Periodic Review Report

Presented by: Ramapo College of New Jersey

May 30, 2005

Chief Executive Officer: William Sanborn Pfeiffer, Interim President

Reaccreditation, June 21, 2000

Date of the Evaluation Team’s Visit: March 5-8, 2000
OVERVIEW OF THE COLLEGE

Established in 1969 and opened in 1971, Ramapo College of New Jersey has been designated the Garden State's “public liberal arts college.” Located on 300 acres in the scenic foothills of the Ramapo Mountains in Mahwah, the primarily residential campus is just 25 miles from New York City. The mainly undergraduate student body of more than 5600 comes largely from New Jersey, but includes students from 21 other states, 64 countries, and almost 400 graduate students. Rising enrollments and admissions standards and a major building program that includes new residential facilities, a recreation center, and a new academic building make Ramapo an exciting institution at this time. U.S. News and World Report has ranked Ramapo first among regional public comprehensive colleges in the north. National reviews have also listed Ramapo among the 49 “most beautiful rural/suburban” campuses in the country and placed it in the “hidden treasures” category.

Ramapo College's educational philosophy, organization, and programming are dedicated to four core values -- interdisciplinary, experiential, international, and intercultural learning. Currently organized into five interdisciplinary Schools, the College's programs are complemented by lectures, performances, and off-campus experiences. Ramapo is committed to providing personal attention to students and seeks to maintain a size that allows such attention. As a public institution, the College also seeks to provide an affordable education to a diverse student population. Despite declining State support (as a percentage of the total Education & General budget), Ramapo remains financially stable, but must now rely more heavily on external fundraising and on partnerships which can leverage opportunities for students and faculty members.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Ramapo's five interdisciplinary Schools, Business (SB), American and International Studies (AIS), Contemporary Arts (CA), Social Science and Human Services (SSHS), and Theoretical and Applied Science (TAS), offer 34 undergraduate majors. Each of the Schools has its own academic identity and outlook, yet each is linked through an interdisciplinary curriculum and concepts of international and multicultural education. Students may elect to take courses from any of the Schools, but in their choice of a major they identify with a particular School and program.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Ramapo's three graduate programs are cross-disciplinary in organization. The program in Liberal Studies admitted its first students in the 1995 academic year, while the first degree-seeking students were matriculated in the Educational Technology program in 1998. A Masters of Nursing joint degree program with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey admitted its first students in 2001. The Master of Business Administration degree has been suspended on the recommendation of the School of Business, due to concerns about staffing and AACSB accreditation issues.
FACULTY

Ramapo has a gifted faculty that has been instrumental in modeling the College's innovative academic programs. 94% of full-time faculty members hold either doctoral or terminal degrees in their fields. Many have received grants and fellowships from such prestigious agencies as the Ford, Fulbright, Guggenheim, Jerome, Kellogg, Mellon, National Science, and Woodrow Wilson Foundations; the National Endowment for the Arts; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the National Institute of Mental Health; the Social Science Research Council; the American Council on Education; and the American Council of Learned Societies. There are 187 full-time and 215 part-time faculty. A new five-year faculty hiring plan commits the College to improving the full-time/part-time faculty ratio.

ACCREDITATION AND MEMBERSHIPS

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools first accredited the College in 1975 and following a visit to the campus in early 2000, accreditation was reaffirmed in June 2000. National disciplinary associations and State entities have also accredited certain Ramapo programs, including Chemistry (American Chemical Society), Nursing (National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission and N.J. Board of Nursing), Social Work (Council on Social Work Education), and Teacher Education (N.J. State Department of Education). The New Jersey Department of Education has asked state colleges to seek accreditation with an outside agency. Ramapo College is currently seeking accreditation under the TEAC (Teacher Education Accreditation Council) guidelines.

Ramapo College is a founding member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC). The Council is an alliance of institutions whose members are dedicated to the education of undergraduates in the liberal arts tradition, to the creation of teaching and learning communities, and to the expansion of access to undergraduate liberal arts education.

THE PAST FIVE YEARS-- SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES

The past five years have been a time of continual change for Ramapo College. While going through the planning process, the mission statement was revised and there were several leadership changes. In 2000, we committed to enrollment by design, to bring in more first time, full-time students, fewer transfer students, and more graduate students, to continue our commitment to enrollment of a diverse student body, and to improve graduation and retention rates. A fuller discussion will be presented later in the document.

We have continued to make technology a high priority of the campus, so that we can have full connectivity, and so that faculty, staff, and students will be continuously supported in their acquisition of technological skills, hardware, and software. We have revised and implemented a five-year plan which more fully integrates international and intercultural education into Ramapo’s curriculum and extra curriculum. We have increased formal collaborations and planning between divisions and have initiated more joint faculty ventures across disciplines. Finally, we have, through the continued
opening of new residence halls, succeeded in turning the campus into a predominantly residential campus, with all of its benefits.

Revised Mission Statement

The Board of Trustees approved a new mission statement in 2002 as a result of the strategic planning process, which has made our mission even more clear and coherent. It has been at the forefront of our planning process.

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's 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.
Personnel Changes but Creative Work

The past five years have been a time of continual change for Ramapo College. The most significant changes have occurred in the senior academic leadership of the campus, and in the Board of Trustees. The presidency had several changes: Dr. Robert Scott, president, left the College in 2000 to become president of Adelphi University. From 2000-2001, Dr. Alice Chandler was interim president. Dr. Rodney Smith became president in 2001 and left in 2004. William Sanborn Pfeiffer became interim president in 2004. The search for a new president has recently been completed. In July 2005, Dr. Peter Mercer will take office.

The vice president for academic affairs/provost position also had a number of changes: Dr. Sharon Rubin resigned from the position of vice president for academic affairs in 2000. Dr. Donna Crawley, Professor of Psychology, was acting vice president for academic affairs in 2001-2003. Dr. Ed Cody, Professor of History, was interim provost from 2003-2004. Dr. William Sanborn Pfeiffer, formerly vice president for academic affairs at Southern Polytechnic State University, became provost and vice president for academic affairs in 2003. Dr. Martha Ecker, vice provost, became interim provost and vice president for academic affairs in 2004.

Membership on the Board of Trustees has changed considerably as the terms of Trustees have expired and the Governor has made new appointments. Currently, there are three continuing Trustees and seven new Trustees, ten excluding the student member, who changes each year. Several of the Trustees will have their terms concluding shortly and additional new Trustees will be appointed.

Despite the changes in leadership, the faculty and administration of the College have worked productively to consider and often implement suggestions and recommendations of the Evaluation Team representing the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. In 2002, a strategic plan was completed with broad participation from the community, which included eight task forces and six ad-hoc committees, managers, union leaders, faculty assembly representation, the Board of Trustees, and community leaders. The Faculty Assembly web site is another indication of this work became a vehicle which communicates information of interest to the faculty. Reports are included on the Academic Review Committee, a new academic building, the work of conveners, the possibility of a foreign language requirement, the college seminar, writing across the curriculum, and of course, parking. Task Forces have submitted their work on academic integrity, experiential education, grading, graduate programs, grants, the honors program, international education, study abroad programs, teacher education, the library, and student evaluations. Administrative reports include capital projects, the planning process, finances, the presidential search and institutional research. The effect of all this creative and challenging work will be discussed more fully in other parts of the Periodic Review Report.

EVALUATION TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

We have worked diligently to respond to the four recommendations made by the Evaluation Team.
1. **Student Learning Assessment**
   To develop and implement a comprehensive college-wide outcomes assessment program, building on the many existing forms of assessment at Ramapo.

2. **Diversity Goals**
   To increase the diversity of the students, faculty, staff, Board of Trustees, and Board of Governors consistent with the College’s mission, as well as to expand training of faculty and staff on specific diversity and legal issues.

3. **Campus Planning as an Integral Part of Decision-Making**
   To identify the areas of confusion about decision-making and to take steps to define and communicate consistent and predictable planning and decision-making processes.

