Prepared for the
Middle States Commission
on Higher Education by
Ramapo College of
New Jersey’s Self-Study
Steering Committee
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3
ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION STATEMENT 5
INTRODUCTION 6

## CHAPTER 1: MISSION, GOVERNANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION 9
- THE CONTEXT 10
- MISSION 11
- THE STRATEGIC PLAN AS IT RELATES TO ACHIEVEMENT OF MISSION & GOALS 12
- LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE 14
- ADMINISTRATION 17
- ETHICS IN GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION 20
- FINDINGS 20

## CHAPTER 2: PLANNING AND RESOURCES 23
- THE CONTEXT 24
- PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL 25
- FINANCIAL RESOURCES 28
- HUMAN RESOURCES 31
- FACILITIES 33
- TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES 35
- OTHER RESOURCES 36
- FINDINGS 37

## CHAPTER 3: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS 39
- THE CONTEXT 40
- PROCESS AND PLAN 40
- CHANGING CULTURE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES 44
- OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT 46
- FINDINGS 48

## CHAPTER 4: STUDENTS 49
- THE CONTEXT 51
- CAMPUS CLIMATE 51
- STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT 52
- CHALLENGING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE THEIR BEST 55
- TRANSITIONS: HELPING STUDENTS ACCLIMATE AND ADJUST 57
- ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES 58
- RETENTION AND GRADUATION 59
- ENGAGING STUDENTS AND PROMOTING LEARNING 62
- ACCESS AND DIVERSITY 65
- HEALTH AND SAFETY 66
- RESPONSIVENESS AND INTEGRITY 68
- BEYOND THE BACCALAUREATE 69
- FINDINGS 70
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ramapo College engaged in a comprehensive, multi-year self-study, involving the entire community through steering committee and study group meetings, general and chapter-specific open forums with public comment, co-chair visits to constituency groups, a public Web site, and a middlestates@ramapo.edu email address. The goal for these activities was to fully involve the community and allow for varied and multiple means through which members could participate in the self-study process. This report is the outcome of that process.

Conducting a self-study affords an institution the opportunity to pause at a point in time to reflect on achievements and challenges and to plan boldly for the future. Given the significant amount of time and work that goes into such a study, the expectation is that it will produce evidence of how Ramapo meets the Middle States Characteristics of Excellence and the hope is that the narrative that emerges will be notable and the findings useful. From the self-study process emerged a few overarching themes that impacted the entire college. The study also proved relevant when discussing specific standards: resiliency through change, commitment to mission, emphasis on assessment, and sacrifice and innovation in the face of declining state support. In response to the findings of the previous self-study and in recognition of the expectations of regional accrediting agencies, the federal government, and Ramapo's "consumers" (students, their parents, taxpayers, etc.), the college has made significant progress in creating a culture of assessment. Despite significant change and decline in state funding, Ramapo has been steadfast in its commitment to student learning and development, as evidenced by enhancements in the curriculum, an increase in full-time faculty lines, and programs and services that focus on student learning in and out of the classroom.

Following is an overview of the major findings of the self-study, organized by chapter:

Chapter 1 addresses Middle States standards 1, 4, 5 and 6 (mission, goals, leadership, governance, administration and integrity). President Mercer's vision for the college and the recently revised strategic plan are significant in the discussion of mission, goals, and leadership, and form the foundation for the remainder of the self-study. The strategic plan, with its six guiding principles and three major goals, is the cornerstone for all campus planning, budgeting, and assessment, and thus central throughout the self-study. As the campus has grown and matured and founders have retired, more formal structures for governance, communication, and organization have been put in place.

Chapter 2 addresses Middle States standards 2 and 3 (planning, resources and institutional renewal). Ramapo College has been increasingly challenged with managing resources and maintaining excellence in the face of dwindling state support. In response, the college aggressively sought and identified opportunities to achieve savings, formalized links between budget and planning to ensure that resources are allocated to the greatest needs and those which support mission, and created an enrollment plan that is far-sighted and inclusive of the realities of demographics in the state and surrounding region. Strategic funding, a commitment to increasing the number of full-time faculty, and an investment in facilities and infrastructure have allowed the college to improve its academic profile and continue to meet its mission. The college will need to continue to seek ways to reduce costs and increase revenue to weather the likelihood of continued cuts in state support and a shrinking pool of high school graduates.

Chapter 3 addresses Middle States standard 7 (institutional effectiveness). Ramapo College has taken significant steps over the past five years to improve efficiency, link planning and budgeting, and use assessment to drive decision-making. Several institutional effectiveness committees were formed, the annual reporting process was changed, and personnel assessment is now directly linked to achieving goals. Furthermore, 2% of the college’s operating budget is allocated to support strategic initiatives, ensuring that despite limited resources funds will be set aside to support initiatives and enhancements that further the college's mission and goals. The college should continue to streamline institutional effectiveness assessment processes and increase the transparency of and access to reports and other data.

Chapter 4 addresses Middle States standards 8, 9 and 6 (admissions, students and integrity). Since the last self-study, Ramapo College increased the size of the freshmen class, raised the academic profile and became a
residential college. The college’s emphasis on the whole student is illustrated through myriad programs and services that support student learning both in and out of the classroom. The college will need to expand enrollment efforts to continue to meet goals, including exploring adult learner, out-of-state, and international student populations. Organizational structures and services should continue to be evaluated to ensure that they are meeting goals.

Chapter 5 addresses Middle States standards 10 and 6 (faculty and integrity). The faculty at Ramapo College is fully engaged in the curriculum and committed to student learning. The growth of the faculty has been a priority, illustrated by a significant increase in the number of full-time faculty—from 155 to 211 in the past ten years—and the creation of the Faculty Resource Center to promote teaching excellence, scholarship, and service. The college should continue to commit to the growth and development of faculty. Orientation, communication and governance should be evaluated and enhanced to serve the needs of newer faculty members.

Chapter 6 addresses Middle States standards 11, 12, and 14 (educational offerings, general education, and assessment of student learning). Ramapo College has committed to a culture of assessment, evidenced by the hiring of a Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment, regular program reviews, the incorporation of learning goals in all courses, and the use of assessment results for continuous improvement. The curriculum was revised in 2006, changing 3-credit courses to 4-credit courses, to achieve greater rigor and allow faculty more time for scholarship and service. The college should maintain a central location for assessment materials, outcomes and analyses and continue its efforts to implement an assessment plan for general education.

Chapter 7 addresses Middle States standard 13 (related educational activities). Ramapo College offers a number of programs and services that fall under the umbrella of “related educational activities.” Although somewhat independent of one another, as a whole they illustrate an abiding commitment to providing student-centered academic support and quality educational experiences that extend beyond the walls of a traditional classroom. Through tutoring and advisement services for under-prepared students, partnerships with outside entities such as the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission, certificate programs, distance learning, study abroad opportunities, and extensive opportunities for experiential learning, service learning, and community service, the college demonstrates its commitment to creating learning opportunities and learning communities that meet the needs of a diverse student body. The college should continue to seek ways to further infuse international education and experiential learning into the curriculum and overall student experience.
ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

An institution seeking initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation must affirm by completing this certification statement that it meets or continues to meet established MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, such as those on distance education and transfer of credit.

The signed statement should be attached to the executive summary of the institution’s self-study report. If it is not possible to certify compliance with all such requirements, the institution must attach specific details in a separate memorandum.

Ramapo College of New Jersey is seeking
___ Initial Accreditation  X  Reaffirmation of Accreditation

The undersigned hereby certify that the institution meets all established Requirements of Affiliation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, such as those on distance education and transfer of credit, and that it has complied with the MSCHE policy “Related Entities.”

___ Exceptions are noted in the attached memorandum (check if applicable)

[Signature]
(Chief Executive Officer)  (Date)

[Signature]
(Chair, Board of Trustees or Directors)  (Date)
INTRODUCTION

THE INSTITUTION

Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is due in part to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of about 5,800 students, and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains, near the New York border. Established in 1969, the 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, the 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 Commission on Higher Education first accredited Ramapo College in 1975 and reaccredited the college 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 New Jersey Board of Nursing), Social Work (Council on Social Work Education), and Teacher Education (New Jersey 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. The college boasts an average student/faculty ratio of 18:1 and an average class size of 23, affording students the opportunity to develop close ties with the college’s exceptional faculty.

The college’s mission is focused on the four pillars of a Ramapo education: international, intercultural, interdisciplinary and experiential learning, all of which are incorporated throughout the curriculum and co-curriculum. 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, cooperative learning, and service learning.

In recent years a campus-wide building program 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. (Excerpted from the Institutional Profile in the Excellence and Accountability Report, 2009)

Ramapo College has enjoyed a number of accolades over the years. While true affirmation comes from student success, the recognition of external bodies is indeed important in garnering a reputation that instills consumer confidence and contributes to recruitment efforts.

- The U.S. News & World Report 2010 edition of “America’s Best Colleges” ranked Ramapo number 5 in the North in the Top Public Universities-Master’s category. This is the third year the college received this distinction.

- Ramapo College was listed in the December 2008 issue of Kiplinger’s Personal Finance magazine as among the “100 Best Values in Public Colleges” for 2009. This is the fourth consecutive year the college has earned this distinction. Ramapo was ranked number 66 in the country, one of two New Jersey colleges in the Top 100.

