go on to have long careers at Rutgers. In addition to Jenkins, George Levine in English (chair), Gerald Grob in history (chair, whose interest in medical history promised links to the medical school), Gerald Pomper in political science (chair), Albert Blumberg in philosophy (chair), and Robin Fox and Lionel Tiger in anthropology were among these promising additions to the faculty. There were also those the college attracted with its emphasis on community engagement. Hilda Hidalgo, hired as an assistant professor, held a master’s of social work from Smith College, had worked for child services in Newark, and was involved in efforts to improve educational opportunity for Puerto Ricans in New Jersey. She joined the urban studies and community development program at Livingston and became the coordinator of efforts to establish a Puerto Rican studies program. Thomas Hartmann, hired initially as a lecturer in the same program, had a bachelor of arts from
Princeton but had considerable experience in state government work in community affairs and had served on a statewide committee charged with responding to recent civil disorders in New Jersey. Both were representative of faculty whom Lynton hoped to hire who had practical experience in community work without necessarily having the standard PhD credential of a traditional academic. On the student side, the college expected about 600 freshmen to enter that fall, perhaps a quarter of them African American and 20 percent “high potential.” Many of these admitted students had been invited to campus to help in the final stages of the planning process, replacing Douglass and Rutgers College students who had served on committees previously.\(^{27}\)

In spring 1969, the prospective Livingston student read in the college undergraduate catalog:

> Livingston College will have no ivory towers. It cannot; our cities are decaying. Many of our fellow men are starving; social injustice and racism litter the earth; weapons of awesome destruction threaten our existence. The times we live in are revolutionary and bewildering. Radical change has become the rule; understanding and mastering that change has become a necessity. Livingston students will need to get a sense of the transformation occurring around them.\(^{28}\)

After presenting this opening salvo, the catalog told students that they would receive an education that they could largely fashion themselves, relevant to the troubled world around them. That education would focus, for example, on the plight of cities and offer various approaches to addressing urban problems: city planning coupled with sociology, political science, and economics. Moreover, education would take place continuously, inside and outside the classroom, in lecture halls, in informal settings, in the communities of New Jersey, and through internships (which, along with community involvement and study abroad, were described as absolutely central to the distinctive quality of the education Livingston offered). The concern that education extend well beyond the classroom walls was coupled with a “special commitment to disadvantaged students,” the urban and rural poor, and, in particular, black Americans, who as students had much to offer other students in learning about the “intolerable conditions” that plagued the lives of the poor in America.\(^{29}\)
The catalog then laid out the distinctive features of student life, beginning with Lynton’s cherished quadrangle dormitories. The quad library and seminar rooms, the resident faculty family, and the small size (50 students) of each house within a quad held out the prospect of spontaneous debate and sizzling conversations. The housing system would, in turn, facilitate education outside the classroom. From their preceptors students would learn the three Ps of quad living—pets (yes), painting (of house walls, yes), and parietals (curfews and other behavior rules, no). Students were adults responsible for their own decision making, more so than at Rutgers and Douglass. Commuting students could symbolically join a house and would also be given representation in the college governing body, the Academic Assembly. Faculty advisers would be available to discuss both personal and academic matters of concern to students. The catalog informed undergraduates that “involvement with students was a part of the teaching responsibility of every faculty member.”

Last-minute preparations, September 5, 1969. Movers unload mattresses for the quad dormitories. Note the muddy ground and the plank walkway on which Dean Ernest Lynton, Assistant Dean Philip Garcia, student Judy Brynes (Highland Park), and student Timothy Harris (Piscataway) are standing. Source: R-Photo, Building and Grounds, Box 33, Livingston College Campus Views, 1969 folder.
Academically, students were expected to take four 4-credit courses a term (rather than five 3-credit courses, as was the norm in higher education). They would receive grades of “honors,” “credit,” or “no credit” for a course (rather than letter or numerical grades), as well as a written evaluation of their work at the end of each semester.31

Aside from the genuine and widespread excitement about bringing a new college to life, there was the day-to-day reality of muddy walkways and of dilapidated World War II barracks and warehouses substituting for yet-to-be-built classrooms. Writing in the early 1980s, the first dean of student affairs, Lawrence Pervin, recaptured the landscape this way:

Not only were the buildings not ready for the originally planned 1,200 students, but they were not ready for the scaled down enrollment of 600 students, about 500 freshmen and 100 transfer students. The residence units were barely ready, with some repairs still to be made and furniture just being delivered as students were about to arrive. The academic building, including the campus center and dining hall, would not be ready until the spring semester. The faculty offices were put in part of one of the residential quadrangles, the old Kilmer Army Officers’ Club became the Officers’ Club Lecture Hall, and the administration remained in the Adjunct General’s Headquarters building. The psychology and biology departments were located in the old barracks building, literally right by the railroad tracks that were part of the disembarkation center [used by soldiers in the 1940s]. In fact, a passageway was constructed over the tracks to connect the two rows of barracks that formed the two academic departments. There was no college center, no gym, no outdoor playing fields, but lots and lots of mud. Not only was the landscaping not even nearly completed, but many of the walks had not been put in and you either balanced yourself on narrow wooden slats or walked in the mud. The austere red buildings rose like a phoenix in the desert.32

Two events set the initial tone for the new college. The first happened just as students arrived. The educational program at Livingston was aimed at poor students from families that did not expect their children to go to college. This demographic was at first
called “disadvantaged,” then “high-risk,” then “high-potential.” Many of the “high-potential” students, mostly but not exclusively minorities, had been at Rutgers that summer and gone through a college preparatory program held at Douglass. Some of the black students had formed the Organization of Black Unity (OBU), and some of the Puerto Rican students had organized the United Puerto Rican Students. When they returned to campus in early September, the black students asked that they be allowed to move into their rooms a day early. Given permission, many did not settle into their assigned rooms but rather moved collectively into what they named the “Malcolm X house” (house 25), giving themselves and the OBU a self-defined home. Other students, arriving on campus during the next week, were upset that some black students seemed to be setting themselves apart from the larger community, and the event foreshadowed some (but certainly not all) of the racial fault-lines that would develop at Livingston. In fact, the black students who established the Malcolm X house were simply doing what deans at other colleges had done and would continue to do by designating special-interest floors or wings of dormitories.