4. **The Library**
   The campus should expand planning efforts to better handle the rising expectations campus constituents have about access to library resources

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**1. Student Learning Assessment**

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education specifies that there should be goals for student learning at the institutional and program level, that there are methods for demonstrating that students have learned and a timeline for assessment policies, and that there should be assignments of responsibilities for carrying out the assessment plan. Further, there should be evidence that academic and non-academic units collegially exchange information about student learning and provide support for student learning, that descriptions of connections among student learning assessment, institutional assessment, and strategic planning be shared, that the allocation of resources for assessment be made, that access to student learning data by all institutional units relevant to their area for use to improve their effectiveness, programs, and services be available, and that processes for using assessment results to improve learning and evidence of change be apparent. Ramapo College has worked on all aspects of student learning assessment and has come to a much more sophisticated level in the assessment of student learning than it had in 2000.

We established a Faculty Assessment Task Force in spring, 2000 with faculty representing each of the major schools within the College as well as the Library, Institutional Research, and the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This Task Force was chaired by the convener of our Nursing program and the convener of our Social Work program. Both chairs have extensive experience with outcomes assessment because of the requirements of the accrediting bodies for their programs. During the summer of 2000, the chairs of this Task Force worked with the staff of the VPAA on plans for 2000-2001 to facilitate the creation of a comprehensive assessment program for student learning in the classroom and in the academic environment. We decided to focus on the majors first. Members of the Faculty Task Force were selected to act as liaisons to each of the majors to help their faculty craft their outcomes assessment initiatives.

The focus of outcomes assessment at Ramapo has continued to be on the majors. Although we had crafted a three-year plan for expanding our outcomes assessment
work (as described in our 2002 report), this plan has been amended significantly. Since 2002, the College has undertaken a complete curricular reform, with revisions to the majors, the school cores, and the general education program. These revisions are currently underway. Therefore, the plan to assess the old cores and general education program was abandoned – and plans to build assessment into these new programs are part of this curricular project.

Our campus-wide academic assessment activities have included Faculty In-Service days devoted to assessment, a presentation by a representative from Educational Testing Service on assessment techniques, workshops on setting program goals and objectives, and one-on-one work with liaisons from the Task Force on Assessment. In addition, we established a Faculty Resource Center in 2003, which sponsors workshops and programs to enhance teaching effectiveness. Workshops on early assessment of the classroom environment, e-portfolios, on rubrics as a tool for assessment and grading, and on facilitating deep learning through undergraduate research have been offered through this Center. The Faculty Resource Center also houses a library on pedagogy, higher education, and specific types of curriculum.

Initially, all majors and other academic programs were required to submit a report to the Task Force which outlined specific program objectives, what measurement instruments were used, what results were found as a result of pilot work, and what changes in the program were being considered as a result of that pilot data. We were pleased that we received assessment reports for 78% of the majors, 60% of which had completed some outcomes data analyses, by the end of June 2001. In addition, assessment reports were submitted for our ESL courses and our reading courses. (See Appendix A for summaries of the assessment reports for the majors, 2000-2001.)

During 2001-2002, each major/faculty group continued its assessment activities, and also wrote up a five-year plan for assessment within the program. The five-year plans were due to one of the Task Force chairs in February 2002. We are pleased to report that 100% of the majors submitted assessment plans. (See Appendix B for the five-year assessment plans.)

The Academic Review Committee (ARC) created an Academic and Curricular Guidelines model (See Appendix C-Guidelines). These guidelines provide a sample course syllabus template which includes a section on course goals and objectives.

At this point, the Office of Academic Affairs oversees the assessment activities of the College. Each year, the head of each major submits an annual report to his or her dean, who in turn writes an annual report for his or her entire School to the Provost. Some of the program heads, although not all of them, regularly discuss their program’s assessment activities for the previous year in their annual reports. For example, for the June 2004 annual reports, over 50% of the programs discussed their assessment activities in some form.

Every major, minor, and other academic program at Ramapo College undergoes a five-year review, with a full self-study and an external evaluator. A report on assessment activities and subsequent plans for revisions to the majors is required in each self-study. To encourage faculty to take assessment seriously and to help faculty understand how to assess, the review procedures for academic programs now include the mandate to assess: “The convening group of any major or minor under review will examine one or
more of the following: the issue of connected learning, the relationship between the structure of the curriculum and the mission of the college, pedagogy, and scholarship. In addition, faculty may want to discuss the following: ways of knowing (the epistemological debates); praxis and experiential learning; community and curriculum. Every self-study will describe and review learning outcomes.” In addition, under the heading “Goals and Objectives,” a set of questions on program/course outcomes, on student outcomes, and on curriculum/pedagogical outcomes is specified. (See Appendix D: Self-study Guidelines)

The School of Business is probably the furthest along conceptualizing the links among assessment, planning, and budgeting, because it is seeking accreditation from the AACSB. In 2003, AACSB reformulated its standards into three categories, including strategic management, participants, and assurance of learning standards. Schools of business must demonstrate that they have in place a system of assessment that ensures program effectiveness and student learning. Assurance of learning must be tied to strategic planning, so that initiatives designed to enhance program effectiveness and to improve student learning become priorities in future planning for programmatic changes, curricular modifications, and teaching methods. These priorities should in turn become action items to be funded or otherwise resourced in the next fiscal year. In this way, the budget is linked to strategic planning priorities, which are linked with outcomes assessment. In its self-study, the School of Business is seeking to implement these standards.

To further facilitate our assessment efforts, we have set up an Assessment Library in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. This Library opened during the fall 2001 semester. The Coordinator of Information Literacy in the Library is working on a Literacy Assessment Plan with assessment components in conjunction with the College English faculty. It is scheduled to be completed by summer, 2005.

The Assessment process is gradually becoming a systematic process institution wide. Assessment of the programs in Student Affairs is done separately from those of Academic Affairs and College Operations but with collaboration. The assessment process for the Cooperative Education and Service Learning Programs, the most comprehensive of Ramapo’s experiential learning programs, both involve a three-way evaluation of the learning and the experience. In Cooperative Education, the student is evaluated by the employing supervisor and then by the faculty advisor who factors in the employer evaluation, assigned academic work and progress toward co-established learning objectives in the final recorded grade. The student also evaluates his/her own learning and the total experience in a process which reviews learning and faculty, employer, and staff participation. In addition, required reflection sessions led by Cooperative Education staff and faculty advisors allow students to share learning experiences with their professors and with one another. Service-learning involves a similar assessment approach. Required reflection is a formal component in which students describe and discuss their challenges, learning, and growth during the service experience. Staff members assess the cumulative sets of evaluations in order to determine how to improve these programs.

The Director of Institutional Research now serves as a member of the extended cabinet, and in that role is driving the use of organization-wide data as an assessment and decision-making instrument. College-wide assessment begins at the initial student contact with Ramapo during the admissions process and continues to graduation and
beyond. We now assess three aspects of our overall mission (international, intercultural, and experiential), and ultimately will assess the extent to which students approach their learning from an interdisciplinary perspective. We survey first year students, graduating seniors, and alumni. We are using National Survey of Student Experience data to explore the extent to which student learning is shaped by international and intercultural experiences gained from working/living with people from different cultures. (See Appendix E: Assessment at Ramapo).

The relationship between student learning assessment and campus planning and resource allocation is discussed in its own section.

2. Diversity Goals

Specific efforts over the past several years to increase the diversity of the faculty, staff, student body, Board of Trustees and Board of Governors have met with limited success. We have made small gains but not the kind of gains we feel we should be able to make.

The diversity of the study body has not increased significantly, although retention and graduation rates of students of color have significantly improved. While the percent of minority students has remained relatively flat over the years (20.8% of all undergraduates in fall 2000 were students of color, as compared to 20.1% in 2004), Ramapo’s total undergraduate minority population of 1,063 in fall, 2004 represents the highest number of minority students ever enrolled at the College. This number and these percentages compare well to peer institutions of similar size and location. The College of New Jersey has a 17% minority population, while Richard Stockton College and Rowan University have an 18% minority student population. (Source: U.S. News and World Report, “America’s Best Colleges 2005”).

