

Ramapo College of New Jersey

A. INSTITUTIONAL NARRATION INCLUDING ACCREDITATION STATUS

Institutional Profile

Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* among the top public universities (master's) in the region, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 5,700 students, and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers three graduate programs as well as articulated programs with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and New York Chiropractic College.

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools first accredited the College in 1975. Ramapo College was reaccredited in 1980, 1990, and 2000. National disciplinary associations and State entities have also accredited certain Ramapo programs, including Chemistry (American Chemical Society), Nursing (National League for Nursing and N.J. Board of Nursing), Social Work (Council on Social Work Education), and Teacher Education (N.J. State Department of Education). The Anisfield School of Business application for AACSB (Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business) accreditation candidacy was accepted in October 2007.

Undergraduate students choose to concentrate their studies in one of five schools with more than 700 course offerings and 40 academic programs. Ramapo College boasts an average student/faculty ratio of 18:1 and average class size of 23, affording students the opportunity to develop close ties to the College's exceptional faculty.

The College's mission is focused on the four "pillars" of a Ramapo education: international, intercultural, interdisciplinary and experiential, all of which are incorporated throughout the curriculum and extracurricular. The international mission is further accomplished through a wide range of study abroad and student exchange links with institutions all over the world through the New Jersey State Consortium for International Studies (NJSCIS). Additional experiential programs include internships, co-op, and service learning.

A campus-wide building program during recent years has resulted in the completion of the Anisfield School of Business academic facility, a central feature of the main entrance to the campus; the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center, with its 2,200-seat arena, fitness center, climbing wall, track and dance/aerobics studio; the Overlook and Laurel residence halls and the Village apartment complex. The Angelica and Russ Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts, completed in 1999, houses performance theaters, art galleries, and specialized spaces devoted to fine arts, computer art, photography, theater, dance, and music.

In addition to Ramapo's ranking in *U.S. News*, the College recently was recognized by two national publications. An article in the February 2008 issue of *Kiplinger's* magazine named Ramapo College among the top 100 public colleges and universities. Ramapo College also is one of 222 select colleges and universities profiled by The Princeton Review in the 2008 edition of *The Best Northeastern Colleges*.

Dr. Peter Philip Mercer became the College's fourth president on July 1, 2005. The College is governed by a Board of Trustees who are appointed by the Governor of the State. The Reverend Dr. Vernon C. Walton is the chairman of the board.

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Ramapo's College of New Jersey's Continued Success

Ramapo College has continued to achieve recognition and distinction in virtually all aspects of its operations.

- Ramapo College is ranked among the top five public Master's Institutions in the Northeast Region in the U.S. News and World 2007 Report of Colleges and Universities. In addition to Ramapo's ranking in *U.S. News*, the College recently was recognized by two national publications. An article in the February 2007 issue of *Kiplinger's* magazine named Ramapo College among the top 100 public colleges and universities. Ramapo College also is one of 222 select colleges and universities profiled by The Princeton Review in the 2008 edition of *The Best Northeastern Colleges*.
- Undergraduate students choose to concentrate their studies in one of five schools with more than 1,750 annual course offerings and 40 academic programs. Ramapo College boasts an average student/faculty ratio of 18:1 and average class size of 23, affording students the opportunity to develop close ties to the College's exceptional faculty. Students typically rank in the top 20 percent of their high school class and have an average Fall Sat combined reading and math score of 1,160. It is particularly notable, with regard to Ramapo's mission as a public college, that minority enrollment in the entering class of 2007 continues to increase, standing at 22.4% this Fall.
- While the entering class continues to be better prepared academically, the College's academic programs operate at a high level of excellence. Earlier this year, site visitors conducted a review of our Social Work program. Such re-accreditation reviews take place every five years. The lead reviewer, Dr. Peggy Munke, advised us that in 30 years of conducting some 90 such visits she had never seen a finer Social Work Program than ours. This is not atypical. Recently, our teacher education program went through a similar re-accreditation review and was ranked in the top 5% of programs nationally.
- Summer reading for fall 2007 first-year students included the *New York Times* best-selling book, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah. Mr. Beah spoke at the College's Opening Convocation, the official kick-off to the academic year. Over 2000 people attended, including all freshman seminar classes, various upperclassmen, community book clubs and local high school students. They heard Mr. Beah speak on the issues raised in his book including: child soldiering, internal strife in Sierra Leone, the struggle to reclaim humanity, forgiveness, and the power of healing.
- The American Democracy Project (ADP) at Ramapo College of New Jersey sponsored its first essay contest focused on the purpose of college education. Steven Pardalis was selected as the first place winner, and his essay will have a link on *The New York Times* Knowledge Network.
- Fall 2007 marked the opening of Ramapo's new academic building, the Anisfield School of Business. Named in honor of longtime college supporters Richard and Millicent Anisfield who donated \$2.5 million (in addition to previous gifts totaling more than \$500,000) the building offers state-of-the art facilities for business students while also housing clinical training rooms for our nursing program with simulated patient beds on the fourth floor.
- In October of 2007, Ramapo College also broke ground on a Sustainability Education Center, which will house a "smart" classroom, a greenhouse, a display gallery, an office, and support spaces. The Center will demonstrate the concept of green building by making the best use of natural daylight and natural ventilation, using recycled and environmentally-friendly materials, and reducing water consumption through fixture choice and collection of rainwater for irrigation.