The other event involved governance. In 1968 the faculty had created the Academic Assembly, as noted earlier, to govern academic and student life and had gone well beyond what most American colleges and universities did to give students real power in the body and make them partners with the faculty and administration in governing Livingston. The students were not satisfied. Some noted that they did not have an equal voice (every faculty member was a member of the assembly, but one student represented every 50 students). Other students protested that the white majority in the student body would dominate the election process and give blacks, Puerto Ricans, and Asians little say. After a day set aside for collegewide debate, and then several months of work by a student-faculty committee, the assembly was made into two chambers, one for the faculty and one for the students, both of which had to approve all academic policies (with student life issues left to the student chamber). For the first year, an executive committee—with equal faculty and student representation, in fact—took on most of the responsibility for policy formation. For the student chamber, blacks, whites, and Puerto Ricans each elected 15 members, and Asians elected three (the student representatives to the executive committee were also elected by ethnic groups.) “Ethnic representation,” its supporters argued, “acknowledged that
racial lines are a major point in determining political views, and [gave] each group a chance to have its political views taken into consideration.” Livingston moved faster and further than most other colleges in giving students a voice and establishing polices that were reluctantly approved and then, in the case of student membership, eventually copied by the Rutgers University Senate.34

In what was an often chaotic first year—”discovering on Tuesday,” as Lynton reported, “that something should have been done on Monday”—what stood out was the teaching.35 Allen Howard, from the history department, remembered that the dorms were planned as

integrated teaching, learning, living places, right. So, we taught, and I can remember teaching in one dorm, in what later became a lounge; it was basically a lounge. Remember, there weren’t a lot of students, and there weren’t a lot of faculty either, then, the very first year. We had to walk there on two-by-eights or two-by-twelves through the mud.36

Howard was one of a number of young historians whose work was helping to bring African history into the mainstream of professional interest. He was still working on his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin when Lynton hired him, had spent two years teaching at the University of Sierra Leone, and specialized in African urban history—a perfect fit for Livingston. Although there were some black students who, because of their nationalist or separatist ideology, were unwilling to take African history with a white professor (and some white students who had no interest in what they defined as a “black” subject), Howard usually attracted equal numbers of black and white students to his classroom and also often had as many women as men in his classes (both of which set Livingston apart from the other federated colleges). He was “committed to a democratic approach in the classroom,” meaning an emphasis on students’ participation, but also committed to improving his students’ writing skills. His teaching spilled out of the classroom into the lounges, where students and professors were encouraged to talk informally, and into advising meetings. As Howard recounts, both black and white students were often the first in their families to go to college, and they worried about getting degrees and “selling out” in the job market rather than
going back to their communities and doing something meaningful. Howard found teaching, advising, attending committee meetings, and dealing with the politically charged Academic Assembly to be exhausting. More than one of his slightly older colleagues took Howard aside and told him to remember his scholarship. Some faculty, Howard recalled and Lynton reported in the first-year annual report, withdrew “psychologically if not physically from this very real battle for the students’ minds,” but most of the Livingston faculty were as engaged as Lynton and Howard.37

Howard also took advantage of the college’s emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches, a pedagogical opportunity that would have been impossible at more prestigious colleges like the Ivies, which tended to be fixed in their ways. He co-taught with political scientist Barbara Lewis, a specialist on women and public policy in the Ivory Coast; with South African–born English professor Barbara Masekela, a leader in the anti-Apartheid movement; and with Ernest Dunn in Africana Studies. (Dunn was the first to offer African languages at Rutgers.) Most of these teaching partnerships came after the initial years, but the cross-departmental faculty cooperation developed in 1969 and 1970 in the shared work of defining the new college.

Lawrence Pervin’s summary of Livingston’s first year, from the perspective of a dean of student affairs, highlighted both accomplishments and problems. As Lynton had acknowledged, Livingston had had its problems—racial conflict, drug dealing, unclear governance structures, theft in the dormitories, and noise that disrupted the life of the college. “There were problems.” Pervin wrote, “with some of our students, the vast majority of whom were freshmen, and problems with outsiders. For the most of the year there was no judicial board and it was a full year before students realized that they could be put on academic probation or required to leave for academic reasons.” There were problems, he went on, “within departments about who should be hired and conflict between departments about who should receive more new faculty positions.”38 Guidance counselors misinformed prospective students about the offerings of the new colleges. Piscataway political leaders were less than welcoming to Livingston’s students. The New Brunswick and Piscataway police and university Campus Patrol were distrusted by the students, and rumors, fueled by media coverage, depicted Livingston as an unsafe campus dominated by allegedly menacing black students.39
After a year, however, there was also much that was positive. A multiracial campus with multiracial clubs, activities, and courses now existed. (Rutgers and Douglass, which had been predominately white well into the 1960s, had also both admitted more black and Puerto Rican students but proportionally far fewer than Livingston.) William Bellinger (Class of 1973) had established the Weusi Kuumba African Dancers and Drummers, which performed not only at Livingston but at other schools as well, while other students founded the Livingston Gospel Choir, which was still on campus a decade later. Students had worked together to improve security, ease tensions, and build organizations; they debated each other, sometimes fiercely, about racism and capitalism and often carried their concerns beyond the campus. Faculty and students worked together, and “the faculty was good, diverse, committed and available.”

There was also much to look forward to. Applications to the college had gone up, and the new freshman class (the Class of 1974) would be larger than the one before. These incoming students would now have some 800 sophomores, some transfers, and most of the former Livingston freshmen, to help them navigate the college. The quad dormitories and Tillett Hall were now complete and better landscaped. Understaffed departments had, in most cases, a full complement of faculty. The constitution of the student-faculty government had been agreed upon, and after the demise of a series of first-year college newspapers, including the Mudslide, Fargo, and General Motors, by October 1970 the campus had a new student newspaper, the Medium, which remained the paper of record for the campus through the 1980s. A few months later, however, looking back over the fall term, the editors of the Medium saw no reason for Livingston to congratulate itself.

In an editorial published in February, the Medium editors wrote bitterly about the college in a piece titled “Community?”:

Livingston has housing and public buildings that are falling apart and being destroyed, grass and trees that are quickly leaving the environment, sewage that backs up, chlorinated water and not enough hot water, electrical blackouts, transportation sometimes, communications (telephones) that have been taken away, health services (if you are lucky to be there when they are), food or whatever you want to call it (certainly not edible),
security that doesn’t protect anything, and a government that doesn’t control anything.\textsuperscript{42}

Although these were typical student gripes, most referenced substantial grievances. The buildings were new, so students had good reason to be irritated with the university when basic systems failed. The fact that the degraded environment was caused by vandalism made any sense of community seem laughable.

A December 1970 \textit{Medium} story highlighted one example. Students had been calling Campus Patrol since late October complaining about cars parked in the central areas of the residence halls (the quads). On the second December weekend, there had been five to 13 cars parked there, and innumerable calls to Campus Patrol to enforce the no-parking regulation had brought no response. “Many of us,” the editors wrote, “remember working from dawn through dusk in an unbelievable wish to turn the mud flats into grassy fields with trees that we could all enjoy.... When we arrived here in September, the quads were full of rich green vegetation and for the first few warm weeks of school we all enjoyed rolling, walking and sitting in the soft green grass.” Now, the quads had become “dead-grass-and-tree” de facto parking lots, with crushed walkways, uprooted trees, knocked-down light posts, and mud everywhere.\textsuperscript{43} Inside, the situation was just as bad. In the campus academic center (Tillett Hall), the “ceilings in the hallways have been torn down, the cushions from the Great Hall furniture have been taken (so many that all that remains are frames of the chairs), and all of the recreation equipment has been stolen.” While destruction of the college landscape undercut the sense of community, perhaps even more troubling were the limited hours that the library and health services were available (both in sharp contrast to the situation at Rutgers and Douglass).\textsuperscript{44}