With respect to faculty, we do not see greater racial diversity overall, although there has been some increase in the hiring and retention of Hispanic faculty. However, the percentage of the faculty which is female has risen from 36.5% in fall, 2000 to 43.3% for fall 2004.

**Faculty by Race/Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2001</th>
<th>Fall 2002</th>
<th>Fall 2003</th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Asian</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black, non Hispanic</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Hispanic</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% White, non Hispanic</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 2004 Institutional Profile)

Currently, females make up 50% of the staff, down from 51.5% in 1999. The diversity of the staff has also decreased slightly, although the numbers have grown.

**Staff (Non-Faculty) by Race/Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 1999</th>
<th>FY 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% American Indian</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Asian</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
% Black, non Hispanic        14.1           13.1
% Hispanic                  5.5            6.0
% White, non Hispanic        73.1           75.0
N=398                        N=633
(Source: 1999 & 2004 Institutional Profiles)

**Staff (Non-Faculty) by Race/Ethnicity and Job Category for FY 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Administrative and Professional</th>
<th>Clerical and Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% American Indian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Asian</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black, non Hispanic</td>
<td>13.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Hispanic</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% White, non Hispanic</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>67.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=231</td>
<td>N=209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Source: 2004 Institutional Profile)

Finally, there have been several changes in the Board of Trustees very recently. The number of Trustees of color is now 4 of 12, or 33.3%. The previous figure was 4 of 11, or 36.4%. The Foundation’s Board of Governors has 58 members, of whom eleven are women and six are minorities.

To better understand issues of diversity and the campus environment, a Diversity Action Committee (DAC) was established by the President in 2004 to recommend specific actions to enhance diversity on campus. The committee has made a series of recommendations to the Provost and has established a web site so its work is available to all members of the campus. (See Appendix F: Report of the Diversity Action Committee).

The committee has come to some conclusions about the state of the campus in relation to diversity. Excerpts from the DAC Report follow.

“In general, the faculty, staff and students of Ramapo College are happy to be here. They cite a very personal, friendly and warm environment as being key elements supporting their remaining here. People agree that Ramapo is an informal environment where everyone knows and refers to each other by first name. It is a caring place that encourages creativity and experimentation in terms of teaching and administrative practice.

“Members of the community expressed surprise that Ramapo has garnered so much recent national acclamation (i.e., US News and World Report, Princeton Review). Somehow we feel that we must not be doing as much as our colleagues ‘out there,’ and it is often surprising to find out that we are frequently on the cutting (if not, at times ‘bleeding’) edge of innovation and practice.

“The physical environment of the Ramapo campus lends itself well to our mission - the interconnectedness of its academic wings enforces the idea of interdisciplinarity and
state-of-the-art residence halls with one-to-one ‘port to pillow’ ratios bring home the idea of just how local a multicultural, international and experiential education can be.

“Our community members have a richness of experiences with diversity through personal experiences and travels, relationships and expertise. The college community needs to do a better job of applying those experiences and abilities.

“‘Things are done the Ramapo way’ is frequently stated with pride by veteran faculty and staff. Our question would be ‘is this necessarily a good thing?’

There is some bad news, as noted by the DAC Report. “Many decisions at Ramapo College are based on relationships that people have with each other. The downside of such an environment is that several members of the community feel that they are left out of the loop. The ability to personally engage contingencies through discussion, collegiality and inclusiveness are essential factors in institutional decision making at Ramapo College.

“The pervasive perception of those disenfranchised members of the community is that it is ‘who you know’ in order to receive funding or permission to develop programs at Ramapo and that those who are in power decide who to allow into their realm of power.

“The ‘side effects’ of an informal system where relationships are such a large part of doing business at Ramapo are that discrimination takes place quite frequently. Some people feel frustrated by their inability to be promoted or receive the equal treatment that they see being distributed to their peers/colleagues.

“Another issue identified is the false assumption that policy decisions are clearly communicated in a ‘trickle down’ method from more senior officials to all that work at the college. Frequently, this doesn’t happen. Messages are either never communicated or reinterpreted to the point of losing their focus.

“Significant concerns also exist about our current student body. The perception by the community is that the price we have paid for increased selectivity and a better prepared student is a more homogenous student body characterized mainly by white, middle or upper class full-time students.

“Teaching about diversity is becoming increasingly challenging given the fact that ‘the other’ is rapidly becoming an abstraction rather than a living, breathing being with a wide range of life experiences to counter preconceived notions of race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation and identity, socioeconomic status, religious background, physical abilities and political leanings.

The set of recommendations of the Diversity Action Committee are short-term, mid-term and long-term. They range from making sure that a clear definition of diversity is communicated to the community, to developing a framework for a campus-wide training day for the entire campus and developing an appropriately-staffed Diversity Action office. The recommendations are a very good start in making sure that the principle of diversity in which we believe leads to an implementation of practices which will ensure its endurance.
1. **Campus Planning as an Integral Part of Decision-Making**

The Evaluation Team report in 2000 suggested that although the campus has a "shared" vision for the institution and important decisions are being made to bring the vision to a reality, the rapid rate of change has created a situation in which confusion has arisen over the way campus planning leads to specific decisions. This critique made us realize that the unique organization of our campus, which we treasure because it is ours rather than because it makes a great deal of sense, needed to be reconsidered. During the past five years, significant improvements in the planning processes at Ramapo College have taken place, beginning with the development of a Ten-Year Strategic Plan.

With a mandate from the board of trustees, the president initiated the development of a strategic plan in the fall of 2001. Thirteen task forces and special ad-hoc committees were charged with conducting a broad based institutional analysis of all academic, administrative and support units throughout the College. The Plan was also informed by a President-appointed Blue Ribbon Commission which reviewed all administrative personnel issues, all non-academic, non-student intensive programs and services that were not cost-effectives. The membership included a past interim president of Ramapo College, trustees, faculty, staff, and community members. Finally, the trustees and administrative and managerial staff, union leaders, and faculty leaders engaged in a SWOT analysis of the institution. The final plan, *Enhancing Institutional Excellence*, reflects the input of an institution-wide strategy group, drawing upon a comprehensive representation of the values that motivate the faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni, community and Foundation members and the knowledge base that underlies the College’s strength and capabilities. The Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2002.

The president appointed a vice provost for institutional planning in January 2004 to implement the plan. The vice provost reports to the provost and is responsible for the college planning process, strategic plan, institutional research, accreditations, policies and procedures, and five-year program reviews (in concert with the vice provost for curriculum and global affairs). This is a great intersection of duties related to managing and tracking the success of the strategic plan initiatives.

The vice provost created a guide to planning and budgeting. (See Appendix G-Planning Guide). She met with the vice president for administration and finance in order to develop a planning process that was tied to the college’s budget cycle. Members of the community were asked to apply to fund Strategic Plan initiatives that would advance the college’s mission. As her cover letter specifies, “the Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs will coordinate the college’s planning process which will be completed annually. We will use the Strategic Plan as a roadmap for the annual planning and budgeting process. Even though the Strategic Plan covers a ten-year period, for the purposes of this planning process, we want each academic and non-academic unit to envision its unit/program goals, assess its resource needs, and determine outcomes from one to three years ahead in support of the attached strategic priorities for July 1, 2005- June 30, 2006. The goals of this planning and budgeting process are to chart the future of the college using the Strategic Plan, with the Mission Statement as an overarching guide. Ultimately, we want to allocate resources efficiently and effectively, and be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan….A successful planning effort requires the collaborative efforts of the administration, faculty, staff, and students. With broad participation and hard work, our planning process will move the
college to the next level of success as a public liberal arts institution. We can take charge of our future and face the challenges all public colleges will have in the coming decades." This planning goes along with the Vice President for Administration and Finance’s yearly public presentations to the Board of Trustee and the Ramapo community, which always consider the challenges Ramapo faces, the possible choices to be made, and the state of the College in relation to the larger society. 