- The Princeton Review’s 2008 edition of America’s Best Value Colleges includes Ramapo in its profile of 165 colleges chosen for their excellent academics, generous financial aid packages, and relatively low costs of attendance. In its narrative profile on Ramapo, The Princeton Review commended the school for “achieving a level of success in 37 years that some older colleges have yet to grasp.”
The John Templeton Foundation named Ramapo College to its Honor Roll for Character-Building Colleges, which recognizes institutions that emphasize character development as an integral aspect of the undergraduate experience. Colleges must exhibit a strong and inspiring campus-wide ethos that articulates the expectations of personal and civic responsibility in all dimensions of college life. Selection criteria include:

- The significant involvement and participation of faculty in forming and shaping the ideals and standards of personal and civic responsibility
- Evidence that a wide variety of programs exist to prepare students for lives of personal and civic responsibility
- The integration of personal and civic responsibility standards and activities into the core curriculum or areas of academic study
- External recognition or honors
- Procedures to assess effectiveness of campus-wide character-development programs.

THE PROCESS

As the Steering Committee reflected on the current realities and the approach it would take for the self-study, a compelling theme emerged: resiliency through change. Change is, of course, constant, not unique to Ramapo, and best managed if viewed as an opportunity. Nonetheless, these changes have had a significant impact on the college and provide a context for the challenges and achievements discussed in this self-study.

- Five presidents served the institution between 2000 and 2009: Scott, Chandler (interim), Smith, Pfeiffer (interim) and Mercer.
- Six different vice presidents for academic affairs/provosts served the institution between 2000 and 2009: Rubin, Crawley (interim), Cody (interim), Pfeiffer, Ecker (interim), Pfeiffer and Barnett.
- Three directors oversaw enrollment management between 2000 and 2009: Tepper, Goetz, and Ortegon. (With Ortegon’s recent departure, plans are underway to hire a fourth.)
- Forty-nine senior faculty members retired between 2000 and 2008. Since 2003, the college has added five new faculty lines every year; this has transformed the faculty cohort, with newer faculty representing more than half the total.
- The curriculum underwent a major change in fall 2006 with the implementation of the Curriculum Enhancement Plan.
- Several programs sought and received accreditation. The business school began the process for accreditation from the Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business in 2006; the teacher education program was accredited through the Teacher Education Accreditation Council in 2007; and the social work program received accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education in 2008. In 2007, the college took sole responsibility for the nursing program, which was previously offered jointly with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and received accreditation from the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission in 2008.
- The college has greatly expanded its physical facilities with the purchase of the Havemeyer House (official residence for the college president and family and venue for meetings, receptions, and fundraising events) in 2001; construction of four new residence halls/areas (Mackin Hall in 2000, The Village in 2003, Overlook in 2005, and Laurel Hall/the Loop Road/Parking Deck in 2007); renovation and expansion of the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center (2004; construction of a new academic building (Anisfield School of Business) in 2007); and construction of the Sharp Sustainability Education Center and Salameno Spiritual Center, both scheduled to open by fall 2010.
• The college has shifted from “primarily residential” (defined as 25% to 49% of degree-seeking undergraduates living on campus) to “highly residential” (more than 50% living on campus).

• In 2002 Ramapo revised its mission and, to help realize its mission, created a strategic plan, which was updated in 2007.

• State funding dropped from 43.4% of the operating budget in Fiscal Year 2000 to 26.8% of the operating budget in Fiscal Year 2009.

Upon agreeing that a comprehensive self-study was most appropriate, the Steering Committee identified four major goals that would guide its work:

1. To present an accurate assessment of Ramapo College which documents how the college meets the fourteen “Characteristics of Excellence” and which serves as a tool for institutional planning, change, and growth.

2. To further emphasize the centrality of the college’s revised strategic plan and to make that plan a “living document.”

3. To reflect on the natural tension between the college's liberal arts mission and its commitment to professional programs.

4. To assess the impact upon the institution of significant changes in leadership, curriculum, administration, and funding.

To achieve this, the Steering Committee grouped together certain standards that were most linked to one another and formed seven different study groups, co-chaired by members of the Steering Committee. Because of the significance and applicability of integrity to all aspects of the study, it was agreed that this standard should be addressed by each of the study groups, rather than standing alone. Discussion of integrity appears most prominently, identified in headings in italics, in Chapters 1 (Mission, Leadership, and Governance), 4 (Students) and 5 (Faculty). Given the recent revision of the college’s strategic plan, its prominence in all aspects of institutional planning, and the Self-Study goal of making the plan a “living document,” each study group conducted its research and prepared its chapter within the context of the strategic plan and its guiding principles and major goals. Although one could argue that all of the guiding principles and major goals of the strategic plan can be intertwined with each of the Middle States Standards and their principle elements, the Steering Committee chose those aspects of Ramapo’s strategic plan (be it principles or goals) that were most relevant to the standards and highlighted them at the beginning of each chapter. Additionally, included in chapters 4 through 7 are “mini profiles” which offer specific examples of how the middle states standards are put into practice.
CHAPTER 1

MISSION, LEADERSHIP, AND GOVERNANCE
STANDARDS 1, 4, 5, AND 6
CHAPTER 1

MISSION, LEADERSHIP, AND GOVERNANCE
STANDARDS 1, 4, 5, AND 6

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
(Ramapo College Strategic Plan 2007-2012, p. 7)

- All strategic goals and objectives must be consistent with the role of providing a high-quality comprehensive education based on the liberal arts, with particular emphasis on international education; intercultural understanding; interdisciplinary curricula, perspectives, and analysis; and experiential learning.

- All strategic goals and objectives must be consistent with the College mission and vision and the primacy of facilitating student learning while also taking into account the needs and interests of faculty, staff, alumni, and the local, state, and global communities.

- All strategic goals and objectives must be consistent with infusing inclusive excellence into the campus environment, fostering diversity, encouraging the dignified and respectful treatment of others, and promoting engaged citizenship.

- All strategic goals and objectives must be consistent with the commitment to environmental, social, and economic sustainability by the College.

- All strategic goals and objectives must be defined in such a way that progress and fiscal soundness can be assessed.

- All strategic goals and objectives must be defined and pursued with transparency, collegiality, and open communication.

STANDARD 1: MISSION AND GOALS

The institution’s mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates whom the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education, clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are used to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

THE CONTEXT

Ramapo College has changed dramatically over its nearly 40 years. Since the last self-study, in 2000, the college has revised its mission; created and subsequently revised a far-reaching and comprehensive strategic plan (2002 and 2007); enhanced the curriculum and changed courses from three credits to four credits (2006); constructed and renovated residence, recreational, and classroom buildings; changed from being primarily commuter to primarily residential; and attracted a larger and better-prepared student body. Although the college’s curriculum remains grounded in the liberal arts, its mission has evolved over the past decade. The most recent changes occurred in 2002, when the mission statement was revised as part of the development of the strategic plan, titled Enhancing Institutional Excellence (2002-2012). The revised mission statement acknowledges the emergence of professional and graduate programs and the change in the college’s classification from liberal arts to comprehensive, but maintains the centrality of a strong liberal arts curriculum. The revised statement also acknowledges that four pillars—interdisciplinary curriculum, international education, intercultural understanding, and experiential learning—
are central to the mission, and places greater emphasis on the college’s vision of creating a learning community that promotes diversity, sustainability, and civic engagement.

When President Mercer arrived in 2005, Ramapo College was emerging from a period of relative instability, yet it was a time in which there was a remarkable sense of campus unity, which had been forged during the presidential search process (see State Commission of Investigation Report, 2007 available in the Resource Room). Dr. Mercer previously served as dean of the law school and then as vice president (administration) and general counsel at the University of Western Ontario, where he was professor of law. He was drawn to the mission and sense of community at Ramapo College:

Ramapo College has been...a very welcoming community, and at this early stage that is my most powerful impression. It is one that I hope all can experience who join this community, and it will be important to me as President to help foster the conditions which enhance that prospect. (State of the College Address, 2005)

In May 2006 President Mercer devoted his inaugural address to the topic, “The Enduring Value of a Liberal Education,” affirming his appreciation of the college’s mission and vision of itself. In that address, he reflected on his own experience with a liberal arts education and how that experience shaped who he is and how he sees the world. He concluded that address as follows:

What does this mean for Ramapo College and for my role as your President? Ramapo College is New Jersey’s Public Liberal Arts College. We must continue to assert what we and our students and graduates and indeed our Governor and legislators know to be true: a liberal arts education is the very weave of a strong social fabric, not its embroidered border, and we must offer public education which makes it possible for qualified New Jersey students to fulfill their educational and societal potential.

MISSION
Ramapo College Mission Statement (adopted 2002)

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, including 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.

The academic programs of the college are organized into five schools, the thematic learning communities referred to in the mission: American and International Studies, Anisfield School of Business, Contemporary Arts, Social Science and Human Services and Theoretical and Applied Science. These schools, or “units,” house major and minor programs, organized into convening groups. Thus there are no traditional departments or divisions.

Ramapo’s effort to fulfill its mission has been enhanced by the college’s transformation to a residential campus. This transformation has had a significant impact on many facets of the college, both in and out of the classroom. Having more residents contributes to the vibrancy of campus life, as students who live on campus are more likely to engage in co-curricular activities and seek support services, particularly in the evenings and on weekends. This demographic change also places a greater demand on many campus offices and services. Operating hours for the library, computer labs, dining services, fitness facilities, meeting rooms, recreational spaces, and some support services have been expanded to accommodate increased usage.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN AS IT RELATES TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF MISSION AND GOALS

Ramapo College created and subsequently revised its strategic plan since the last self-study. In 2002, then-President Smith charged thirteen task forces and special ad hoc committees with conducting “a broad-based institutional analysis of all academic, administrative, and support units throughout the college” (*Enhancing Institutional Excellence*, 2002). In addition, the president appointed a Blue Ribbon Commission in spring 2002, chaired by former Interim President Chandler, to review all administrative personnel and all non-academic, non-student intensive programs and services that were viewed as not cost-effective, with the goal of making recommendations that would lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness. These recommendations informed the strategic plan and provided the impetus for placing a greater emphasis on teaching and learning and conducting a further analysis of institutional effectiveness and administrative structure. The analyses led to important actions, including a commitment to add faculty lines and the reorganization of certain service units (Financial Aid, Admissions, Registrar, and Advisement) under the umbrella of Enrollment Management.