\textbf{Moving On: The Second and Third Years}

Academically, however, there were signs of continued pursuit of the college’s mission. The history chair had hired two outstanding social historians, Peter Stearns, who played a major role in the New Brunswick graduate program before departing, and Louis Galambos, whose research linked him with urban studies as well as history. In political science, Wilson Carey McWilliams arrived, already a major star in the field; the same could be said about Richard Poirier in English. Saul Amarel joined the faculty as chair of computer science. Programmatically, students could now
major in art, Asian studies, labor studies, and Puerto Rican studies (in addition to the programs available since the college’s opening and those at Douglass and Rutgers).\textsuperscript{45}

Much of the impetus for developing Puerto Rican studies came from students, led by Walter Martinez. In spring 1971, Livingston students joined with Puerto Rican students at all of the other liberal arts colleges (including Camden and Newark) to pressure the university to do more to admit and retain Puerto Rican students and develop academic programming in the nascent field of Latin American studies. At Livingston itself, the loosely defined Latin American studies option was reimagined as a Puerto Rican studies program. By year’s end, Maria Canino had been hired as the first director. On the student front, quad councils had been organized to extend the reach of student government. A parents’ association was established to facilitate effective communication about college concerns. The library was completed during the year (although it was woefully short of books), and a gymnasium was under construction.\textsuperscript{46}

Peter Klein, who lived with his wife as a resident faculty couple in Quad II during Livingston’s second year, later reflected on the ability of students to work out many of their own problems. From his office at the top of Tillett Hall, he looked out on the pathway—wood pallets run end-to-end across mud flats—that students had to traverse to get from the quads to the classrooms. When groups of black and white students started across from opposite ends and were of roughly equal numbers, both would form single-file lines and march past each other. If, however, one group was significantly larger than the other, the minority group would stand down, in the mud, until the other group had moved across. White outsiders might see this as “gangs” of blacks intimidating “groups” of whites when, in fact, it was a ritual that allowed both groups to cope with both the real racial tensions and the equally real landscaping nightmare.\textsuperscript{47}

So although it was a racial event that most people remember about Livingston’s second year, it was not a black-white split per se but an incident involving two groups of black students, with different relationships to the white and Puerto Rican students. On the morning of Friday, March 12, Campus Patrol received a call about men running from the Malcolm X house being chased by others. Soon thereafter, the Piscataway police were informed that five armed men had abducted DeForest Blake “Buster” Soaries Jr.,
an OBU leader and a commuter who had been staying overnight at the house. Other students in the house recognized four of the five abductors, three of whom were Livingston students. The Medium reported that the intruders had been armed with a sawed-off shotgun, two rifles, and two handguns. The arrest warrants stated they were wanted in conjunction with kidnapping, atrocious assault, and having guns on campus. By that evening Soaries was back on campus, having been driven to Trenton, then taken to Princeton, and finally released to take a bus back to New Brunswick. The rooms of the three students involved in the abduction were searched, and narcotics paraphernalia and small quantities of drugs were seized.  

Apparently an earlier incident, in which a student had been beaten by a nonstudent, had triggered this retaliatory action, but the deeper causes reached back across the entire school year. The Malcolm X house and the OBU had become associated with a strong stand against drugs on campus, especially among black students who were aware of the damage drug use had inflicted on their home communities. Many white students, like some black students who lived with them, used drugs, primarily marijuana and LSD. While Lynton had written to the Livingston community during the first year that “psychotoxic drugs and marijuana represent[ed] a clear and present danger to individuals and the Livingston community,” a written admonition could not counter the student acceptance of drugs on most American campuses, including Livingston’s. During Livingston’s second year, stories circulated of efforts by some students to intimidate other students thought to be distributing drugs, and many of these rumors linked the intimidation to the OBU. They ranged from the story of a student, thought to be a drug dealer, hauled off campus and sent home on an airplane to stories of face-to-face confrontations between various groups of students. In addition, numerous students, including those in the Puerto Rican student organization, had acknowledged the drug problems on campus but spoken out against vigilantism as a solution. The assault on the Malcolm X house most likely occurred because of these tensions.  

Soon thereafter, acting president Richard Schlatter appointed a panel chaired by Katharine E. White, a trustee, to determine what had led to the incident. While the White report ranged broadly over Livingston’s short history, it concluded bluntly that “lack of confidence in the Livingston College leadership” had been the “most pervasive cause of fear and insecurity” on the campus that had led to
the abduction. The report faulted Pervin and Lynton, in particular, for not assigning administrative and student life responsibilities clearly, leaving students without effective means to resolve grievances. And while it noted that a college that offered little in the way of recreational and extracurricular activities (and virtually none in the evenings and on weekends) invited trouble, some of its most telling comments were directed at the faculty for failing to provide leadership and advising for the students. 51

Between September 12 and 23, Lynton responded at length to the report in letters to Edward J. Bloustein, Rutgers’ new president. 52 Lynton accepted much of the blame and made it clear that most of the administrative reforms the report called for were largely accomplished. Especially in his third letter, however, he also took issue with the tone of the report, its preoccupation with the past rather than the progress that had been recently made in correcting problems, and its reliance on rumor rather than fact. In one particularly striking part of the letter, he dealt with the complaint that it had taken Livingston too long to establish an adequate student judicial system:

The report criticizes the College for not establishing a permanent judicial system in the first months of Livingston’s existence. The Panel apparently did not consider the fact that such a system had to have the consent of (1) Black students who view all judicial mechanisms with suspicion, (2) White students who feared the system would be used to throw them out of school for smoking pot, (3) a faculty that was especially sensitive to the civil liberties of students whose campus offenses are subject to outside prosecution, and (4) an administration that needed a system that could settle disputes quickly and efficiently without violating due process. 53

Two of the students on the panel added a personal statement asking if a college designed as a microcosm of the larger society could be expected to deal successfully with the societal problems that “we as a whole have not yet dealt with?” In such a situation, the students insisted, they were “not separating themselves from the mainstream culture at Livingston, nor are we negating its energies and strengths, we just want to re-enforce and maintain our own (for
survival). So when we return to our communities,” they insisted, “we would not be strangers to our own people.” Having signed the final report, the students wanted nonetheless to underscore that the campus incidents the report described were virtually inevitable consequences of conditions administrative changes would not fix and that black and Puerto Rican students had to resolve themselves.54

Peter Klein, who by year three had moved with his family to the new South Tower dormitory, provided a telling anecdote about the continuing ethnic divides on the campus and the students’ ability to handle these issues themselves. On one of his first nights living in the towers, he had returned to a scene of a shouting match threatening to turn into a brawl on the top floors. Earlier he had learned that the Puerto Rican students had been assigned (if they so chose) to the seventh floor, which was fine (and such voluntary assignments by race or ethnicity were now common throughout the university), but he was incredulous that a dean had then allotted the sixth floor to the Cuban students. After all, they all spoke Spanish. “Are you kidding?!” Klein told the dean, “The Cuban students are sons and daughters of the upper middle class and professional class who left when Castro came and they can’t stand the Puerto Rican kids, and the Puerto Ricans can’t stand them.” In spite of the housing officer’s insensitivity toward the students’ ethnicities, no great setback occurred. When “one of the Cuban kids had started dating a Puerto Rican girl,” trouble had erupted. But then, almost as abruptly, the matter had been settled, with the students taking the lead in doing so.55

Outside the university, media reports about racial incidents created the impression that Livingston was a failure. Furthermore, the White report was misconstrued as a condemnation of the college generally, when in fact it concerned only one aspect of the college’s administration, one that was well on its way to correction. But Mason Gross’s retirement and the arrival of a new president produced a new need for an assessment of the college. The faculty wrote Lynton and the new president, Edward J. Bloustein; Lynton and other administrators also passed along personal assessments to Bloustein and to the BOG.