Many of the initiatives discussed in the Periodic Review Report resulted from the College’s planning exercise and the Middle States Review in 2000. Discussions centered around enhancing the academic division by increasing the number of faculty members, reducing the number of adjuncts, reorganizing the academic structure, improving student learning and the environment in which they learned, and faculty workload and scholarship issues. These issues will be explored later in the Periodic Review Report.

**Academic Structure Exploratory Committee**

Of course, reorganization of the academic structure has taken the collaboration and cooperation of the faculty, many of whom created the original organizational structure of the College. The joint charge from the Provost and the Faculty Assembly leadership to an Academic Structure Exploratory Committee was “to recommend the most appropriate and cost-effective system for organizing the academic division,” and on May 17, it made its final recommendations. 

Although many of the changes seem quite commonsensical, it has been difficult for faculty to give up Ramapo terminology, such as “convener” and “unit council” and to see the need for an organizational structure transparent to students, new faculty, and members of other colleges. Still, a July, 2004 poll of faculty by mail ballot was overwhelmingly positive. Currently, the Provost’s office has asked each academic dean to begin to work within each school to discuss and make recommendations concerning convening group membership, home of degree majors, and faculty membership and role in programs. The deans and the provost are in the process of redefining the responsibilities and roles of deans.

**4. Library Resources**

One of the other recommendations for improvement that was included in the Middle States report focused on the Library. In 2000-2001, the College undertook a significant project to improve the Library print collection and to do an analysis of the Library holdings. It should be noted that an additional $236,000 per year has been allocated for library acquisitions.

Due to the combined effort of library faculty and teaching faculty, the library added 18,000 volumes to the collection since fall 2000, as compared with adding only 23,000 volumes the previous decade (1990-1999). Continued institutional commitment to special funding for book purchases ensures a current rate of collection growth.

A formal collection analysis has begun using gap analysis with Books for College Libraries (BCL), Best Books, and other standard bibliographies that identify core
undergraduate resources. In addition, the staff conducted the first comprehensive
inventory of the circulating collection in twenty years to further hone the book collection
and replace missing core titles. Inventory of the reference collection and non-print
collection is planned for spring, 2005.

The Cahill Center Career Collection database has been added to the online catalog
(OPAC), providing broader access to this specialized collection. In the near future, the
Women’s Center holdings will also be linked.

The Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies video collection has been catalogued
and added to the on-line catalog. A large collection of videos was donated to the School
of Contemporary Arts and a database of those titles is being created by the School’s
faculty. This database will also be linked to the library’s on-line catalog, providing
college-wide access to resources in support of the curriculum.

The library’s online resources have grown to 48 databases, mostly full-text, including the
archival JSTOR collections. In addition to general academic databases, some
specialized resources such as Thomson One Banker and the ACM Digital Library have
also been added. Open URL linking of all online periodicals is available on the local
level and remotely. Our community has access to approximately 17,000 full-text journal
titles and to citations and abstracts of several thousand more titles. In lieu of a
Government Publications collection in print, we now subscribe to Documents without
Shelves, currently a 20,000 full-text, online document collection of governmental
resources.

Articles assigned by faculty for course reserve are now routinely scanned and made
available through the remote access e-reserve module of the integrated library system,
Endeavor’s Voyager.

To increase both speed of delivery and quality of print, ARIEL is now used as the
primary vehicle for both borrowing and lending of materials. In addition, through the New
Jersey Academic Library Network, Ramapo students can borrow directly from other state
college/university libraries. The Virtual Academic Library Network (VALE,) of which
Ramapo is a member, initiated a reciprocal borrowing agreement, giving access to
almost every academic library, public and private, in New Jersey for all graduate
students and faculty. Palinet (a consortium of primarily academic libraries from New
Jersey to West Virginia) is developing a reciprocal borrowing arrangement as well, which
Ramapo will join. In September 2004, Ramapo joined Q&ANJ, a state-wide consortium
that now makes available online reference services twenty-four hours a day, seven days
a week, to Ramapo students.

Information Literacy Standards are integrated in the newly revised general education
program to go into effect in fall, 2006. In close collaboration with teaching faculty,
measure of learning outcomes are being developed for the College English courses
initially, then for other general education courses and ultimately for disciplinary courses.
“On demand” information literacy sessions continue to increase by 5%-10% per year.

During spring, 2005, the library will administer the LibQUAL Survey, a web-based
opinion survey of library service quality based on “gap analysis” methodology.
All in all, the Library is meeting the challenges of the Evaluation Team, even beginning the planning for a new library with a technology mall as part of its integration into the life of the campus. (See Appendix J: Task Force Report on Library.)

MAJOR CHALLENGES AND CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

Relating Work Load, Faculty Scholarship, and Curriculum Revision

The results of the Middle States Self-Study and the College's 2002 Strategic Plan revealed that the campus was at a significant crossroads. As the report on Implementing Course-Load Adjustment notes, “We must now decide what reputation, degree of innovation, and type of study body will characterize our college for the foreseeable future. State budget cutting, the construction of dormitories requiring a steady stream of income, and the maturity of the college all make these decisions unavoidable." The Course-Load Adjustment committee (CLA), created in the fall of 2002, (followed by CLA II and CLA III) undertook to consider how to relate faculty workload, faculty scholarship, and program and general education curriculum to the revised College mission in a comprehensive and creative way. It recommended a new Unit Plan.

Each step of this process was arrived at through extensive consultation with Schools, and voted on and approved by the Faculty Assembly over a two-year period. The Unit Plan will be implemented in conjunction with the switch to the Banner system planned for fall 2006. (See Appendix K: Implementing Course-Load Adjustment)

The committee set out to give a rationale for the most extensive revision of the way the College conducts itself since the original creation of the College. “Our challenge is clear. If we are to attain a distinctive reputation among quality institutions, Ramapo must finally make the bold leap toward fully implementing its unique educational mission, clearly defined to attract a national and international audience of excellent students interested in a quality education, while not severing roots to the region’s diverse population. Our discussion, accordingly, is not just about course load, the renaming of 3- and 4-credit courses as “Units,” or the re-timing of our classes. Rather, we view the Unit Plan as a reconceptualization of Ramapo courses and requirements aimed at more completely and innovatively implementing the College’s distinctive mission. Through its implementation, we may achieve an integrated vision for Ramapo’s future. Specifically, CLAII recommends the Unit system be used to sharpen mission realization through a mosaic of mission-related course modifications and that the process of instituting it be a keystone for a general reorganization of the College to meet its mission. This moment offers perhaps our best opportunity to shape the direction of our future.”

The Unit Plan

The Unit is a course meeting the equivalent of 200 minutes a week (180 classroom minutes/20 minutes experiential/studio/co-op). For the majority of current three-credit courses this means an additional 40 minutes of instruction per week (20 minutes classroom/20 minutes experiential). Under the Unit Plan, students need to complete 32 Units to graduate with a Bachelor’s Degree. Finding the correct balance between classroom time and the graduation requirement was a major challenge of the CLA I, II, and III Committees. Under the Unit Plan, students will be required to complete fewer...
courses than they do now, but because the courses are 30% longer, the change represents a move from more breadth to more depth.

The adjunct rate was a major consideration in devising the plan, as no plan was to be proposed that would increase the adjunct rate from its current level. Institutional Research worked alongside the CLA Committee at every step, calculating probable outcomes in terms of budget and adjunct rate. CIRCUIT (the CLA implementation committee) is currently ensuring that the adjunct rate remains the same or decreases overall under the Unit Plan. In addition, the Provost and the President have increased the number of new faculty lines over the next five years in order to decrease the adjunct rate even more. Ten additional faculty lines were filled for 2004-05. Ramapo is currently conducting twenty-one faculty searches to be completed for 2005-06; approximately nine faculty searches will take place for the 2006-2007 academic year. A minimum increase of five new faculty lines per academic year for the next five years has been promised.

**Student Learning**

Students will benefit from the conversion to the Unit Plan because the quality of student learning experience will be directly enhanced:

1. The student program in a given term will be based on an eight-Unit per year load. By decreasing student course load from five or more to four courses per semester, students will be able to focus their attention in a more concentrated manner on these longer, more intensive courses.