The strategic plan adopted in 2002 required annual reviews and revisions at five-year intervals. The decision to update the 2002 plan stemmed from an analysis of whether existing goals were attainable and measurable. The original plan listed twenty-two long-range goals in no order of priority, with outcomes that were difficult to assess. In fall 2005, shortly after the arrival of President Mercer, the college conducted a review of the progress toward these goals and determined that 50% had been accomplished. This assessment led to the president’s decision to “refresh” the existing plan.

The refreshed plan was drafted by the Strategic Planning Task Force, which was chaired by President Mercer and consisted of broad representation from the college (list of task force members appended). The task force began its work by reviewing the original plan with the intention of creating a shorter document that would reflect Ramapo College’s traditions while providing clear strategic direction. The task force presented its draft document to the community and solicited feedback through open forums and meetings with constituency groups. College members were encouraged to e-mail comments directly to the president. The task force incorporated much of the community feedback into the final document, which the Board of Trustees approved in December 2007.

The building blocks of the *Ramapo College Strategic Plan 2007-2012* are a vision statement, guiding principles, major goals, and specific objectives. The vision statement asserts that Ramapo aspires to be “…the premier public
college in the greater New Jersey/New York metropolitan area providing a high quality education across programs whose curricula are founded on a commitment to the liberal arts.” This vision statement creates the foundation on which the goals of the Plan are built. The six guiding principles, listed at the beginning of this chapter, are basic underlying assumptions. The three major goals—enhancing academic excellence, investing in the future, and enriching college life and community presence—are general statements of strategic direction. While the goals of future strategic plans may vary, the principles are likely to be retained. The objectives enumerated under each goal are specific enough to assess progress but not so detailed that they dictate the way each unit will approach its pursuit of the strategic goals.

The focus on student learning and the purposeful integration of planning, budgeting, and assessment are hallmarks of the Plan. The goals and objectives of units and divisions must be specific, measurable, and aligned with the major goals and objectives of the Plan, ensuring that they are central in all programs and activities. Budget requests are likewise aligned with the goals of the Plan, and funding is contingent upon demonstrated outcomes.

Indicators of the college’s progress in achieving its mission and goals are contained in the 2008 Institutional Profile. The Profile displays information on enrollment growth, 4- and 6-year graduation rates, retention, net assets, etc. This information is presented to the Board of Trustees and the college community to demonstrate Ramapo’s year-to-year progress toward achieving its goals and to provide a measure for comparison to peer and aspirant schools. The primary indicators include number of full-time faculty, resources, faculty-to-student ratio, retention and graduation rates, and ethnicity of students and faculty. The college uses these measures to determine what actions should be taken to further its goals. For example, a comparison of the number of full-time faculty at Ramapo versus peer and aspirant institutions revealed that Ramapo’s complement was comparatively low. Therefore, President Smith in 2003 made increasing the size of the faculty a priority. President Mercer continued this effort by committing to five additional faculty lines per year until specific benchmarks are met. This has resulted in forty-two new faculty lines as of fall 2008.

**STANDARD 4: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE**

The institution’s system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

**STANDARD 5: ADMINISTRATION**

The institution’s administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution’s organization and governance.

**STANDARD 6: INTEGRITY**

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

**THE CONTEXT**

As indicated in the college’s 2005 Middle States Periodic Review Report (available in the Resource Room), significant changes in leadership occurred at the college in the preceding five years, with five presidents (including interim positions) and five senior academic officers. President Mercer arrived in 2005 and Provost Barnett in 2006. Leadership and structural changes also have occurred in the Division of Administration and Finance and more recently in the Division of Student Affairs. Changes in senior leadership create both opportunities and challenges as new administrative structures emerge, new relationships are forged, and plans are revised, refreshed, or replaced.
During this period of change, the college has demonstrated remarkable resiliency, evidenced by 1) a revised curriculum, 2) a change in administrative structure, 3) the growth in enrollment and overall improvement of the student academic profile, 4) the renovation and construction of facilities, 5) the revision of the strategic plan, and, 6) an integrated approach to planning, budgeting, and assessment.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ramapo College is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the governor of New Jersey. The board holds general supervision over and is vested with the conduct of the college. Members are appointed for their expertise and relevant experience. Up to eleven trustees may be appointed in this manner. A student trustee, interviewed and screened by a committee of peers and selected by the Student Government Association, also sits on the board and has full voting rights, with the exception of personnel decisions. The board has ultimate responsibility for all college personnel, policy, and fiscal decisions as well as for selecting and evaluating the president. The president and board maintain an open line of communication and the president meets monthly with the board chair to discuss college activities and statewide issues.

The makeup of the board has changed significantly since 2000. Between 2003 and 2005, nearly three-fourths of the membership changed, creating a period of transition. While greater continuity has been established, two seats remain vacant and three board members whose terms have expired continue to serve while awaiting further direction from the state. The college has had very little influence in getting the state to address the expired terms or fill the vacancies.

New trustees participate in an informal training with the president and current board members. During this half-day session, they are oriented to the duties and responsibilities of the position. Trustees also receive a copy of the board’s Policies and Procedures Manual and the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities Trustees’ Reference Guide. Board members are encouraged to attend the association’s seminars for trustees, which cover topics such as Sunshine Law regulations and the annual National Conference on Trusteeship offered by the Association of Governing boards of Universities and Colleges. In addition to the regular board meetings during the year, the president establishes half- or full-day retreats to address specific issues, such as the budget or planning for the coming year. These retreats allow for extensive discussion of specific issues and usually involve the presence of other senior administrators of the college.

The board holds six formal meetings per year and committee meetings focused on particular areas, such as human resources, academic and student affairs, capital improvements, institutional advancement and alumni affairs, and finance, as well as audit committee and ad hoc committees created by the board to serve a specific purpose. Full board meetings are open to the public, and members of the audience are invited to comment on agenda items and board actions. Before agenda items are introduced for a full board vote, matters are discussed at committee meetings. Board members, the president, the provost, and vice presidents sit on the committees, along with representatives from the administration, Faculty Assembly, the Professional Staff Association, and the Student Government Association. College personnel, such as members of the President’s Cabinet, attend board meetings, present reports, and serve as resources.

THE PRESIDENT

The president is designated the chief executive officer of the college and is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the college. The provost, vice presidents, chief planning officer, internal auditor, affirmative action officer and ombudsperson all report to him directly. The president is also the administrative liaison to the Board of Trustees, as evidenced by his designated status as ex-officio, non-voting member of the board.

When President Mercer began his tenure at the college, he sought to establish open lines of communication and to meet with the various constituencies across campus. He addressed each faculty unit council, attended division and unit staff meetings, and met with student leaders in order to get a sense of the community. From these discussions,
he learned that people at Ramapo were extremely engaged and eager to be a part of the planning process, but that there were few formal opportunities for communication with the administration, across divisions, and even within specific constituency groups. Based on this careful assessment, the president identified several action items intended to move the college forward in achieving its goals: revising the strategic plan, creating an integrated planning process, facilitating a greater and broader involvement in governance, increasing transparency, and enhancing communication.

In addition to leading the process for revising the strategic plan, outlined earlier in this chapter, the president instituted several initiatives to achieve the aforementioned goals.

Quarterly communications meetings, one with support staff and one with managerial and professional staff, were established in fall 2007 to improve communication and increase transparency. The vice president for institutional advancement convenes these meetings and the president often leads the discussion. The meetings are structured to address particular staff groups so that people can speak freely about concerns regarding their own units as well as campus-wide matters. The meetings are designed to provide pertinent and timely information and to answer questions posed directly or submitted anonymously on index cards. Topics have included budget and planning efforts, the managerial evaluation process, the college's Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, and state-mandated furloughs.

In March 2008, the president hired a consultant to facilitate discussions on how Ramapo could support new revenue-raising ventures that bring external groups to campus. The president also charged the consultant with identifying internal challenges to greater communication. Ninety-six faculty and staff members participated in small-group discussions that generated a list of communications ideas. This list underscored the importance of the quarterly communications meetings and identified the need for a recognition program for administrators and staff that parallel existing faculty awards. This recognition program has been instituted and is discussed later in this chapter.

A Daily Digest, an electronic newsletter introduced in April 2008, offers centralized written communications regarding campus programs and events and policy changes or approvals. The Digest, sent to all faculty, staff, and student e-mail accounts, also alerts the community to activities that directly impact them, such as technology upgrades and power shutdowns.

In fall 2008, the president formed a Constituent Assembly. This group includes representatives from all three unions (AFT for faculty and professional staff, CWA for support staff, IPFTE for trades, public safety, and housekeeping), the Professional Staff Association, the Ramapo College Foundation Board of Governors, faculty, undergraduate students, graduate students, and alumni. The Constituent Assembly convenes periodically to discuss substantive issues and concerns affecting the college and its constituent groups. The president also meets separately with the major constituent organizations and/or their leadership as needed or requested.