Contemporary Evaluations of Livingston

Of the several faculty attempts to explain Livingston’s problems, none was more passionate or perceptive than that of the
chair of the English department, George Levine, who in summer 1971 wrote to the new president. Since his arrival in fall 1968, Levine had found Livingston “a vocation and way of life,” and he now had “a sense of frustration, fatigue, overwork, disillusion” that most of his colleagues shared in some degree. It was Levine, quoted earlier, who stated most clearly that Livingston had failed, but “not totally, not irrevocably.” And it was Levine who went on to argue that it was worth more effort to turn things around: “We need to do what nobody else has been able to do on a large scale, create a state institution which deals with a wide spectrum of the population in a great variety of ways.” The college needed time to make mistakes, and it needed flexibility, autonomy, and resources in trying to solve its problems. As Levine pointed out, Livingston was worth saving because it was both educationally innovative and aimed at disadvantaged students.

Levine itemized the failures: “First, we have taken in a significant minority of ill-prepared minority students (in my time here the jargon has shifted from ‘disadvantaged,’ to ‘high risk,’ to ‘high potential’) but we have by and large failed to do much for them.” For the “traditional student,” Livingston’s failure was just as profound. Here Levine mirrored what the students themselves said about the college in their letters to the school newspaper, the Medium: there was no gymnasium, no funds for extracurricular activities, “no library to speak of,” inadequate transportation, few security personnel, and a force (Campus Patrol) with “built-in prejudices and fears” about the students. Livingston had become a “dark and depressing outpost,” with students anticipating the weekends so they could flee home.

Levine continued, “That Livingston should have been for one moment (no less than two years) without a full-time doctor and medical facilities is sheer brutality and is perceived as such by students.” And, he further said, “Of course, there is ‘race.’ … The typical pattern is for the white liberal kids to arrive full of love, fall into the shock of rejection, then of fear, and finally of a sullen racist resentment. The Blacks and Puerto Ricans, for their part, find their sense of things confirmed by the school’s failure genuinely to help them.” Livingston had a faculty of “extraordinary distinction for so young a place,” but “the college manage[d] to use its talents minimally.” Younger faculty were confused about how to apportion their time among research, teaching, and helping with the planning and development of the college, while some of the senior
faculty avoided the gritty committee work required at the college and acted as if they were "the faculty of All Souls at Oxford."  

Levine was deeply troubled by the situation at Livingston but determined to turn things around; Grob, equally troubled, but from a different perspective, left the college in frustration and joined the Douglass faculty. Grob had been drawn to Livingston by its emphasis on interdisciplinary inquiry and its commitment to minority admissions. In his first report as history chair, Grob had bemoaned a pervasive anti-intellectualism at the college, reflected in "apathy in the classroom, the lack of scholarly dialogue on campus, and the absence of extracurricular scholarly concerns." A little over a year later, from his new position at Douglass, Grob wrote to Vice President Henry Winkler that there was a "hostility toward scholarship and learning" that had had a "disastrous impact upon students." He felt that faculty were routinely hired and promoted without evidence of research accomplishments and that the dean had delayed hiring scholars with outstanding qualifications because the dean believed that they lacked commitment to the college's mission. Grob noted that a number of outstanding scholars who, like himself, had been attracted to Livingston because of its commitment to interdisciplinary work in the social sciences, had either left the university or asked to be transferred to the graduate faculty. In challenging the academic goals and claims of the college, Grob supplied a critique that put him among a distinct but articulate minority of the faculty.
A year later, after several internal and external reviews of Livingston, Winkler summarized for the BOG the college’s current situation. The previous year had shown improvement. Lynton had sustained the college’s mission, Winkler stated,

as a multi-racial institution with an urban emphasis, blending career-oriented programs with the liberal arts, reaching out into the community to develop new kinds of internships and field work, placing emphasis on program-related interdisciplinary studies, while at the same time making a substantial contribution to graduate instruction and research.61

Of the remaining problems, Winkler highlighted several. One was the lack of commitment on the part of some of the faculty to provide students the academic guidance necessary for a nontraditional curriculum. “Put quite bluntly,” Winkler wrote,

Some faculty members appear to believe that their obligations are fulfilled when they have met the required number of classes and held minimal office hours. This is, of course, untrue in any case, and particularly at Livingston, where the whole system of course selection, concentration, even grading, is based on the assumption of heavy faculty involvement in helping students shape their program.62

Winkler then raised, only to reject, a related concern. Many faculty felt that meeting such obligations required a different reward structure for the college. Promotion, the argument went, had to depend on more than research if the faculty were expected to devote large amounts of time to advising and to student life. Winkler felt that the university promotion review committee already took quite seriously faculty contribution to community service and the supervision of independent student work and that if more needed to be done in this area, it was the responsibility of the college to come up with ways to measure and evaluate such contributions.63

A year after Winkler’s report was submitted, black faculty and staff members raised a related concern with the provost. They argued that the “real experiment at Livingston” was the creation of
a multiracial college and that black faculty and staff members were carrying most of the burden of advising and teaching disadvantaged students. They thus “sacrificed their own careers” while white members of traditional departments devoted themselves to research, training of graduate students, and getting on with their own careers. They said the college needed more resources for the educational support of disadvantaged students. They also argued that Livingston’s loose degree requirements, originally designed for middle-class white students, had failed to provide the academic rigor needed to assure that disadvantaged students got a meaningful college education.64

The First Graduation and Beyond

For many, concern about promotion standards at a college raised the additional question of the evolving relationship of each of the colleges to the university. Winkler addressed this issue as well. “There is,” Winkler noted, “genuine fear that Livingston’s innovative and ‘untraditional’ program might suffer if Livingston were to be too closely tied to the rest of the University.” Winkler admired Livingston’s strengths and did not want to see it forced to conform too closely to educational practices at the other colleges, but he insisted that the college evaluate how well it was achieving its own goals.65 At the first fall 1972 BOG meeting, President Bloustein reinforced Winkler’s message: Whatever faculty across the river thought or high school guidance counselors told prospective college students, Livingston was going strong as its fourth year began.66

Livingston’s third year had been, in fact, fairly uneventful, and its fourth would be the same—at least in comparison to other campuses nationwide during the later stages of the Vietnam War. The college organized its own intercollegiate football team (the Panthers, though faculty and students often referred to them as the “Black Panthers”), recruited cheerleaders, and played a modest local schedule.67 The crime rate, first reported in 1971, was the lowest of all the campuses.68 The student chamber disbanded for lack of interest (it would eventually be reinstated), and many students began asking for a more conventional grading system now that they needed the credentials to apply to graduate and professional schools.69 The most disturbing sign was that enrollments went down, including African American enrollments (as both went up at other campuses), an indication that bad publicity had hurt the college substantially.70 Livingston was still struggling, but it had
turned a corner and was now an established college in the federated system.