2. Significant writing assignments for all courses have been proposed. It was agreed that writing success requires a multi-pronged approach and the Unit Plan calls for writing intensive courses to be offered on each level, in the major, in the School core and in general education.

3. The expanded class periods afforded under the Unit Plan will allow faculty and students to increasingly address two core mission elements in innovative ways -- interdisciplinary learning, which focuses on whole problems and issues that must be approached from multiple perspectives, and experiential learning, which involves students directly in the contexts of study. These goals are difficult to achieve under the current one hour fifteen minute course periods twice a week. Each course under the Unit Plan is required to include the equivalent of twenty minutes per week of experiential learning. This might include class trips, community service, lab, studio or other experiences.

4. By integrating the general education and School core requirements, the Unit Plan will enhance the effectiveness of our mission by providing students with more numerous perspectives on the two additional core institutional pillars—an international perspective, which grounds topics of study in comparative and cumulative frames and allows for the relationship of local and global, and multicultural education, which prepares students to live in a diverse world. These have also been incorporated into the School core programs, so that students gain an understanding of culture and difference of perspective as they apply to their disciplines, while these concepts of cultural complexity are reinforced in general education.
Faculty Workload and Scholarship Issues

Among the motivating factors in the development of the Unit Plan were the inequities in faculty workload and the difficulty of hiring new faculty who were not going to be given the time for the scholarship they were expected to achieve. The Middle States Self-Study clearly identified faculty workload issues: “Enrollment growth has increased faculty loads in specific programs and stressed available resources.” The Strategic Plan challenged the College to “examine equity issues among faculty with respect to student enrollments and other aspects concerning the delivery of the curriculum” and further set the goal to “review and make recommendations concerning faculty teaching load” whose measurable outcome would be “equity among faculty, enhanced teaching, scholarship and service.”

Beginning in the fall semester of 2002, the CLA committee gathered qualitative data through a series of open forums and focus groups to guide the committee’s recommendations. Cost benefit analyses were developed for the five models the committee identified as viable. After reaching consensus on the model identified as the Unit Plan, each School was asked to provide an impact analysis, identifying likely costs, impacts on major programs, adjunct rate and other probable curricular outcomes. The faculty voted to adopt the Unit Plan as the model for course load adjustment in November, 2003, which ensured equity across the disciplines, guaranteeing all faculty members yearly teaching loads of six Units.

Scholarship and workload issues are closely linked. In 2002, Interim Provost Cody identified disparities in the granting of released time for scholarship and other administrative duties and sought to begin a dialogue about reducing faculty workload and creating a more equitable means of encouraging scholarship. This was reflected in a section of the Strategic Plan which states: "(b.) review and revise support for re-assigned time for faculty scholarship" [and "(i.) work toward reducing the teaching load of faculty to promote scholarship" whose measurable outcome would be “…faculty teaching loads will be brought more in line with that found at other quality institutions.” (p.30)

The Plan further charges the institution to create "a system of faculty development programs that enables faculty to stay at the cutting edge in their field." (p.28) This issue is even more pressing because nearly half the faculty is expected to retire in the next 10 years; 68% are 50 years of age or older.

The Flex Unit

The CLA committee incorporated this goal in developing the Unit Plan and devised a scholarship system that addresses equity and accountability issues through the creation of the Flex Unit. "Against the option of teaching a fourth course, faculty will be invited to propose in writing to their peers [i.e., their convening groups] a program of activity for each term that involves scholarship (as defined by the handbook) or activity related to course enhancement or community leadership that is developmentally positive for the faculty member. The Flex Unit will extend the benefit of scholarly participation, now enjoyed by the limited percentage of the faculty receiving Separately Budgeted Research or other similar grants to virtually all. In this way, Ramapo faculty will be closer to a level playing field with colleagues from other institutions. This will help our faculty foster their scholarly reputations, but more important, it will allow them to bring their
research into their teaching and, in more cases to provide opportunities for interested students outside the classroom. In addition, it will help Ramapo maintain its strength as an institution as it matures and assist it in attracting promising scholars to the faculty.

The adoption of the Flex Unit was achieved with significant sacrifice on the part of the faculty. For the most part, released time will be eliminated for administrative duties. Released time awarded for scholarship will also be largely eliminated and replaced with the Flex Unit. In addition, overload pay will be eliminated, except at the request of the Deans in emergency situations. The faculty came to the consensus that the more equitable distribution of course load and the universal adoption of the Flex Unit will support scholarship more effectively. Through the adoption of the Unit Plan, the faculty has taken the opportunity to recommit to the values at the heart of the college mission for the benefit of their intellectual and creative lives here, and for the benefit of our students.

**Curricular Reform**

The discussion of course load and scholarship was, of course, guided by concern over the curriculum and the educational goals of the institution as articulated in the College mission and the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan. Ramapo’s mission is based on the four pillars: international, intercultural, experiential and interdisciplinary education. The March 2000 Middle States report correctly identified the institution’s goal in strengthening mission realization in regard to these four pillars, stating "an expansion of these components in the curriculum would further the campus' progress in meeting this expectation." The Strategic Plan further challenges the institution to "examine the school cores in the context of the revised general education program by Spring 2004," and to assure that "Ramapo Graduates will complete their programs of study with a course load that is consistent with similar programs of study around the country." (p.17-18)

The Unit plan impacts almost every area of academic life on campus, but most significantly it is a reexamination of what constitutes a course. By revising the curriculum from the bottom up, integrating major, School core and general education requirements to reinforce concepts, and by providing the additional time needed in the classroom, we believe the Unit Plan has succeeded in striking the important balance between breadth and depth while responding to student needs and student preparedness.

The Unit Plan has invigorated convening groups to ask the question, “What do our students really need to know?” because School cores and major requirements are limited to 22 Units. The convening groups have completed the initial process of revising their curricula to fit the extended class periods required under the Unit Plan and the smaller number of courses available, but more modifications will certainly be needed as the change to the Unit Plan is implemented. Schools have agreed to incorporate mission goals into their core programs and are in the process of fine-tuning their core curricula so that the School cores and general education requirements will take up no more than 17 Units.
New Schedule, More Space

An unexpected but welcome benefit of the Unit Plan will be the creation of more space for classes. As a result of the standardization of classroom periods under the Unit Plan, classroom space on campus has been maximized because the lag time between courses that have varied in length between three and four credit time slots has been minimized. The need for more academic space is still pressing, so the plans for a new academic building are underway. The new daily schedule of courses, approved by the Faculty Assembly, offers 17 non-overlapping slots for courses.

The New General Education Program

Perhaps the most exciting development was the creation of a new 10-Unit General Education Program, approved in August, 2004. The goals of the program are made clear and each category has objectives for learning, which will make assessment doable. The overall goals of the program are:

- The purpose of the General Education Program is to provide students with critical reading, writing and analytical skills essential to a Liberal Arts education. Students should also gain a foundation in academic areas which will prepare them to further develop in their majors. In this spirit, we recommend that all courses in General education incorporate six information literacy goals (as per Middle States recommendations):
  - framing the research question,
  - accessing sources,
  - evaluating sources,
  - evaluating content,
  - using information,
  - understanding ethical and legal issues affecting the use of information.
- We recommend that all General Education courses should be writing intensive, when appropriate.
- We recommend that all General Education courses should be taught by full-time faculty wherever possible.