The Campus Communications Web site is a recent initiative that ties together information and outcomes related to many of the previously mentioned activities. It provides a single location for accessing critical information and announcements. The Campus Communications Web site includes links to the President’s Blog, key publications, programs and offices, and information about new hires and promotions.

In fall 2008, the president established the President’s Staff Recognition Program to recognize excellence and extraordinary effort demonstrated by Ramapo College employees. A committee, chaired by the special assistant to the president, reviewed the forty-nine nominations and, at the June 2009 Board of Trustees meeting, formally recognized three individuals and one unit for their leadership and service.

The president also has continued the tradition of meeting with student leaders. He meets biweekly with the president and vice president of the Student Government Association, and at least twice a semester he and the cabinet meet with the Student Leaders Coalition (comprised of the leaders of the major umbrella organizations and media groups) to discuss developments and substantive issues that impact students.
In addition, the president has used his “open door policy” to enhance communication and maintain relationships with the three unions, the Professional Staff Association, the Student Government Association, the Faculty Assembly, and the deans. The president typically meets with leaders of these groups at least monthly to discuss pressing issues or further explain policy decisions.

The president prepares an annual self-assessment, which includes a statement on the state of the college that is presented to the board. The president requests annual reports from the provost and vice presidents and includes elements of these reports in the assessment package as well. The president reviews the division goals with each vice president and incorporates these goals into his overall statement of college goals. The board meets with the president to review progress made over the past year and to discuss goals and recommendations for the future.

**THE PRESIDENT’S CABINET**

The President’s Cabinet, the senior administrative body of the college, aids the president in decision-making. According to its mission:

> The Cabinet meets weekly to discuss campus issues and initiatives, decisions being considered, policies and procedures, and items of importance to the well-being and advancement of the college. Cabinet members provide advice and counsel to the President, assisting him/her in making decisions that align with the College’s Strategic Plan ([President’s Web site](#)).

Members of the cabinet are responsible for reporting on the areas they oversee and relaying institutional decisions through their direct reports.

**THE PROVOST**

The Ramapo College Office of the Provost was established in 2002. The office has evolved over the years, often in response to internal needs and the desire to improve assessment and transparency in academic decision-making. The provost governance model emphasizes the centrality of student learning and the responsibility of all units for meeting the outlined student learning goals. This model was first proposed in the Chandler Blue Ribbon Commission Report (available on the visiting team Web site), partly to increase effectiveness and efficiency and partly to “match the level of expenditures and resources to the identified priorities of the College and its mission” ([Chandler Commission Report](#), Spring 2002, p. B5). Several reorganizations and changes in reporting lines over recent years have furthered this model. In addition to Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, Information Technology Services, and the Center for Innovative and Professional Learning all report to the provost.

In 2006, the provost created two standing councils. The Graduate Council deals with issues regarding the development and maintenance of Ramapo’s graduate programs. The Provost Council deals with broad academic policies. In addition, there is a Deans’ Council, which focuses primarily on academic planning and operations issues, policy implementation, and resource distribution. The provost also meets regularly with the Faculty Assembly Executive Council and reports at meetings of the Board of Trustees and the Faculty Assembly.

**THE FACULTY**

The faculty governance structure has changed significantly in recent years. The Faculty Assembly Executive Council was established in 2007 to serve as a representative faculty voice. Members of the Executive Council, who are elected by the Faculty Assembly, include representatives from each academic unit including the library. The Faculty Assembly Executive Council meets regularly with the president and provost to exchange ideas and communicate on current issues. It also does preliminary work and sets the agenda for the full Faculty Assembly meetings so that discussions there can focus on broad issues and substantive topics. The Faculty Assembly is organized so that curricular changes move from the convening groups and schools to the Academic Review Committee and then directly to the Faculty Assembly (see Faculty Assembly and Academic Review Committee bylaws, available in the Resource Room). The Academic Review Committee was created in 2002 as a single committee that replaced four previous committees. This change represented both a consolidation of faculty...
responsibilities and an expansion of faculty oversight of the curriculum. The multi-committee system, which was filled with redundancies, made it difficult to track oversight of curriculum and academic policy.

Ramapo also has moved toward a more conventional process for selecting deans, another significant change in faculty leadership and governance. Until recently, deans were elected from the faculty of each school, serving up to two three-year terms. Currently, deans may be recruited from within the faculty or through an external search and can be retained for renewable terms.

THE STAFF

Ramapo’s professional, support, and service staffs play a vital role at the college, serving as the backbone for all programs and services. Perhaps unique to an institution of Ramapo’s size and age, staff members are especially engaged in the mission and goals of the institution and work closely and collaboratively with faculty and students. Governance among the staff is not as formal as with the faculty, given the different levels and types of staff on campus and the fact that they do not vote on policy. Nonetheless, staff members participate in formal organizations, both professional and union, to ensure their participation in governance and decision making. The Professional Staff Association focuses on education, support, and advocacy. The three major unions that serve faculty/professional staff (AFT), support staff (CWA), and public safety/trades staff (IPFTE) provide information, advice, and advocacy. Staff members also sit on all-college committees and the Constituent Assembly, and are represented at meetings of the Board of Trustees and its committees.

THE STUDENTS

Ramapo’s students have a voice in governance primarily through the Board of Trustees, the Student Leaders Coalition, and the Student Government Association. A student sits as a full member on the Board of Trustees and on all board committees. The Student Leaders Coalition, comprised of leaders of the major umbrella and media organizations, meets at least twice a semester with the President’s Cabinet to raise questions and concerns and discuss substantive issues. The Student Government Association meets weekly to discuss activities and concerns, develop initiatives to benefit students, and pass legislation. Furthermore, elected senators and/or designated liaisons of the Student Government Association meet regularly with specific unit administrators to discuss topics of interest and concern and then report back to the general body or their constituents.

ADMINISTRATION

The mission statement and major goals of the strategic plan – enhancing academic excellence, investing in the future, and enriching college life and community presence – guide the administration. Administrative structures and reporting lines, as illustrated in the college’s organizational chart, are reviewed annually and revised as the institution evolves and priorities shift.

Under the direction of the president, the administration is organized into four divisions, each overseen by the provost or a vice president. The divisions are Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, Institutional Advancement, and Student Affairs. Managers oversee units and areas that fall within each of these divisions. Specific units develop policies and procedures based on standards and practices developed by applicable professional organizations and the expertise of unit and division heads. The responsible vice president or associate vice president must approve policies and procedures for the division and bring to the President’s Cabinet for approval those that have significant and broad impact on the college. In some cases, formal approval by the Board of Trustees is required. Human resources policies, the college’s code of conduct, and all board-approved policies are posted on the college Web site.

The college seeks to hire faculty and staff who are well qualified, with the credentials and experience necessary to achieve the strategic goals of enhancing academic excellence, investing in the future, and enriching college life and community presence. This is accomplished through formal job descriptions that include educational and experience requirements and rigorous search and selection processes. Resources and ongoing workshops offered
by the Faculty Resource Center, Human Resources, and the Instructional Design Center provide faculty and staff with opportunities to further their skills in pedagogy, technology, and management, as well as familiarize them with policies and procedures that impact their work. A commitment to additional faculty lines, the change in course load and added flex unit, and ongoing faculty development (discussed more fully in Chapter 5) ensure that Ramapo continues to support student learning, research, and scholarship.

The employee assessment processes help the college improve administrative operations and provide employees with feedback and opportunities for development. Employees generally fall into one of two broad categories, union and non-union, and within these categories are classified, unclassified, and managerial employees. The evaluation and assessment process is different for each type of employee. For managers, the evaluation process is also a reappointment process, since managers are generally given one-year contracts, while the contract length for AFT professionals is governed by negotiated contract. After an initial five-year phase of single-year contracts, long-term AFT employees currently can be awarded multi-year appointments. The performance appraisal process has been integrated with the planning process so that individual goals are tied to unit, division, and institutional goals.

**THE EVOLUTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

Over the last five years, internal and external forces have led to significant changes in the administrative structure of the college. The state of New Jersey continues to reduce funding for higher education. Striving for a balanced budget, the college identifies expenditures that can be significantly reduced and opportunities for revenue-generating initiatives to build on current Ramapo strengths. Internally, the college has moved to a process that formally links planning, budgeting, and assessment, with the strategic plan at its center. The focus on strategic advancement within a context of finite resources prompted a shift in institutional priorities. At the same time, retirements in senior level positions provided an opportunity for Ramapo to review its administrative structures in light of the three strategic goals.

Using the organizational chart from 2003 as a benchmark, the most noticeable changes have been the reorganization of the Division of Administration and Finance and the development of the Provost model of governance. After a leadership change in the Division of Administration and Finance, the senior title was changed from vice president of administration and finance to Chief Planning Officer. The need for a senior position to drive a systematic and strategic approach to resource allocation grew out of the refreshed strategic plan, and the new title underscores the importance of planning. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP) moved from Academic Affairs to Administration and Finance to reflect the importance of institutional data in decisions regarding resource allocation. With both the Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning and OIRP reporting to the Chief Planning Officer, a formal planning, budgeting, and assessment process was created and implemented in 2008.

In June 2009, following the retirements of the vice president for student affairs and the dean of students, the reporting lines for the Division of Student Affairs changed. To strengthen the link between the curriculum and co-curriculum and to further acknowledge the centrality of student learning, Student Affairs, along with Academic Affairs, now reports to the provost and is led by two associate vice presidents.