In November 1971, Lawrence Pervin had announced his resignation as dean of student affairs. In Spring 1973, Ernest Lynton, having seen the first class through to graduation, told Bloustein that he, too, wished to resign. In late May 1973, approximately 500 Livingston students were among the more than 7,000 Rutgers graduates. The New York Times reported that many of the students at the Livingston College graduation marched “robeless and wearing sandals” to the beat of a “jazz combo of professors and New York City musicians.”

The college would experience its share of controversy and moments of crisis during the next decade, but never again would it be the center of university or public attention. In November 1973, while George Carey was acting dean, black students occupied the administration building; held Carey, Provost Kenneth Wheeler, and several others hostage overnight; and demanded the firing of Pervin’s successor as dean of student affairs, Luis Nieves. (Testifying to the continuing complexity of race relations was the fact that Puerto Rican students supported most of the black student demands but vigorously rejected the criticism of Nieves, and the student publication Black Voice/Carta Broicua printed letters on both sides of the dispute.)

Black protest touched on campuswide problems, but a more localized struggle began in September 1974 with Bloustein’s appointment of Emanuel G. Mesthene (pronounced, he liked to tell people, to rhyme with “destiny”), a philosopher, as Livingston’s new dean. Mesthene set the tone in his initial address to the college by stating that Livingston had “virtually no credit left in the eyes of the University and the State” and that the “Board of Governors are prepared as early as this year to declare the Livingston experiment a failure.” Whatever his “good intentions,” Mesthene found himself on the defensive almost immediately, attacked by both faculty critics and student leaders, and he would spend much of his three-year tenure explaining that he was trying to turn Livingston around without undermining its original mission.

Thus the 1970s remained feisty years at Livingston College. During these years, however, much of the trouble at Livingston paralleled problems elsewhere at Rutgers and was manifest throughout American higher education. There were three reasons for this. First, for all their efforts to recruit and retain minority
students, neither Livingston nor Rutgers fulfilled the expectations of many black and Puerto Rican students. The concerns these students brought to campus politics were not easily addressed, reflecting in many cases structural problems in New Jersey’s urban economy and persistent racism in the culture. Black students, then, carried the protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s into the next decade. Second, the students who entered college after 1973 had gone through the secondary school system during the Vietnam era; they brought antiauthoritarian values with them to college, to which were added new, growing concerns with feminism, gay rights, and, more generally, identity politics. In this same period, colleges increasingly raised tuition prices to offset financial problems created by increasing baby boom enrollments and shrinking real dollars in direct state and federal support. Tuition increases occasioned a new and quite militant student activism, while the revenue crisis particularly hurt a college like Livingston that was playing catch-up with its brother and sister institutions at Rutgers, Cook, and Douglass.

A Balance Sheet

If by the early 1980s Livingston was much like other colleges, we can ask why, given the idealistic and innovative design of the college, had things gone wrong? What, just as significantly, had left an enduring educational legacy? Focusing on the first two years and on the problem side of the accounting ledger, three academic problems stand out, each of which might have been addressed with better planning.

The goal of creating an interdisciplinary educational structure that would allow students and faculty to explore current urban problems never received the organizational direction it needed. Such an approach was, in fact, embedded in the urban studies departments but never fully percolated through the college. As has been made clear by Allen Howard’s memories, mentioned earlier, there were many opportunities to collaborate with colleagues in teaching across disciplinary boundaries, but these fell short of the type of problem-solving, interdisciplinary partnerships that Lynton envisioned but did too little to facilitate. Yet one should also note that Lynton’s ideas anticipated the proliferation of centers and institutes in the 1980s throughout the university (and in higher education more generally). These institutions were generally interdisciplinary and directed to problem-solving research that
could attract government funding and graduate students. Most had community outreach components, and many developed programs that enhanced undergraduate research opportunities.

Equally clear is the fact that too little attention was given to the goal of undergraduate participation in community-oriented work. Lynton wanted internships, or other types of work outside the traditional classroom, to be a part of every Livingston student’s education. At the department level, there was some success in meeting this goal, but such success has to be measured again against a failure to provide the overall leadership and organization structure that would have made this a central component of college academic life. Like interdisciplinary inquiry, internship programs have become far more common at Rutgers in the decades since Livingston’s founding, and once again the college and its dean deserve recognition for anticipating an important trend in higher education.74

Winkler’s report to the BOG captured a third major problem for the college. Nontraditional education, with an emphasis on written evaluations of student work rather than letter grades, learning that carried over from the classroom into informal sessions between students and teachers, and advising that prepared students for internships and careers in public service, would have required a unique degree of dedication to the undergraduates by the college faculty. In turn, if faculty were expected to fulfill these roles, a reward structure should have been created to encourage faculty to do so. Winkler was probably right that the faculty was not as committed to these goals as Lynton hoped they would be, but he was surely wrong that it was the college’s fault for not defining standards for tenure and promotion that encouraged faculty to take on more active advising and teaching roles.

This problem was particularly acute for two reasons. First, in two of the programs that best reflected the ideals of the college, community development and Puerto Rican studies, many of the faculty were hired with master’s degrees rather than doctorates and for their background as organizers and activists. Climbing the academic ladder was a challenge for these faculty. That challenge was all the more daunting as Rutgers, like many other public universities in this era, was placing increasing emphasis on research and publication in the promotion process.

Second, there was the question of student life. Lynton, Pervin, and the students and faculty who helped plan the college
had a vision of a college community that integrated living and learning. This vision never came to fruition. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, other American colleges were experimenting with dormitories that had short hallways and small peer groups. As one might expect, a small peer group lowered the chance of a first-year student finding a soulmate or close friend on the freshman hall. The irregular plans that were supposed to bring about casual interactions more commonly caused irritation. And the quads' tunnels, a netherworld of nefarious activity, allowed thieves and drug dealers to conduct business. While some faculty members, like Klein, did live with the students, this lifestyle was not appealing to a wide swath of professors.