Our overall rationale is as follows:

- Students will be exposed to the academic areas which highlight the four pillars of the Ramapo College mission: interdisciplinary analysis, intercultural and international issues and experiential learning.
- Most courses will not double-count, ensuring that students have academic experience outside their majors.
- A central feature of the Unit model, upon which our General Education proposal depends, is its more rigorous set of expectations for our students and ourselves. The Unit model assumes that all Ramapo courses should include more reading. Our students will therefore leave Ramapo well read and well versed in the art of reading critically.
- Furthermore, for the General Education program to be effective and to maximize the advantages the Unit plan offers, we recommend that as part of General Education, all courses at Ramapo College in which students are evaluated on the basis of their writing will allow for substantial feedback on that writing. All such
courses must be structured to ensure that students receive significant *written* feedback early enough in the semester to allow students to apply that feedback to future writing assignments (See Appendix L - General Education)

In the last five years, a myriad of challenges were presented to the college as a result of its rapid growth, its higher admission standards and the expected rate of new faculty hires. The Unit Plan became the keystone for an integrated vision for Ramapo's transformation into an institution that better implements its mission, better serves its students, and creates expanded opportunities for scholarship for its faculty.

Of course, we have had additional challenges and opportunities. In 2000, we committed to enrollment by design, to bring in more first time, full-time students, fewer transfer students and more graduate students, to continue our commitment to enroll a diverse student body, and to improve graduation and retention rates. We have continued to make technology a high priority of the campus, so that we can have full connectivity, and so that faculty, staff, and students will be continuously supported in their acquisition of technological skills, hardware, and software. We have revised and implemented a five-year plan which more fully integrates international and intercultural education into Ramapo’s curriculum and extra curriculum. We have increased formal collaborations and planning between divisions and have initiated more joint faculty ventures across disciplines. Finally, we have, through the continued opening of new residence halls, succeeded in turning the campus into a residential campus, with all its benefits.

**Technology**

A vice provost for technology and academic services, reporting to the provost, was appointed in fall, 2002 to coordinate campus technology. This has resulted in greater efficiency in administrative and academic technology use and in significant advances in wiring the campus. The organization and structure of the computer center have been revised, separating administrative from academic computing. Furthermore, the Academic Media Center now has new staff and a new director. A new director has been hired for our Technology Education Center as well. These new structures and staff are better meeting the needs of the faculty, staff, and students.

Specific accomplishments in the past five years include the following:

1. There are now 580 computers installed in classrooms, student lobbies, Smart Classroom Teacher Stations, and research labs. All have been upgraded since 2000.
2. 15 Smart Classrooms have been constructed (through renovating old space) since 2000. These include 3 classrooms/labs with smart boards.
3. Friends Hall has been renovated into a smart meeting room.
4. The three rooms in the Trustees Pavilion have been outfitted with state-of-the-art presentation equipment.
5. 90% of Contemporary Arts classroom computers have been upgraded to Mac G5s.
6. All faculty and staff offices have been upgraded to Dell G150s and Mac G4s and G5s.
7. For each bed in all residence hall rooms is the wiring for data, voice, and cable.
8. All classrooms and offices are wired for voice and data.
9. We have completed Banner migration (from SCT-Plus) for Finance, Human Resources and Advancement.
10. We are in the process of completing a new lab for the Bioinformatics major.
11. We have upgraded all our servers.

Keeping technology current, training faculty, staff and students to use new technology, and providing new technology as new buildings are built will be continuing challenges. However, we now have the personnel in place to be able to meet the challenge. We are in the process of developing a technology plan to respond to future needs of the institution, another of our strategic objectives.

**International and Intercultural Initiatives**

The enhancement of International and Intercultural education is one of the priorities of the Strategic Plan and is a core mission value. As the Strategic Plan notes:

By the year 2014, Ramapo College will be regionally and nationally recognized for its international and intercultural programs with:

- Supportive environment for international students
- Exchange opportunities for faculty and students
- Expanded study abroad opportunities
- Expanded international/intercultural programming
- Increased funding for international/Intercultural programming

- Expanded international/intercultural programming
- Increased funding for international/Intercultural Programming

To meet these goals, a new Director of International and Intercultural Education was named in 2001. In addition, a Faculty Director of Study Abroad was appointed in 2002.

A review of international programming was completed in 2004 by a Task Force on International Education. Its mandate was to examine and make recommendations in regard to the following issues: the international components of the curriculum; and the best administrative structure for promoting international education at the college. A variety of issues, approaches and models in international education at Ramapo were explored and a number of specific recommendations were made. Among the most significant were:

- “The General education program is a crucial framework for infusing international perspectives across the curriculum. All students should have multiple exposures to international education embedded in general education requirements throughout their undergraduate program. Accountability for developing and delivering these curricular outcomes need to be explicitly part of the responsibilities of the Provost/VPAA, Deans, Conveners and relevant faculty committees. Furthermore, the courses within the General Education program need to be systematically reviewed, culled and adjusted in light of international education criteria.”

The new Unit Plan and General Education Program do just that.

- “Other general education recommendations include ensuring that each School core has an international component (a specific course or substantial elements of
several courses), that the College Seminars should be a "gateway" to introduce and explore international programs and opportunities for all students, and that the evolution of the general education Global Studies category emphasis move from ‘Western Studies’ to ‘World Civilizations’.

The new courses have been designed and are offered, and the new General Education Program incorporates this recommendation

- “Experiential learning is also an important element that should be required as part of general education with as many international opportunities as possible within the Cahill Center’s ‘Spectrum’ model including cooperative education, study abroad, internships and service learning.”

The new Unit Plan gives class time for experiential learning, but longer-term activities are also encouraged.

- “Study abroad should emphasize semester-long programs in addition to our current short-duration programs.”

Students can attend semester-long study abroad programs hosted by other colleges, but semester-long options sponsored by Ramapo (as well as other institutions) are being considered. We are also encouraging students to attend focused programs of short duration sponsored by a variety of institutions, such as NGO’s, in addition to colleges and universities. (See Appendix M: Task Force Report on International Education)

A small but significant connection of our international mission with the high school community is our hosting of the Governor’s School on International Relations for the past five years. There had not been a new Governor’s School in New Jersey for over fifteen years, but our proposal to host a Governor’s School on this crucial topic was successful. Rising juniors compete for the slots in all the New Jersey Governor’s Schools, and Ramapo’s program is highly sought out. Some years, the Governor’s School includes a trip to Quebec, so that students have a real cross-cultural experience, and the United Nations is a continuing resource to our students.

Collaboration between Units

Efforts continue to increase collaborations between divisions, particularly between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Although we do not systematically track such joint ventures, many collaborations occur each semester. A few specific examples of collaborations within the past several years include:

- First Year Experience programs run jointly between Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Academic Affairs. These programs include a First-Year Seminar as well as orientation programs.
- The Educational Opportunity Fund Program, a part of Academic Affairs, is strongly supported by Student Affairs as well. For example, the staff of the Cahill Center on Experiential Learning, a part of Student Affairs, and the EOF staff jointly run programs on career and graduate school placement, along with a mentoring program.
The staff members of Financial Aid and EOF work very closely with Admissions, all under the umbrella of Enrollment Management, to recruit and retain students. Sustainability education programs are jointly sponsored by faculty in Environmental Studies and Environmental Science and Student Affairs. The annual conference on the African American Professorate is organized jointly by staff in Student Affairs and faculty and staff in Academic Affairs. The Recess program, a speakers’ series sponsored by the Berrie Center, includes programs by faculty, community resources, and staff, as well as a free lunch connected culturally to the program. Many community members make this a regular part of their visits to the campus. The Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies co-sponsors programs with other College units and community organizations. Programs range from teacher workshops, public lectures, art exhibits and film screenings to commemorative programs with local synagogues. Its Holocaust Video Testimony project is conducted in conjunction with Yale University, and its Speakers’ Bureau sends Holocaust survivors to speak in local schools and to community groups.

Joint faculty ventures continue in the spirit of interdisciplinarity. Highlights include:

- Group faculty exhibitions in Contemporary Arts.
- Colloquia sponsored by various faculty groups, most recently on such topics as Corporate Policies on Transgender Issues, The Future of Diversity at Ramapo, and Weapons of Mass Destruction.
- Conferences held on campus on such topics as sustainability, teaching world history, the use of technology in teaching, business and public policy, and teaching the Holocaust to elementary and high school students.
- The creation of interdisciplinary programs such as Bioinformatics and Integrated Science Studies.
- Speakers’ Bureau sends Holocaust survivors to speak in local schools and to community groups.