To better serve students, academic support units with related services have been grouped together under one major unit. The Enrollment Management unit, which previously included Admissions and Financial Aid, was expanded to include the Registrar, the Graduation Office, academic advisement, placement testing, and first-year experience. An associate vice president who reports directly to the provost oversees the Enrollment Management unit. Academic advisement, placement testing, and first-year experience were combined under one director for the purpose of increasing retention and graduation rates. Combining these areas also allows the college to share data and better evaluate the effect of policy changes on important institutional indicators.

There have been other organizational and reporting changes involving marketing and communications, events and conferences, technology and media services, contracted services, public safety, business continuity, and innovative and professional learning that are discussed elsewhere in this self-study and/or reflected in the changes in the organizational chart.
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

Under the aegis of the chief planning officer, the college convenes an Institutional Effectiveness Committee with broad campus representation. The committee evaluates requests from academic and administrative areas to fund strategic initiatives that are not considered part of regular operating expenses. Requests are submitted through a process that links budgeting, planning, assessment, and annual reports. The committee analyzes the requests based on their alignment with the strategic plan and the existence of measurable outcomes. Continued funding of a unit objective is not a given. Instead, each year units must reassess their rolling plans and report on the progress made toward achieving articulated goals. Tools to assess achievement include internal surveys, focus groups, student surveys, employee questionnaires, and national benchmarks. Funding may be shifted based on the success of the original initiatives and competing priorities.

The college established the Position Review Committee to review requests for all new and replacement positions other than faculty lines. The committee helps the college address two priorities: allocating financial resources efficiently and making the best use of human resources (Position Review Committee Policy and Procedures in the Appendix). Unit supervisors seeking to fill a vacated position or create a new one must present a proposal to the committee with substantial data supporting the need for the position. The committee conducts a thorough analysis of existing and potential staff positions, goals and priorities of the college, and available resources in order to enact institutional staffing decisions based on qualitative and quantitative data. As a result of this centralized review, many positions were eliminated and those lines reallocated to higher priority areas. In FY 2007, the approximate savings in salary was $612,000. (Position Review Committee Summary, 2007)

The Budget Committee is the standing committee that monitors the allocation of resources throughout the year. The committee allocates resources “based on ongoing planning linked to [the college] mission and strategic goals.” The committee is committed to achieving these objectives by using “the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal and continuous improvement.” (Principles of Budget Development in the Appendix)

The Space Allocation Committee is a standing committee that makes decisions about space allocation and usage in the context of the college’s mission and strategic plan, “keeping in mind budget and sustainability” (Space Allocation Form). The committee was charged with creating a transparent and equitable process for reviewing requests and making recommendations to the president’s cabinet (Space Allocation Committee policies, application, and membership list on the visiting team Web site). A recent example of a positive outcome from this process was the relocation of the Graduation Office and reconfiguration of the Counseling Center space. This resulted in the Graduation Office being on a main hallway and closer to linked units (Registrar and Advisement Center) and afforded Counseling Services required additional space and a more private entrance for students seeking counseling services.

The Information Technology Services Steering Committee takes an “approach that will be especially valuable when mediating technology conflicts in priorities and/or departmental perspectives that may not be in the best interest of Ramapo College” (Information Technology Services Steering Committee Mission Statement). As with the aforementioned committees, this provides a centralized process for making decisions that are aligned with the college’s mission and the strategic plan. This process has helped the college realize savings since units that were purchasing technology independently were not always benefiting from contracted or group pricing that would be accomplished by purchasing through the steering committee. In some cases the steering committee was able to advise the unit on alternative technology that would both meet the needs of the requesting unit and save the college money.

All of these committees, which report directly to either the chief planning officer or the provost, are vehicles for managing the critical resources of the college – human, financial, physical, and technological – effectively and efficiently. (For further discussion, see Chapter 3).
ETHICS IN GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION (Integrity)

The Uniform Ethics Code published by the New Jersey State Ethics Commission is the primary code of ethics for Ramapo College. In compliance with this code, the college distributes to all employees the Plain Language Guide, the Mandatory Ethics Briefing, and the Outside Activity Questionnaire. Furthermore, the ethics liaison officer must review and approve employee requests to attend external events to ensure that there is no conflict of interest with outside sponsors/vendors and state employees. Faculty, who are exempt from the events approval requirement, are governed by the Scholarly Capacity Rule. Under this rule, they report their activities/benefits annually on the College and University Disclosure Form. Each member of the Board of Trustees files a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form, and the president files an annual Financial Disclosure Statement. In addition, specific employees with purchasing and contracting responsibilities annually file the Personal and Financial Disclosure Form. All of these forms are filed with the State Ethics Commission.

The Board of Trustees has adopted policies regarding the Code of Professional Responsibility, nepotism, and reporting financial and other irregularities (also known as the “whistleblower” policy, which is administered by the Audit Committee of the board and the college’s internal auditor). Integrity and ethical conduct are monitored, reviewed, and adjudicated in a variety of venues, including through the ethics liaison officer, the State Ethics Commission, the Board of Trustees Audit Committee, the internal auditor, the ombudsperson, the affirmative action officer, and the Department of Human Resources.

The board has been proactive in the area of ethics. Ethics is a major public issue in New Jersey, and in October 2007 the State Commission of Investigation published a report on public higher education. This extensive audit and investigation found Ramapo College to be without violation and free of tawdry practices found at other institutions. The college and the board, however, have not rested on their laurels. The chair of the board’s Audit Committee, along with the college’s ethics liaison officer, has conducted several workshops on campus regarding ethics in practice. Compliance with conflict-of-interest reporting and disclosure requirements is thorough, with a report rate of 100% in 2008-09.

FINDINGS OF THE SELF-STUDY

ACHIEVEMENTS

• Revised mission and developed a vision statement
• Revised strategic plan, allowing mission to be implemented in more assessable ways
• Reorganized the administrative structure to strengthen the focus on student learning and operationally link budget to planning and assessment
• Reorganized faculty governance, creating the Academic Review Committee and the Faculty Assembly Executive Council
• Expanded efforts to improve communication

CHALLENGES

• Maintaining mission in a context of declining state support
• Maintaining morale in a time of change
• Maintaining open lines of communication as leadership changes and governance structures evolve
RECOMMENDATIONS

• Continue discussions of curricula founded on a commitment to the liberal arts and assess all programs in light of this vision.

• Develop a process for reviewing new program proposals to emphasize alignment with mission.

• Given the considerable responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, provide greater and more formal training for new members.

• Assess faculty governance structure and revise as needed to meet the needs of a larger faculty with more new members.
CHAPTER 2

PLANNING AND RESOURCES
STANDARDS 2 AND 3

GOAL 2: INVESTING IN THE FUTURE
(Ramapo College Strategic Plan, p. 9)

The College will strive to increase and diversify its revenues to provide the human and material resources needed to deliver high-quality programs and services.

- Objective 2.1: The College will operate all units efficiently and effectively in administration, communication, practices, and use and provision of human and material resources.

- Objective 2.2: The College will actively seek initiatives, consistent with the College mission, that generate revenue.

- Objective 2.3: The College will identify the strategic initiatives for which funding support will be sought from the College Foundation.

- Objective 2.4: The College will develop financial decision-making models to address management of assets and debts.

THE CONTEXT

The term “public college” is perceived by the general public to mean that substantial support is received from the state legislature as part of its commitment to creating a highly educated workforce and citizenry. However, state funding for higher education in New Jersey has diminished as the state faces increasing budget demands and declining revenues. State funding represented 26.8% of Ramapo College revenues in 2009, compared with 43.4% in 2000.

The college balanced its 2009-10 budget with the help of stimulus funding (which came with the condition of a 3% cap on tuition increase), but state budget deficits are likely to be a persistent challenge given economic conditions, the reluctance to raise taxes, and continuing demand for high levels of service from state government. Recognizing this financial reality, the college must focus its resources on its highest priority goals: those outlined in the strategic plan.

From the time President Scott left the college in 2000 to the time President Mercer arrived in 2005, the process of institutional planning and budgeting was incremental. Goals for each unit of the college were approved through a decentralized process based in the academic and administrative divisions. The president reviewed annual reports prepared by the units and then shared plans with the Board of Trustees. Budgets increased as needed to cover inflation, the cost of negotiated contracts and other salaries, and a few new initiatives. The college carried out cost-cutting initiatives and raised tuition and other fees to cover shortfalls.

During President Smith’s tenure (2001-04), the Board of Trustees approved a new ten-year strategic plan. Despite its complexity and diversity, the college experienced many positive achievements as a result of the Plan. Enrollment grew more than 4%, twenty-two additional full-time faculty members were hired, and the curriculum received a complete overhaul. The college purchased a new home for the president and constructed several new non-academic facilities, including the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center, The Village residences (524 beds), Laurel Hall
(432 beds), and the Overlook (295 beds). A new academic building, the Anisfield School of Business, was approved during that period and opened in 2007.

Reflecting upon what he found when he arrived at Ramapo, President Mercer determined that the strategic plan was too unwieldy and somewhat outdated, so in 2006 he convened a representative group to update and refine it. The president demonstrated the importance of the task when he personally chaired the group and committed a significant amount of time to its work. This new plan, approved by the Board of Trustees in December 2007, became the basis for all college planning, with the allocation of resources tied to its goals and objectives. This decision, at this point in time, has proven to be critically important, as state support for Ramapo continued to decline while costs increased. In addition, the state’s demographics portended difficulty in the college’s plan to attract a growing share of well-prepared students without an increase in scholarship support.