The architectural style of the buildings was no help, either. Tillett was designed in the style known as Brutalism, which declined in popularity quickly. Even in its heyday, Brutalism required a level of academic awareness that other architectural styles did not. Within the federated system of colleges, Livingston had the newest, cheapest-looking buildings and virtually no landscape architecture. We can safely speculate that to parents and potential students, the Douglass and Cook campus, with its charming “Passion Puddle,” and Rutgers College, with its expansive and leafy Voorhees Mall, looked the way colleges were supposed to look. Livingston did not. Livingston faced another problem that was (and is) endemic to state universities. Although there might have been money to construct new buildings, there was never enough money to maintain those buildings. Students are notoriously hard on buildings, even concrete ones, and the structures at Livingston showed evidence of wear and tear soon after opening, which amplified the notion that the campus was not as prestigious or important as the other Rutgers campuses.

If the dean and the faculty had wrestled with these academic and student life problems more fully at the planning stage, Livingston might have done better in fulfilling the expectations of its founders. Still, there was another dimension to the problems facing the college that no amount of planning could have addressed. Livingston was, as we noted at the outset, designed to be part of the federated system and as part of a plan to grow big by building small. Its distinctive mission depended, in part, on the university’s having the resources and commitment to build additional colleges. Bond issues might have allowed some of this building, but there was never enough state funding to address the
infrastructure needs at Livingston, let alone at additional colleges. With such funding, however, Livingston still might have “failed” as the university moved during the 1970s in halting steps to replace the federated system with a structure it argued would better support graduate education and faculty research.

The crucial decision, made after a decade of tweaking the federated system, was one that advocated the “consolidation” of individual New Brunswick departments. Consolidation broke the connection between faculty and departments, on the one hand, and the colleges, on the other (Cook, however, was an exception). English professors, for example, who had previously been in one of four college departments (Rutgers, Douglass, Livingston, and University Colleges), were now brought together on one campus (College Avenue) and were attached to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, not to a college. Faculty members were expected to become “fellows” of at least one college, and as fellows they continued to shape undergraduate education at their college. Consolidation was expected to strengthen graduate education and faculty scholarship by enhancing the reputations of now larger departments and allowing for greater collaboration among a discipline’s members. It also allowed the administration to direct
resources to a small number of the best departments and, in so doing, to rapidly boost the ranking of the university overall. With consolidation and the new emphasis on graduate education, the earlier ideal of building small to grow big was effectively dead. Livingston was a double loser, as its campus was perceived as the most isolated and least desirable home for consolidated departments, and it thus lost out in the musical-chair politics that sent specific departments to specific campuses and reworked the academic landscape in New Brunswick and Piscataway.

Yet Livingston pioneered a number of significant changes in academic and student life at Rutgers. As has been noted, Lynton’s ideas about internships, interdisciplinary approaches to problems, and community service all became aspects of the modern public research university that Rutgers now is. The voice Livingston gave to students in university affairs is now reflected in student membership in the University Senate and on the BOG. The urban teacher education department, established at Livingston, now finds a parallel in the Graduate School of Education’s Urban Teaching Fellows program. The current School of Arts and Sciences' Department of Latino and Caribbean Studies is the successor to the original Livingston Puerto Rican studies Department, which exemplified Lynton’s concern for combining academic work and community involvement.75

Another indication of Livingston’s success is the initial evaluation of the graduate programs the college had helped launch. Lynton had come from a department, physics, that could justifiably claim to have among the very strongest research records in the university; it also had a program with a distinguished record of undergraduate teaching. Lynton never doubted that Livingston could excel in both teaching and research. While the effort to create an innovative college focused on student life and the undergraduate academic program, the 1981 university survey of its graduate programs indicated that Livingston’s departments had made major contributions to Rutgers' standing as a research university. Both urban planning and anthropology were ranked in top quartile of the three dozen graduate programs in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in New Brunswick, with computer science only a notch behind. With regard to urban planning, for example, the university review concluded that it was a “candidate for national distinction,” with a “professionally very active faculty” who turned out a “high number of publications” with significant applications.
to urban problems. Faculty in the allied community development department were not, however, evaluated in the review, but members of both programs would eventually move to the new Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy and relocate to downtown New Brunswick.

Today the muddy beginnings of the Livingston campus are long forgotten. The three new residence apartment buildings make it the location of choice for juniors and seniors living on campus, and a new business school building, with an arresting architectural design, serves as a gateway to what once was “the college of good intentions.”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

We wish to thank Alice Chunn, Caitlin Foley, Jennifer Stice, and Erin Weinman for research assistance. Mariah Eppes, Justin Lucero, and Christopher M. Price helped with a photographic image of modern Livingston campus. Ricki Sablove’s research and scholarship contributed to the discussion of Livingston dormitories.

NOTES

Unless otherwise stated, manuscript collections are held by Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The Rutgers–New Brunswick campus newspaper has been called at various times the Daily Targum, the Rutgers Daily Targum, the Rutgers Targum, and the Targum.


2. The [Livingston College] Mudslide, September 17, 1969, 1. This quote was from vol. 1, no. 1, of Livingston’s first but short-lived newspaper. It may be found at Louis T. Economopoulos, http://loueco.com/1_18_Livingston-College.html. Economopoulos was on the editorial board of the Mudslide and later worked for its successor, the Medium.

4. Board of Governors Minutes, March 12, 1965, 8 (hereafter BOG Minutes).

5. George Levine to Edward Bloustein, July 27, 1971, Records of Edward J. Bloustein Administration (RG 04/A17), Livingston College, June–September 1971 Folder (hereafter EJB and EJB Papers). These papers are in the process of final cataloguing. We have referenced the current folder name rather than the preliminary box and folder numbers.

6. For these developments, see Paul G. E. Clemens, *Rutgers since 1945: A History of the State University of New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2015), and Richard P. McCormick, “Rutgers, The State University,” in David Riesman and Verne A. Stadtman, eds., *Academic Transformation: Seventeen Institutions under Pressure* (New York: McGraw Hill for the Carnegie Foundation, 1973), 271–86. Clemens has heard the phrase “dysfunctional disaster,” usually coupled with “from its inception,” in comments over the years from many of the Douglass and Rutgers faculty who watched Livingston from across the Raritan, and misconceptions about the college are well documented in the MWG, EAL, and EJB correspondence as well as in student and New Jersey newspapers.

7. Maurice T. Ayers to Archibald S. Alexander, December 15, 1964, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 1, which includes Ayers’s “Summary of the Events Concerning the Disposal of Camp Kilmer.” The property was actually acquired in December 1964, but the announcement of the transfer from the Department of Defense to Rutgers was made in late October, purposefully before voters went to the polls in November to decide on a higher education bond issue.


10. An early statement on the need for a stand-alone college at Camp Kilmer can be found under the title “Tentative Policy Statement for the Development of Raritan Campus,” MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 1. The document probably dates from 1964 but may not have been written by Lynton. For Lynton’s view, see Lynton to Richard Schlatter, October 28, 1965, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 2. The
New York Times (hereafter NYT) ran a story about the “Federated Campus” on April 18, 1965, that discussed the relationship of Livingston to existing New Brunswick colleges and compared the system to that of “cluster colleges” in California. The story was based on a Rutgers “fact sheet” about Camp Kilmer planning drawn up earlier in the month. Many of the Rutgers College departments expressed concern about the duplication of their programs at Livingston. See, for example, Kenneth G. Wolfson (chair of mathematics) to MWG, October 27, 1964, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 1.