ENROLLMENT BY DESIGN

The retirement of the previous vice president for enrollment management offered new possibilities for the college to continue to strengthen the division of academic affairs, its planning initiatives, and the delivery of services to students. Enrollment management was moved into the division of academic affairs. A new vice provost for Enrollment Management was appointed. The unit added the assistant provost for academic support programs and services, the Academic Advisement Center, the Center for Academic Success (which includes the Writing Center), the Educational Opportunity Fund Program, and Testing and Placement. This reorganization makes it possible to communicate more effectively and to carry out plans and programs more efficiently. The Vice Provost for Enrollment Management also supervises Admissions, Financial Aid, the Registrar’s Office, and the Office of the First Year Experience and Leadership Education.

Enrollment Management is experiencing the most success in Ramapo’s history. In the fall of 2004, the College welcomed the largest freshman class in 29 years and the most well-prepared class ever. Continuing the goals of the Strategic Plan and in accordance with our 10-year Enrollment Projection Model (see Appendix N-Ten Year Enrollment
Projection Model), Ramapo has increased the size of the freshman class while decreasing the number of new transfer students. In addition, the level of preparedness of enrolled freshmen has risen, with regular admits now ranking in the top 19% of their high school graduating class with mean SAT scores of 1164 (577 verbal, 587 math).

The undergraduate headcount has increased from 4,906 students in fall 2000 to 5,278 in fall 2004 (+7.6%) and the percent of students who are full-time has increased by 11 percentage points from 68% to 79% over the same period. Full-time equivalency has risen from 3,805 in fall 2000 to 4536 in 2004 (+19.2%) and the number of residential students has increased from 1,712 to 2,497 students (+45.9%) in the five-year span. Sixty percent (60%) of all full-time students now live on campus and almost 90% of freshmen choose residential life.

First to second year retention rates have increased dramatically (see attached), from 82.4% for the 1999 cohort to 89.1% for the 2003 entering cohort. Higher retention has led to a rapid rise in graduation rates (see attached). In 1996, Ramapo’s four-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time freshmen was 24.7%. The 2000 cohort graduated at a rate of 44.5% in four years. Similar success was seen for the five-year rate, as 54.5% of the 1999 freshmen finished in five years, while only 41.7% of the 1995 completed their degree in this time frame. Finally, the six-year rate has jumped from 45.2% in 1994 to a very successful 62.3% for the 1998 cohort.

With respect to improving retention and graduation rates, we have been successful. The first to second year retention rate for First Time Full-Time students matriculating at Ramapo in fall 2003 was 89.1%. This can be compared to the first to second year retention rate for First Time Full-Time students who matriculated in fall 1999, which was 82.4%. Similarly, the graduation rate has steadily risen.

**Graduation Rates (Percentages) for First Time Full Time Undergraduate Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Entry</th>
<th>Four-Year Rate</th>
<th>Five-Year Rate</th>
<th>Six-Year Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>45.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>41.7</td>
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<td>24.7</td>
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<td>56.6</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 2004 Institutional Profile)

We predict that over the next five years, we will continue to improve the retention and graduation rates.

**Projected Enrollment, 2005-2010**

We expect to admit 725 new first-year students in 2005, 750 in 2006 and 2007, 775 in 2008, and 800 in 2009 and 2010. These projections are based on a number of assumptions. First, students will continue to apply in the numbers in which they are now applying. While the number of high school students will continue to increase only through 2008, there is an increasing interest in Ramapo which can be seen in Open House registrations, Immediate Decision Day registrations, etc. The College
and its programs are very heavily marketed in the summer and fall, especially with a targeted recruitment print and radio campaign. If for some reason all these efforts do not continue to bear fruit, we can dip further into the applicant pool, because we currently admit only 40% of all applicants.

Second, we expect students to continue their interest in residing on campus. A significant number of students are coming from counties further away from Ramapo. Moreover, as the reputation of the College has improved, even Bergen County students want to reside on campus rather than commute. Virtually all of our students now want a residential college experience. We expect 89% of our new students to live in the residence halls in 2005.

Third, we will continue to limit the number of transfer students. We expect to reduce transfer students to 500 in 2005, 475 in 2006 and 2007, 425 in 2009, and 400 in 2010. Although we have articulation agreements with a number of community colleges, they are only for graduates of these colleges, so we are not under an obligation to take any specific number of community college students. While it is true that 60% of the transfer students are community college students, many of the transfer students are those who were not initially admitted to Ramapo. These students either went to a community college or another four-year college for a year and are now trying to gain admission to Ramapo.

Fourth, we will have enough space and faculty to educate the students we admit. Over the next five years, we will be increasing admissions by about 43 students a year. Increased faculty hiring has already been discussed. Because we will be gaining more classroom space once the Unit Plan takes effect, and because a new academic building is in the planning stages, there should not be a problem with space.

Finally, the modest increase in graduate students will be justified by current interest, marketing, and possible approval of new graduate programs.

**The Development of Ramapo as a Residential College**

Between the fall, 2000 semester and the fall, 2004 semester, residence hall occupancy at Ramapo College grew from 1,712 students to 2,497 students. In the fall, 2006 semester, the number of residents will rise again to approximately 2,736 students and will continue to increase, though at a less dramatic pace. Since the fall, 1999 semester the percentage of undergraduate students who are full-time has risen from 68% to 79% and the percentage of full-time students who live in on-campus housing has increased from 52% to 60%. These percentages will increase in the years immediately ahead and clearly demonstrate that important changes in the character of the college are taking place.

**Capital Projects**

In response to this change in student enrollments, a number of projects have been completed or are in the building or planning stages. The new residence hall, The Overlook, costing $23.685 million, opened in fall 2004, and the new Bradley Sports and Recreation Center, costing $26.695 million, opened in fall, 2005; a renovation of the “old” section of the Center will be completed in spring 2005. A number of other capital projects are ongoing. Following are a number of the other capital projects with their
estimated costs: a Sustainability Center, $.961 million; a parking deck, $7.995 million; a new loop road, $3.494 million; a main feeder line and switchgear replacement, $1 million; an underground steam line replacement, $.200 million; academic building repair, $.500 million; athletic field renovations, $1 million; new campus-wide signage and marquee, $3 million; a new residence hall to open in fall 2006, $47.817 million; and last, but certainly not least, a new academic building, $24 million. Some of these capital projects will be bonded; others will be paid for by user fees.

In response to these changes, the college has also enhanced a number of its student support services. For instance, the new sports and recreation center serves students at almost all hours of the day and night, and campus dining facilities have been completely renovated. In addition, The Pavilion, a large meeting space for campus and student events, was constructed to accommodate the increased number of organized campus activities. Health Services, Counseling Center and Athletics staffs were increased to meet student demands for services and specifically to recognize the increased physical and psychological problems presented by students living in a primarily residential population. Greater access to public transportation has been achieved so that our students can make increased use of New York City’s resources. More academically-orientated student activities (i.e. debates, panel discussions, thoughtful speakers) have been increased. A center for those wishing to offer voluntary service to the larger community has been opened at the same time active civic engagement has been more vigorously promoted through voter registration drives and participation in the national American Democracy Project.

Within the next year, the college will consider whether our current security force should be partially converted to a campus police force and we will relieve parking shortages with the construction of a garage.

OVERVIEW OF OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION

The total Fiscal Year 2005 operating budget is nearly $97 million. A growing endowment of about $4 million exists for the College in a separately incorporated foundation. There are no serious cash flow problems and the institution has several million dollars in reserves for emergencies, for funding start-up costs of some capital projects in advance of obtaining permanent financing and for Trustee-approved investment in high priority projects, (for which no other funding source exists) such as a campus-wide signage program or migration to a new administrative software platform.