The move to a centralized approach to planning, requiring that each unit of the college focus its activities on the priorities of the strategic plan, was not initially met with total enthusiasm, as it was understood that resources would be more centrally allocated (and reallocated) and that priorities would be finally decided at levels above unit directors. But significant efforts were made to educate the entire community and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning conducted training sessions on the completion of annual reports for every unit director. The sessions were designed to ensure unit directors were aware of the ways in which ongoing work might be connected to the strategic plan’s priorities and to encourage discussions that might generate creative solutions to the challenges facing the college. Furthermore, at the suggestion of the president, the college dedicated 2% of its annual operating budget to support strategic initiatives. This ensures that even in difficult times the institution will continue to move forward strategically. Despite predictable state cuts to higher education over the past two years, the college maintained its commitment to directing 2% of the operating budget to Strategic Priority Incentive Funding. This amounted to approximately $2 million in Fiscal Year 2009. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee reviews all requests for Strategic Priority Incentive Funding and scores them based on established criteria before making recommendations for funding to the President’s Cabinet (see Chapter 3 for further discussion).

**STANDARD 2: PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL RENEWAL**

An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of the assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.

At Ramapo, various constituencies of the college are involved in campus planning, resource allocation, and renewal. These groups—which include the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, students, alumni, the Foundation, and the larger local community—often engage in matters beyond those that directly affect them and feel ownership of the larger enterprise. In Ramapo’s early history, the shared experience of building the college inspired many large group discussions as major planning and resource-allocation decisions were made. As the college grew and matured, individual units operated more independently, but there remains an abiding need to know where the college is going and how it will get there.

The allocation process was decentralized and not as transparent as it could have been. This combination led some to question whether the planning process led to an equitable allocation of resources. While the decentralized process served the college well in some ways during a period of growth, the results of that process were not always well understood. In 2008, the college implemented a coordinated process to improve its allocation of resources. The process makes the allocation more equitable and helps the community understand the method of connecting priorities in the strategic plan to the development of a college-wide budget.

The president, an avid supporter of the need for focused college-wide planning, met with each unit on campus to provide information about the new planning process and to answer questions from those who were beginning to use it. The planning process begins at the unit level, where goals and outcomes are reviewed annually and requests are
made on a three-year cycle. These reviews lead to appropriate revisions and inform planning and budget requests. Actual funding is done yearly, as revenues cannot be accurately projected on a multi-year basis because the state does not budget on a multi-year cycle and tuition and fee increases are approved on a yearly basis. Each element for which funding is sought must be connected to the major goals of the strategic plan as well as its more specific objectives. This process “closes the assessment loop” whereby assessment of goals and outcomes leads to planning, which leads to funding and implementation and ultimately back to assessment.

As of its creation in 2006, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee reviews budgets and unit plans and uses the budget request and rolling three-year plans to systematically assess the goals and objectives of each unit and inform the President’s Cabinet of the progress being made toward achieving the goals in the strategic plan. In September 2008, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning compiled all unit planning information in a database. An assessment of measurable objectives for Fiscal Year 2009, completed at the end of the fiscal year, was included in unit/division annual reports to be used in the planning and strategic budget requests for the next fiscal year. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee documents its work on an accessible Web site, making the process as transparent as possible. (A fuller discussion of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee appears in Chapter 3.)

Although the current planning process is fairly new, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee is assessing its effectiveness (in addition to assessing the achievement of goals and objectives of each unit). Many improvements have already been made as units were encouraged to critique the process, the forms, and the training from the start (sample unit plans in the Appendix). This feedback led to a change in software, self-guided online training modules, and a greater alignment between annual reports, budget requests, and personnel assessment.

The following sections illustrate some of the ways in which the college community becomes involved in planning, resource allocation, and renewal.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The president consults regularly with the Board of Trustees chair and executive committee. At least once a month, the president and the chair meet in person. Major decisions and issues are reviewed with board members. Before the full board meets to act on a resolution, thorough discussions take place at the appropriate board sub-committee meetings. For example, the Finance Committee reviews the college’s financial statements and budget proposals and makes recommendations to the full board regarding actions or approvals. Board members are often experts in fields, and their expertise is extremely valuable as new plans are discussed.

**FACULTY AND STAFF**

From the college’s inception, the faculty and staff have been engaged in planning. In fact, some current faculty members helped to create the curriculum from the original planning document written by the founding president.

Curriculum planning occurs in disciplinary and interdisciplinary groups called convening groups. Convening groups consist of all faculty who teach in a particular program. Until recently, faculty in a disciplinary group could be a member of any school within the college. Planning became convoluted, however, when the demands of the school conflicted with the needs of the disciplinary group. The college formed the Academic Structure Exploratory Committee in fall 2003 to analyze academic structure with the purpose of improving efficiency, transparency, and academic excellence. The exploratory committee’s analysis led to a restructuring: majors are now housed in only one school and faculty members limit their involvement to a primary and secondary convening group. Convening groups plan programs and conduct program reviews, which are then reviewed by the appropriate unit council (comprised of all the faculty in one school) and the Academic Review Committee. If needed, the plans may be presented for action to the Faculty Assembly. Separately, the dean of the school reviews actions of the unit councils and convening groups. The dean, in turn, may recommend actions to the provost, who, when appropriate, may forward the recommendations to the President and Board of Trustees.
Planning for new academic programs involves multiple layers of review. Initially, those proposing new programs must justify that the programs fit with the college’s mission and strategic plan. Additionally, market need must be supported and a business case that includes budget projections must be developed. Finally, the appropriate convening group must design and approve curriculum. The school dean reviews these materials and forwards his or her approval to the provost. The provost conducts a feasibility study and forwards the program to the Academic Review Committee for review. The committee presents the program to the Faculty Assembly for its vote. On behalf of the Faculty Assembly, the Academic Review Committee recommends the program to the provost, who brings the program proposal to the Board of Trustees for its approval. If approved by the board, the program is sent to the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education for state approval. Only then can the college begin offering the program.

The Master of Arts in Sustainability Studies is an example of a program that went through this planning process. If approved by the Commission on Higher Education, the degree will be the first of its kind in New Jersey and the region. It aligns well with the guiding principle of the strategic plan, which affirms the college’s “commitment to environment, social, and economic sustainability.” (Since Ramapo’s current mission, as approved by the Commission on Higher Education, does not include a major focus on graduate programs, the commission must approve each new graduate program.) The more than two thousand Ramapo alumni in environmental fields as well as international students are among the target audiences for the program.

Much like planning in Ramapo’s academic units, planning in non-academic units is a multi-layered process. Unit directors meet with their staffs to review current and future goals, budgets, and other resource needs. They engage in extensive discussions about how unit activities relate to the overall mission and strategic plan before final plans are presented to the division vice president, forwarded first to the President’s Cabinet and then to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee for review. Recognizing that Ramapo’s resources are limited, members of the college’s professional staff sit on the college-wide planning committees reviewing requests for positions, space, and budgets. The responsibilities of the Position Review Committee, the Space Allocation Committee, and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee have been described in other sections of this document (Chapters 1 and 3).

The new planning process encourages units to think more about the long term and to consider new activities aligned with the college’s high-priority goals. The process also addresses the need to review current activities to ensure that only those activities that can be tied to the strategic plan are continued and to reallocate resources as appropriate.

STUDENTS

Students are actively involved in most aspects of planning within the college. The college president meets regularly with the president of the Student Government Association and twice a semester with the Student Leaders Coalition. The college president seeks input and encourages open and honest communication on all matters of importance to the students, particularly the college budget. These meetings are lively and often produce excellent ideas for immediate action and future discussions. Students also have a voting member on the Board of Trustees, attend and report at board committee meetings, and serve on most major college committees. Students have easy access to senior administrators, and all major decisions involve input from students.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Board of Governors of the Ramapo College Foundation, alumni, local leaders, major donors, and others are involved in planning in a variety of ways, most often by consulting with the president or as members of advisory boards.

STANDARD 3: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

The human, financial, technical, and physical facilities and other resources necessary to achieve an institution’s mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution’s mission, the effective and efficient use of the institution’s resources is analyzed as part of the ongoing outcomes assessment.
In its nearly forty-year history, Ramapo College has acquired the resources necessary to build a campus from scratch and to guide its evolution as a sought-after choice by highly prepared students who want to attend a public liberal arts college. It was not always easy. The “new” college had to compete for resources with other well-established colleges in the state. The college’s mission and innovative structure—with faculty organized in thematic groups rather than by discipline—were not always well understood in the state capital. However, the record of accomplishment by alumni and the ability to attract well-qualified students and an outstanding faculty have helped solidify the college’s reputation as one of the more selective public colleges in New Jersey.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The college’s operating budget for 2009-10 was set at $134 million. The college’s financial resources are derived from tuition (31%), tuition-related fees (12%), auxiliary funding (29%), state allocation (27%) and other revenues (1%). In 1986, public colleges in New Jersey became autonomous, allowing them to set their own tuition and fees. The tuition and fees are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees after a legally mandated open forum, where the public may comment on the proposed budget and tuition charges. In recent years, the state has reduced absolute dollars appropriated to the college, capped fringe benefits on appropriated lines, penalized the college for not charging a 100% differential to out-of-state students, and, for Fiscal Year 2010, imposed restrictions such as a 3% cap on tuition increases.

Despite declining state resources (see Figure 1), the college always presented a balanced budget to the Board of Trustees. Budget development is a year-round process that evaluates the national educational climate, the economic climate in New Jersey, and national and state trends affecting higher education (demographics of high school students). Ramapo’s budget planning process is rooted in the vision and strategic goals of the college, tempered by the state and national economic climate.