13. "Summary of Progress on New College" (ca. 1965), MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 2.


18. "Program for the Raritan Campus."

19. Office of Student Affairs, Executive Dean (RG 9/A), Box 10, Folder "Deans of Men & Women—River Dormitories, 1963–4," and "Report to the Board of Trustees: River Residence Halls," November 15, 1963, Ohio State University, University Archives. In this report the authors, all student life deans, paraphrased a document put together by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.


21. "Summary of Progress on New College" (undated), 4, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 2. This was EAL’s statement about thinking, planning, and early committee work he had done with interested faculty from Douglass and Rutgers on planning the college. Almost certainly, the statement dates from spring 1965.
22. Ibid., 4.
23. Ibid., 2. EAL describes the college as “essentially unique,” having “some similarities to only the new campus of the University of California at Santa Cruz” and also some little similarities to the Claremont complexes.
24. EAL to MWG, February 7, 1968, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 4. Lynton forwarded the report of the admissions committee presented at the second meeting of the Livingston faculty. The report stated that a facultywide commitment had to be made to minority admissions if the effort were going to succeed. For follow-up, see EAL to MWG, December 19, 1968, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 4, and EAL to Richard Schlatter, February 26, 1969, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 5. The December 19 letter highlights the recruitment of faculty and staff to help in the effort to bring minority students to Livingston. The goal of a creating a “multi-racial” college always included a faculty and staff component. For the relationship between protest and reform, see Richard P. McCormick, *The Black Student Protest Movement at Rutgers* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), quote on 7.
25. “Livingston College, Report of the Dean, 1968–1969” (Annual Reports), and “Livingston College [Undergraduate Catalog], 1969–1970,” 24. College catalogs, annual reports, and yearbooks are in Special Collections and University Archives, and although there is an aid for finding the annual reports, it is not yet available online. Lynton mentioned only comparative literature as a department not yet fully ready to meet his expectations. On anthropology and its relationship to the urban mission, see Lynton to Schlatter, “Establishment of a Department of Anthropology at Livingston College,” undated, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 3.
27. Ibid., 91–97. The initial admissions data come from the appendix to the dean’s report. Some 70 percent of the “high potential” students were black, 10 percent were Puerto Rican, and 20 percent were white. Overall, Puerto Ricans made up less than 5 percent of the admitted students. Faculty are listed in the annual college catalogs and, in many cases, in the Lynton Papers, both in the individual department folders and in the hiring and recruitment boxes.
28. Ibid., 3.
29. Ibid., 4.
30. Ibid., 5. For the three Ps, see Pervin, “College of Good Intentions,” 2:11 (after the first chapter, Pervin paginated his manuscript by giving the chapter and page numbers in the same format used here). The administration seemed most concerned with wall and room painting, and university administrators toured the quads at various
times to observe the results. Today the only traces of this activity are wall murals, done a few years later, in Lucy Stone Hall. Pervin had a doctorate from Harvard University, had taught at Princeton University, and had been employed at that school’s guidance clinic; he came to Livingston both as associate dean (for student affairs) and as an associate professor of psychology. See Lynton, “Livingston Faculty and Staff News,” January 12, 1969, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 4.

31. Ibid., 22. On residence libraries, see the appeal for suggestions of titles for libraries in Lynton to the Livingston College Faculty, October 22, 1968, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 4.


33. Ibid., 2:5–10. Special-interest floors or houses for foreign languages and the like had long existed at Rutgers and elsewhere, and honors units had as well. During the 1970s, many colleges created African American interest floors or houses in dorms, and the students in these were largely, but not necessarily exclusively, black. There is an insightful analysis of the experience at Rutgers in Michael Moffatt, Coming of Age in New Jersey, College and American Culture, 1989 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 141–80.

34. Medium, October 1, 1970, 1 and 3 and October 5, 1970, 1 (correcting the earlier story), and Pervin, “College of Good Intentions,” 67–76. Pervin documents the substantive nature of the debate over “ethnic representation” and quotes at length from political scientist Gerald Pomper’s opposition to the idea. (Pomper is not named in the manuscript, but his role is clear from other sources.) There is a summary of the process in “Livingston College, Annual Report of the Dean, 1969–1970,” 3–4. For another account, see Peter Klein interview, June 6, 2011, Rutgers Oral History Archives (hereafter ROHA) http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/64-text-html/1633-klein-peter-part-3. Ethnic representation seemed bizarre, essentialist, and reactionary to some second-year students, and the continuing debate over it runs through the 1970–1971 Medium. See, in particular, the November 19, 1970, issue, quote on 12.


36. Interview with Allen Howard, May 18, 2010, audio transcribed by Paul Clemens.

37. Ibid. The EAL quote is from “Annual Report, 1960–1970,” 2. Initially, hiring at Livingston was handled on an ad hoc basis, with EAL playing a major role, which gave Howard more input in shaping the new college. He was interviewed by EAL; Seth Scheiner, a professor of African American urban history; and, he believes, a member of the urban studies program.

exist, Pervin’s study and his reflections on Livingston provide the best and most comprehensive discussion of the college’s first year.

39. Ibid., 2:78. Where we have not quoted directly from Pervin’s summary of the first year, the text is largely a paraphrase.


41. Henry R. Winkler (vice president for academic affairs) to Rutgers Board of Governors, June 26, 1972, 9, EJB Papers, Livingston College, 1971 and undated, Reports, Assessments, and Clippings folder. Page 9 contains admissions data for 1969–72. We know of the existence of three first-year newspapers because of information supplied by Louis T. Economopoulos, who also contributed pdf copies from his personal collection of issues of some of these papers. General Motors, according to Pervin’s account, was probably the most substantial of these publications. It was anticapitalist, in the spirit of the student left of that era, and was edited by Eric Krueger, whose family had ties to the auto manufacturer. See Pervin, College of Good Intentions, 2:16.

42. Medium, February 25, 1971, 2.

43. Ibid., December 10, 1971, 1–2.

44. Ibid., October 22, 1971, 8. Peter Klein describes efforts to deal with vandalism in the Great Hall in his interview of June 6, 2011, ROHA.

45. This summary comes from EAL’s annual reports and the college undergraduate catalogs. See also the correspondence in EAL Papers, Box 6, Folders 30–31 (history department); Box 6, Folder 41 (political science); Box 6, Folders 25–26 (English); Box 6, Folders 8–9 (computer science); and Box 6, Folder 46, and Box 16, Folder 4 (Puerto Rican studies).

46. On Puerto Rican studies, see Medium, February 11, 1971, 2; March 11, 1971, 1; and April 8, 1971, 4, and also EAL Papers, Box 6, Folder 46, and Box 6, Folder 4.