Since the abolition of the Department of Higher Education in 1994, New Jersey public institutions have had considerable autonomy in managing their affairs, which has allowed for greater flexibility and efficiency in managing resources. Unlike some of its neighboring state systems, the New Jersey public institutions have not experienced crippling budget cuts. The College has managed its budget through a period of declining State support by planned increases in enrollment coupled with expense controls and resource conservation. Where possible and appropriate the College collaborates with other senior public institutions in joint purchasing or sharing of purchasing contracts. The public institution presidents have tried to stay united in their requests to the State for funding for basic operations and have felt free to push for special projects for their campuses at the same time. Developing and urging the case for improved State funding will be a high priority for the future.
State funding has dropped from 57% of revenues in 1991 to 34 percent in the current fiscal year. As a percentage of Educational and General funding, state support has dropped from 77% in 1991 ($18.9 million of a total of $24.6 million) to 46% in FY 2004 ($29.1 million of a total of $62.9 million). The dwindling share of state support has been partially offset by student tuition and fee increases; student tuition and fees now account for 38 percent of all operating revenues versus 21 percent in 1991.

The FY2005 tuition increase was seven percent – one of the lowest among the senior public institutions, and below the Governor's cap of 8%. Ramapo's tuition and fees are now at $8,081 for an in-state student. This places Ramapo at slightly above the average for New Jersey senior public institutions (which include Rutgers and New Jersey Institute of Technology, and the State Colleges/Universities), but it still offers a bargain for a mid-sized, primarily liberal arts and increasingly residential college on an attractive campus, offering a great deal of student-faculty interaction. Compared to private institutions, Ramapo is at least $10,000 to $15,000 lower in price than its competitors among New Jersey independent colleges. In recent years its costs have increased for merit-based financial aid. An area of concern is technology, which requires a growing share of the budget, far in excess of $2.3 million generated by the student technology fee. Over the past three years, technology spending in the operating budget has grown from FY'02's $4.993 million (9.2% of E&G) to $7.645 million (11.5% of E&G) projected for FY'05.

Nearly 90% of Ramapo's full-time faculty and staff are covered by union contracts, which are negotiated as part of statewide collective bargaining. But the State does not fully fund the outcomes of statewide negotiated increases in salaries and benefits, thereby forcing the institutions to increase tuition and fees and reallocate existing resources. The State has provided some special funding for deferred maintenance and technology and has floated bonds for these and other purposes, but the College is expected to pay for a portion of the debt service. The total of all debt service is about $11.5 million (including $8 million for residence halls), which represents 12% of the operating budget.

As noted above, there is a separately incorporated private foundation to support Ramapo College. Supplementing its endowment of about $4 million, the Foundation raised $4.3 million in annual funds in FY 2003. The College does not rely on Foundation funding for any substantial contributions to the annual operating budget. However, Foundation funds provide support for buildings, scholarships, and discretionary funds for faculty and staff projects available through an internal grant process.

Ramapo College has had to navigate difficult and challenging "fiscal waters" over the past five years. State support for both operating and capital budgets has declined. Salaries of bargaining unit employees have climbed per contracts negotiated and approved by the State, but the State has failed to fund fully and consistently those increases. Therefore, the College has had to cover the unfunded salary increases from operating resources. In addition, in response to strong student demand and State pressure to increase capacity, the College has continued to invest in new facilities consistent with the College's master plan. Because of inadequate capital support from the State, the College has paid for new facilities largely through debt, thus increasing the proportions of the operating budget devoted to debt service.

Despite these fiscal challenges, the College has grown and prospered. The College's success has been noted and recognized in the *US News and World Report* rankings. And, even though highly leveraged for a school of its size, Ramapo has nonetheless
been given a stable outlook by bond rating agencies, Moody's and Standard and Poors. Moody's, in particular, has noted that with strong student demand Ramapo retains significant enrollment flexibility. The College offers a quality education at a low cost relative to private and out-of-state alternatives. With its low acceptance rate and increasing student preparedness level, the College could, if necessary, generate more enrollment by only a slight alteration in the admitted student profile.

The outlook for the next five years, thanks to the continuing vigorous student demand, is positive, but not without challenges. The proposed revised curriculum and course load adjustment, although planned to be budget neutral, may impact student enrollment in the summer terms. Planning is already underway to address the need for the summer term to be a stand-alone profit center for the College. Creative summer programming to attract students from other colleges, talented high school students for pre-college programs, as well as special programs for Ramapo students, for seniors, or for groups and organizations wanting to rent College facilities will be explored. One person assigned by the president will have overall responsibility for generating a given amount of net revenue for the budget from summer activities.

Another challenge is addressing the declining share of State support to the College's operating budget by building up revenue sources other than tuition and fees while continuing to manage as efficiently as possible. On the revenue front over the past five years, the Institutional Advancement organization has invested in both human and physical resources needed to promote the College's image, cultivate donors, and seek grants successfully. The next five years should see a continued and accelerating return on those investments, hopefully in more direct support for College capital construction as well as in scholarship funding and endowment growth.

On the side of expense control, the College will continue to encourage purchasing collaboration with other schools; to outsource activities as appropriate and cost-effective; to utilize technology for efficiency and savings (e.g. on-line billing rather than printing and mailing student bills); and to manage and reorganize the work (as retirements and other turnover allows) for maximum efficiency.

In conclusion, Ramapo's current financial condition is sound and the future looks bright. The fiscal challenges ahead are largely known, understood and manageable. Ramapo College is confident and prepared to address them.

Please see: Special Financial Exhibits For Periodic Review Report consisting of:

A. Financial Statements
   FY 2004
   FY 2003
B. Management Letter (none submitted FY'03 or FY'02)
   FY 2004
   FY 2001
C. Budget Highlights – FY 2004-2005
D. 5-Year Budget Model (Description and Sample Display)
E. Financial Materials for Board of Trustees (Sample Item on Board Agenda)
F. Moody's Investors Services Report on Ramapo College Credit Rating
G. Open Forum: Fiscal Budget Hearing April 28, 2004
CONCLUSION

The Evaluation Team’s visit happened at a fortuitous time. The campus was about to be shaken up by changes in senior academic leadership and compelling new ideas about how we should go about the business of educating our better-prepared residential students. Because of the report of the Evaluation Team, the campus entered into a strategic planning process and the Faculty Assembly began to undertake the serious issues of organization of the academic campus and the curriculum. As we look back on the campus in 2000, we remember it as strong, vital, and effective, yet as the last five years have proven, we are going forward to a college that is more well-matched to our mission, more creative in its outlook, and more successful in its education of students.
Copies of some exhibits can be found on the Ramapo Intranet site as noted, others are attached:

**Exhibits**

**Appendix A:** Assessment Reports from Majors

**Appendix B:** Five Year Assessment Plans

**Appendix C:** Academic and Curricular Guidelines (ARC)  
http://phobos.ramapo.edu/facassem/

**Appendix D:** Self-Study Guidelines

**Appendix E:** Assessment at Ramapo

**Appendix F:** Report of the Diversity Action Committee  
http://guide.ramapo.edu/content/DAC/

**Appendix G:** Planning Guide  
http://guide.ramapo.edu/content/StratPlan/index.html

**Appendix H:** Open Forum: Fiscal 2005 Budget Hearing Power Point Presentation  

**Appendix I:** ASEC Final Report  
http://phobos.ramapo.edu/facassem/asecpage.html

**Appendix J:** Task Force Report on Library  
http://phobos.ramapo.edu/facassem/TFLibraryRecom.html

**Appendix K:** Implementing Course Load Adjustment  
http://phobos.ramapo.edu/facassem/circuitpage.html

**Appendix L:** General Education  
(http://phobos.ramapo.edu/facassem/cla2final100303.html)

**Appendix M:** Task Force on International Education  
(http://phobos.ramapo.edu/facassem/TFIntnlEd.html)

**Appendix N:** Ten Year Enrollment Projection Model

**Special Financial Exhibits For Periodic Review Report** consisting of:

**H. Financial Statements**
- FY 2004
- FY 2003

**I. Management Letter (none submitted FY'03 or FY'02)**
- FY 2004
- FY 2001
J. Budget Highlights – FY 2004-2005
K. 5-Year Budget Model (Description and Sample Display)
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