FIGURE 1
STATE SUPPORT AS A PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE

Source: Budget and Fiscal Planning Report

Over the past ten years, Ramapo’s spending has shifted to support the plan to improve the academic quality of the student body (see Figure 2). A new enrollment plan, “enrollment by design,” initiated by President Scott in...
1998, included the construction of more residential facilities, a sports and recreation center, academic space, and additional funds for student scholarships and faculty lines.

Between 2000 and 2007, five new residence halls were built, almost tripling capacity in the halls to just over 3,000. In the past three years the college has taken steps to accommodate the increasing demand for student housing. In two of the newer halls, double rooms have been converted to triple rooms (it should be noted that the rooms were originally designed for three students). In years when demand outpaced campus capacity, the college housed students in local hotels for up to a semester.

In 2005, the college built the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center to meet the need for campus recreation space as well as facilities for intercollegiate and recreational sports. The need for additional academic space also became acute. A $3 million gift spurred the construction of a new academic building to house the business school, nursing-related activities, and the Marge Roukema Center for International Education (named for a former member of Congress from this district). The college spent additional funds over the decade to modernize the campus technology infrastructure.

FIGURE 2
EXPENDITURES BY CATEGORY

![Expenditures by Category Chart]

Source: Budget and Fiscal Planning Presentation

Although the state of New Jersey provided funding for the original buildings on campus, little state money has been available for capital improvements or new construction since 1988. The college has had to borrow funds to support the cost of building auxiliary facilities for such operations as housing, a student center, and recreation. Colleges in New Jersey make their own decisions regarding the expansion of facilities. Ramapo’s need to build additional facilities to accommodate enrollment growth leaves the college with a high debt ratio. The total yearly debt payment in support of bonds sold for campus projects has risen to $18.6 million in 2009 from $3.97 million in 2000. (Two-thirds of the debt payment is supported by income, such as housing rental fees.) While Moody’s recently (March 2009) upgraded the college’s A3 rating from a negative outlook to a stable outlook, the debt payments do not leave...
room to address emerging needs for infrastructure repairs and upgrades to aging facilities. The college responded to this situation by seeking approval from the Board of Trustees to institute a Capital Improvements Fee. The board approved this fee in July 2009. This fee will allow the college to begin critical maintenance projects. While it was a difficult decision to place the burden of such expenses on students, the board believed that properly maintained and up-to-date facilities are essential to achieving Ramapo’s strategic goal of academic excellence.

The college has substantial resources in infrastructure, employees, facilities, and technology and has adopted the following principles of budget development:

1. The planning process will help the college manage resources efficiently, maintain fiscal control, improve services and processes, and allocate resources effectively.
2. The planned use of resources will not exceed estimated resources available.
3. The college is committed to building and maintaining reserves in net assets in order to sustain overall financial health.

The Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning employs National Association of College and University Business Officers best practices and standards. The use of ratio analysis and benchmarking ensures the college presents an accurate picture of its financial health while considering decisions about budget and other resource allocations. These tools allow the college to see progress toward goals and its relationship to similar institutions over time. The college uses five ratios:

1. Primary reserve ratio. Compares total expendable net assets and total expenses to define whether the resources of the college are sufficient and flexible enough to meet current and future operating and capital needs.
2. Viability ratio. Compares total expendable net assets and total long-term debt (project-related) to measure whether debt payments are the appropriate size for the college and whether the operations are strong enough to support the debt issued.
3. Return on net asset ratio. Compares change in net assets and total net assets (beginning of year) to determine whether the college is financially better off than in prior years.
4. Net operating revenue ratio. Compares net operating income and total operating revenues to measure operating surpluses or deficits for the year.
5. Composite Financial Index (CFI). Combines the four core ratios into a single score, thereby allowing a more holistic understanding of the total financial health of the college. In addition, this measure functions as an “affordability index” of the strategic plan. The CFI measures only financial health and must be analyzed with other associated activities and plans in order to measure overall viability. (Data from ratio analysis for 2005-08 available in the Resource Room.)

The Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning continually monitors unit expenditures in a general way. Individual unit directors are expected to closely oversee all spending and to ensure funds are spent in accordance with approved plans. When funds to address an emergency repair/purchase are required, a request is made to the Contingency Review Committee (CRC). (In a recent example, emergency funds were requested after the state required that swimming pools be retrofitted with a special unit to eliminate the possibility of accidental drowning due to suction from the strainer.) The CRC, composed of senior managers, may elect to allocate resources from a collection of funds set aside for such situations; suggest that the needed funds be allocated from accumulated incentive funds (units that do not spend their entire budget in a fiscal year can retain a percentage for future use, allowing them to “save for a rainy day”); or indicate that the request should be reconsidered or resubmitted as part of the annual budgeting process. (Contingency review policies and procedures are in the Appendix.)

Ramapo College, similar to most institutions, must prioritize from the long list of desired actions and initiatives and set an acceptable level of achievement, using the resources available. Planning has been focused on being as efficient as possible, while aggressively seeking to cut costs without negatively impacting quality. Creative actions
over the past five years have achieved significant savings or present the potential of producing revenue or savings, as illustrated by the following examples:

1. Issuing tax-exempt revenue refinancing bonds to reduce future debt service payments. In October 2006, conditions were favorable for refinancing all or portions of certain outstanding bonds. The rule of thumb for determining which bonds to refinance is a targeted savings of 3% of the total amount of the bonds to be refunded. The actual savings was 3.44% and resulted in a net present value savings of $3.5 million. The savings were used to increase current net assets.

2. Establishing a Center for Innovative and Professional Learning (CIPL) in 2007. The center is the locus for programs designed to attract new populations to the college, such as credit-bearing programs designed specifically for high school students, certificate programs for professionals in fields which require continuing education, and programs offered by outsiders who wish to rent space on campus. As of Fiscal Year 2009, CIPL had five different programs with a total of 197 participants.

3. The college has over the past several years taken steps to reduce and/or stabilize its utility costs during a volatile market period. Examples of these initiatives include a three-year agreement with a third-party supplier of electricity, Consolidated Edison Solutions, at the favorable rate of $.1330/kWh, and the utilization of a contract for natural gas from the Hess Corporation at the rate of $1.3095 per therm arranged for by the State of New Jersey's Division of Purchase and Property.

4. Participating in a demand response program, an energy curtailment plan through CPower, to produce guaranteed monthly revenue. A “curtailment” event requires the college to remove energy use off a PJM overloaded grid to prevent a brownout or blackout (in 13 states) and may occur only between June 1 and September 30. Revenue is consistent and is projected to save the college $39,000 in Fiscal Year 2009 and $49,000 in Fiscal Year 2010.

5. Becoming a signatory to the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, requiring the college to become carbon neutral. The president appointed a Climate Commitment Task Force and charged it with leading the college in carrying out this objective. In addition to supporting ongoing efforts related to energy savings, recycling, and paperless practices, the task force partnered with students in a senior level environmental course to conduct an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions; initiated the development of an ENERGY STAR policy for purchasing; and instituted a policy for new buildings and renovations to achieve LEED silver standards or better.

6. Going solar. As part of the Sustainability Education Center project, Sharp Corporation, a major benefactor to Ramapo over the years, donated 81 solar panels appropriate for rooftop mounting. The college was successful in soliciting a firm, Pfister Energy Inc. of Paterson, New Jersey, to supply inverters and associated equipment and to install the solar panel system at no initial expense to the college. Under a formal energy services agreement, the college will buy back the electricity generated by the system at the very favorable rate of $0.06/kWh, inflated 1% a year for the next ten years, at which point the system will be turned over to the college.

The college engages a firm to audit its finances and the finances of the Ramapo College Foundation annually. The college administration, the foundation Board of Governors, and the Board of Trustees review the audit. If the management letter suggests necessary changes, they are made quickly. (Copies of audits for the past two years are available in the Resource Room.)

**HUMAN RESOURCES (Integrity)**

The college has approximately 700 full-time employees. It has always been able to attract a highly qualified faculty and staff. In the 1970s, the opportunity to build a college from the ground up was enticing to young PhDs, and the proximity to many first-rate universities, technology centers, and New York City continues to be a magnet. Forty years ago, the college was located at the outer edge of suburban development; today, after years of suburban sprawl, Mahwah sits in the middle of a large population of well-educated citizens, many of whom are interested in working at a college. The salary scales for all faculty and most staff (except managers) are set through contract
negotiations conducted centrally in the Governor’s Office for all unions (AFT, CWA, Local 195/IPFTE). While salaries are settled centrally, state allocations for the increases do not cover all of the costs. It is hard to know in any year how much of the salary program the state will fund because the level of funding is based on unreliable projections of state revenues. As a result, the college models its own projections and must be ready to deal with whatever amount it actually receives.

The state has offered a set of benefits for all non-student employees. The cost of benefits has been rising, particularly as health care costs have escalated. (Information on contracts and benefits are available on the Human Resources Web site.) The state budget covered benefits on educational and general positions. In 2009, the state indicated it would cover benefits only for “601 approved” employee lines and that the college would be responsible for paying the cost of benefits for any positions in excess of that number. As a consequence, the college assumed more than $72,000 in benefits costs for eighty-six employees, in addition to the college’s funded benefits for auxiliary related positions.