47. Peter Klein interview, June 6, 2011, ROHA.

48. Medium, March 18, 1971, 1; Pervin, “College of Good Intentions,” 3:44–49; [New Brunswick] Home News, March 12, 1971, 1, and March 13, 1971, 1. After leaving Rutgers, Soaries completed his bachelor’s degree at Fordham, then attended Princeton Theological Seminary and became a Baptist minister in New Jersey. He served for two years as secretary of state for New Jersey during the administration of Christine Todd Whitman. His involvement in the Livingston incident is noted on his church’s webpage, and so we have included his name in the text, but otherwise, following Pervin’s treatment of the event, no student names are used. Local newspapers, including the Medium, of course, carried the names...

49. On drugs, see Lynton, Memo 69:18, MWG Papers, Box 62, Folder 5. Letters in the EJB Papers, Livingston folders, emphasized the efforts of black separatist students (and specifically the OBU) to intimidate other blacks who lived comfortably with white and Puerto Rican friends and shared suburban and often similar class backgrounds. They suggest that the triggering event was the beating of a black student at the Malcolm X house who had gone there to challenge the OBU’s attempts to intimidate other students. A number of “fact sheets” circulated on campus immediately after the event had similar interpretations (as reported in Pervin, “College of Good Intentions”). EAL had a different depiction of and explanation for the earlier incident; see EAL to EJB, September 23, 1971, 2, EJB Papers, Livingston Confidential Materials folder. EAL’s account should be compared with the account in Peter Klein interview, June 6, 2011, ROHA.

The “confidential” materials deal almost entirely with matters related to the White report, discussed below, and virtually everything in the files is also to be found in various nonconfidential folders of the EJB Papers. The White report itself had “confidential” stamped on its cover but was published or summarized in the Medium, September 16, 1971. There are several faculty letters in this file, and we have obtained permission from the faculty involved to use and cite their letters.

50. BOG Minutes, April 8, 1971, 5. The announcement, made on March 30, is in the BOG papers. The Medium response to the panel can be found in an editorial, “University: Stay Out!” that appeared on April 8 (p. 2). White was a trustee in April, when the panel was empowered, and a BOG member in August, when the report was submitted. In addition to the Medium reprint of the White report, see “A Crisis in Confidence: The Report of the Rutgers University Panel on Livingston College,” August 1971, EJB Papers, Livingston, Confidential Materials folder.

51. Ibid. White was a trustee in April, when the panel was empowered, and a BOG member in August, when the report was submitted. Schlatter had asked for one nonvoting student member of the panel; the committee decided on three voting student members, who, not surprisingly at Livingston, were chosen with consideration of gender and ethnicity.

52. EAL to EJB, September 12, 1971, September 22, 1972, and September 23, 1971, EJB Papers, Livingston, Confidential Materials folder. The September 22 report was EAL’s 1971 annual report.
53. Ibid., September 23, 1971, 4.
54. Ibid. Katharine White to Schlatter, September 24, 1971, with the statement of Deborah Benjamin and Jose Maldonado attached.
55. Klein interview, June 6, 2011, ROHA. Although one cannot generalize, the Cuban students tended to be anti-Communists, and many traveled to New York to participate in protests against Castro. The Puerto Rican students had a different political agenda: independence for their homeland. Both groups worked together in what at that time was called the campus Puerto Rican student movement.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
60. Grob to Winkler, November 26, 1971, EJB Papers, Livingston Confidential Materials folder. Material used with author’s permission. Grob included two examples of promotion standards from “Livingston College Memo #71:60.” This memo called for the inclusion of black, white, and Puerto Rican input in all hiring and promotion decisions. We have been unable to find the original memo or what happened to it. In the 1970s, colleges could set their own hiring and promotion rules, although candidates for promotion (or hiring with tenure) had to gain approval from a universitywide promotion review committee that generally put the primary emphasis on research accomplishments.
61. Winkler to BOG, June 26, 1972, 2, EJB Papers, Livingston College, 1971 and undated, Reports, Assessments, Clippings folder. Winkler’s report was a follow-up to the Harold L. Hodgkinson and Lavinnia Hammond external evaluation.
63. Ibid., 4.
64. Office of the Provost, Memorandum of Record, Meeting with Black Faculty Representatives ... on May 2, 1973,” May 7, 1973, EJB Papers, Livingston College, November 1973 Incident folder. The statement contrasted the workloads of the academic foundations departments with those of the art, sociology, biology, urban planning, and (especially) English departments.
65. Winkler to BOG, June 26, 1972, 2.
66. BOG Minutes, September 8, 1972, 4. The minutes noted: “Referring to a report of Livingston College, copies of which had been distributed to the Board members in July, 1972, Dr. Bloustein said that he is satisfied that progress is being made at the College, although there are still some matters of concern. Mrs. White added
that she has also been encouraged by the progress made and especially by the efforts of the central Administration to assist the College officials in the solution of the College's problems."

67. *Medium*, September 7, 1971, 1, 3. The schedule included such schools as Newark State, St. Francis, and Stony Brook. Livingston already had an intercollegiate men’s baseball program, established in the college’s second year. The same year they had added football, the college had also begun a “liberated” intramural baseball program open to women as well as men. See *Medium*, November 11, 1971, 2.

68. Nonstudents were involved in the majority of campus crimes, and Livingston’s isolation meant that there were fewer nonstudents around. See *Medium*, November 4, 1971, 1, but also October 5, 1972, 4, and December 7, 1972, 3.

69. *Medium*, October 19, 1972, 1; March 2, 1972, 1; March 9, 1972, 1.

70. Ibid., November 30, 1972, 3.

71. Ibid., November 18, 1972, 1; March 2, 1972, 1; March 9, 1972, 1.

72. The basic information can be found in EJB Papers, Livingston College, November 1973 Incident folder, which includes a detailed police report as well as communications from the Puerto Rican community, black faculty, and Provost Kenneth Wheeler (one of those in the building). For coverage, see *Medium*, November 8, 1973, and *NYT*, November 6, 1973, 78, and November 7, 1973, 99 (quote).

73. For Mesthene’s initial address to the Livingston community, see *Medium*, September 20, 1974, 4. His own assessment of the progress made on the matters he raised in September can be found in the “Livingston College Annual Report, 1974–1975.” For another assessment of Livingston, see *NYT*, March 29, 1975, 20. Mesthene said he was working against the notions that “a little learning should be rewarded with a large diploma and that volubility is a substitute for thought.”

74. The college also lost out when it could not get a physician’s associate program started and when the administration made the decision to locate the new school of criminal justice at Newark. Both would have helped Livingston develop as a center for applied social sciences. See *Medium*, October 28, 1971, 1, and October 12, 1972, 2.

75. On urban education, see *Medium*, April 6, 1972, 2.

76. Supplement to the report of the Task Force on University Policy and Future Directions in Graduate and Graduate-Professional Education at Rutgers, August 6, 1981, 21. This is a personal copy, to be deposited with Clemens’s research notes in Special Collections and University Archives. Additional copies exist at the Office of Research and Academic Planning and, presumably, in the EJB Papers.