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- In May of 2008, Ramapo broke ground on the Salameno Spirituality Center. The Spiritual Center will provide a place where students can practice their faith, gather to discuss ethical matters and seek quiet contemplation. It is expected that the project, whose \$1.15 million cost will be funded entirely from private donations, will accommodate assemblies of up to 80 people with smaller areas for personal reflection. It will also include the Padovano Peace Pavilion, named after one of our most distinguished faculty, Anthony Padovano, as the centerpiece for informal and formal gatherings.
- Ramapo College was a winner of CASE's 2007 Wealth Engine Awards for Educational Fundraising, which honors superior fundraising programs at colleges, universities, and independent schools. Ramapo was selected to receive an Overall Improvement award by the Circle of Excellence which analyzed three-years of fundraising data provided to the Council for Aid to Education's annual Voluntary Support of Education (VSE) Survey. Out of 482 colleges and universities reviewed by CASE, only 17 institutions in the entire country were recognized for Overall Improvement. Ramapo also won this prestigious award in 2000.

Institutional Mission

The Ramapo College mission statement was approved by the Board of Trustees April 30, 2003.

It states:

Ramapo College of New Jersey is a comprehensive institution of higher education dedicated to the promotion of teaching and learning within a strong liberal arts based curriculum, thus earning the designation "New Jersey Public Liberal Arts College." Its curricular emphasis includes the liberal arts and sciences, social sciences, fine and performing arts, and the professional programs within a residential and sustainable living and learning environment.

Organized into thematic learning communities, Ramapo College provides academic excellence through its interdisciplinary curriculum, international education, intercultural understanding and experiential learning opportunities. These four pillars, supported by global partnerships established in Europe, Africa, Asia, South America, the Caribbean, and several Native American tribal communities, have become central themes in Ramapo College's excellence in the teaching and learning continuum.

Ramapo College provides students with individual academic attention and social support within a caring sensitive and intellectually vigorous community. The College provides service and leadership opportunities for students and faculty through a combination of internships, field placements, community service, study abroad, and cooperative education. These opportunities allow students, faculty and staff to encounter the world beyond the campus.

Ramapo College is committed to maintaining strength and opportunity through diversity of age, race gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and economic background among faculty, staff, and students. Ramapo College is a selective institution committed to providing equal access to under-represented populations. Barrier-free, the College maintains a continuing commitment to persons with disabilities.

Ramapo College provides a rich living and learning environment through almost one hundred student organizations, intramural sports, and intercollegiate athletics. The College maintains a strong positive and economic impact on the surrounding communities by partnering with area communities, corporations, schools, service organizations, and governmental entities, while sharing its intellectual and cultural resources and its facilities. Ramapo College of New Jersey is committed to providing service and ethical leadership through international understanding and the creation of 21st century partnerships.