The Department of Human Resources provides comprehensive services, including assessment for all non-faculty and many services for faculty. (Initial faculty appointment recommendations, reappointments, tenure, promotion, etc., are overseen through the Provost’s Office.) Human Resources makes extensive use of technology to support its activities. For example, all applications for employment are completed online. For almost all professional positions, the process of screening candidates includes a search committee comprised of people who are deemed to have expertise or a special interest in the position being searched. (A student is often included.) Search committee chairs receive training and assistance to ensure that information about available positions reaches the widest possible pool of applicants. The use of technology has increased national interest in Ramapo positions. While the New York metropolitan area is a lure for many, the high cost of living can make it challenging to hire and retain highly qualified faculty and staff.

In recent years, Ramapo saw the retirement of many long-time faculty members who had been at the college since its early years. The retirements have provided flexibility as newer academic specialties could be added to the curriculum. Like other colleges and universities, Ramapo sees fewer “academically and professionally qualified” applicants for faculty positions in high-demand areas such as business, nursing, and science. To determine how to attract the candidates it needs to support certain academic programs, the college consulted national salary surveys and found that, to be competitive, it had to offer salaries that were higher than normal. This has caused some consternation in programs that have an excess of well-qualified applicants.

The college had been able to maintain a stable schedule of faculty promotions and staff reclassifications. In addition, the new Curriculum Enhancement Plan, which revamped the curriculum, provided additional time for faculty scholarship while the college continued funding summer research stipends, faculty travel, career development, and Teaching, Learning, and Technology Roundtable grants. The College committed to adding five tenure-track faculty lines per year, which has resulted in an increase of full-time faculty from 155 in Fiscal Year 1998 to 211 in Fiscal Year 2008. Unfortunately, the budget situation resulted in the suspension of reclassifications for staff in 2009, but faculty-related incentives continue to be funded.

A part of the new planning process and in recognition of the stress on fiscal resources, the college established a Position Review Committee in 2007. The committee reviews every request to fill a new or newly-vacant non-faculty position. In its review, the committee takes a holistic view of the current opening, looking at the strategic plan as well as current operations and conditions. The manager seeking to fill the position must complete a thorough review of the need for the position and present it as part of the application to fill the position. The unit director must then meet with the committee to defend the need for the position. Part of the process includes a frank discussion about the priority of the work to be done by someone in the requested position; the classification of the position (civil service/union) as to salary level; the possibility that the work involved could be redistributed to others at a lower cost; and the availability of others on campus with transferable skills who might be able to serve well in the position (with the concomitant expectation that filling the to-be-vacated position would require review by the Position Review Committee). The committee makes recommendations to the President’s Cabinet. Faculty vacancies are reviewed within the Provost’s Office. No vacancy is automatically filled. A list of priority faculty positions, approved through the Dean’s Council, makes clear in what order new and vacant positions will be filled, thereby allowing for future
planning for programs. (Most professional positions and all faculty hires are approved by the Board of Trustees, although the board has granted the president authority to make offers to all positions below the dean level.) In all cases, once positions are filled, the budget office monitors salary budgets to ensure that all expenditures are within the allocated amounts.

The work of all contract employees is assessed through a set of processes that are well publicized. Some of the processes are designed within the college, while others are outlined in union contracts or civil service regulations. Goals and standards for individual employees are developed in consultation with supervisors and must be directly linked to the mission of the employee’s unit and division and ultimately to the mission and strategic plan of the college. The assessment process for all non-faculty members includes meetings with supervisors in which overall progress toward specific goals is reviewed and “grades” are assigned. Faculty members are assessed for reappointment, tenure, promotion, and career development by their peers and their dean, with recommendations to the provost and president; ultimately, they are approved by the board. (Assessment processes, forms, training schedules for managers, etc., are available on the Human Resources Web site and in the Resource Room.)

FACILITIES

The college is located on a 300-acre campus that was formerly an estate. The estate owner was an accomplished gardener who cared deeply about the plantings around his home. The college has taken care to situate its buildings in ways that respect what existed when the college took over. It has paid special attention to keeping the grounds looking lush and well cared for. With several notable exceptions, all the structures on campus were built within the past forty years. The older buildings include the main house (now known as the Birch Mansion); a carriage house; a caretaker’s cottage (now known as the McBride House); the carriage garage; and the president’s home (known as Havemeyer House), which the college purchased in 2002 (see campus map in the Appendix for a listing of all facilities). The total area of all enclosed facilities on campus is 1,632,837 square feet. All facilities-related planning is done in light of the college’s overall Master Plan, which was most recently updated in 2000. The following major facilities have been added to the campus since the 2000 Middle States Team visit:

- **Havemeyer House**  President’s home/public spaces (replaces former home, which was sold)
- **Mackin Hall (formerly Maple)**  367-bed residence
- **The Overlook**  295-bed residence
- **The Village**  524-bed apartment complex
- **Bill Bradley Sports and Rec Center**  General purpose, intercollegiate sports, recreation
- **Laurel Hall**  432-bed residence
- **Anisfield School of Business**  Academic building with separate greenhouse
- **Turf Field/Track**  Replacement of existing
- **Sharp Sustainability Education Center**  Academic/demonstration center
- **Salameno Spiritual Center**  Assembly and meditation space (privately funded)

The planning for any facility includes all constituents, including students. This alerts everyone to the planned enhancements (for which their input is sought) as well as the inevitable inconveniences during construction. The college has been quite successful in managing large construction contracts. The new facilities have helped to transform Ramapo into the high-quality, residential college it is today.

The George T. Potter Library has been through a number of major changes driven by several factors at the college: an increasing number of students, tighter resources, and an effort to balance professional program needs within a liberal arts mission. The library’s overarching principles include reaching the “millennial student;” balancing the role of the traditional vs. the contemporary library; finding its strengths; and establishing meaningful collaboration, both internally and externally. Outcomes from the previous self-study indicated that the college should build and enhance access to the library’s electronic collection to address the projected increase in student population. Several initiatives support the development of this area, including cultivating internal technical expertise and strengthening the connection between library IT and campus IT development. This paralleled several initiatives, including:
1. Developing periodicals and reference book collection in electronic format

2. Developing streaming video collection

3. 24/7 reference support through QandANJ.org, a service of the New Jersey Library Network

4. Online course guides using Web 2.0 format

5. Online tutorials

6. Subject-driven access to more than one hundred periodical and reference databases.

Capital renovations in the library since the last self-study have included a reorganization and upgrade of workspaces, book stacks, and reading areas; improvements to existing systems and acquisition of new systems to support modern library technologies; resolution of humidity, water leakage, and security problems; installation of an additional air handling unit and alterations to the existing air distribution system to allow for better climate control and increased airflow; waterproofing by re-caulking the building exterior, repairing and replacing flashing, and weather stripping doors and windows; and creation of a twenty-seven-seat computer laboratory for bibliographic instruction and other academic uses. The college’s annual capital budget request to the state seeks funding for a new library, recognizing that the possibility is remote, given its estimated $25 million cost, the college’s current high debt load, and other high-priority needs. The request reflects a vision for a new library would affirm, both physically and symbolically, the centrality of learning, teaching and research activities at the college.

Although the college had the luxury of many new facilities, it now has some aging buildings that require maintenance. The college engaged the firm of Hatch Mott MacDonald to assess facilities that have been online for more than ten years. This assessment ensures that the college is aware of the conditions of all its facilities so that it can plan for required repairs and preventative maintenance. The assessment reports were received in draft form in June 2009, with more complete documents to follow. These reports are used for planning purposes and in support of any requests that may accompany a budget request to the state or a funding agency.

The newly imposed Capital Improvements Fee will generate funds to allow the college to proceed with the highest priority maintenance and improvement projects. The lack of capital funding from the state leaves the college with little choice but to pay for what is needed from operational funds in order to protect the integrity of existing facilities and to ensure that the educational facilities and equipment meet the standard for the college’s high-quality academic programs. The replacement of the roofs of the main academic building, the Student Center and Pine Hall (residence hall), and the replacement of the HVAC system in the Student Center are priorities, and the upgrade of the aging science laboratories and associated spaces is most urgent. Plans for all these projects are well under way, and the actual construction will begin as soon as the funding is available. The college has set a goal of 5% of plant value in a capital reserve account for future capital needs. To date, the college has $10 million in its reserves.

With the Board of Trustees’ approval, the college may seek the assistance of the Educational Facilities Authority (EFA), a quasi-public state agency, in selling bonds in support of needed facilities. Almost all capital projects have been funded through the authority. In preparation for a capital request, the college uses means cost data to better understand complex projects. Construction managers who use industry-standard practices provide cost estimates that are as accurate and realistic as possible. They include estimates for a conceptual plan, a schematic design, and 50% completion costs. This enables project managers and administrators to adjust the projects as needed based on overall project costs. The college has worked closely with the Educational Facilities Authority marketing advisors and underwriters to refinance construction bonds at favorable rates. Gross savings from refinancing in the past six years (2003-present) exceeded $5.17 million.

Most matters related to facilities fall under the associate vice president for administration and finance, who reports to the chief planning officer. The 94 employees in the Facilities Department are responsible for all aspects of facilities maintenance. The staff includes plumbers, electricians, housekeepers, general repairers, grounds crew, work order processors, engineers, boiler overseers, painters, etc. All except managers are unionized, and most have civil service protection. Beginning in 2001, some housekeeping tasks were outsourced (Student Center,
Bradley Center, all residence halls, etc.) to save money and gain flexibility. However, recent legislation requires that outsourced workers be paid the prevailing wage, so the amount of savings is less than anticipated. The college also accesses local contractors for work that is outside the expertise of college employees or which can be done more expeditiously or at a lower cost by outsiders. Contracts are publicly bid wherever required and all state regulations are carefully followed.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Ramapo College uses the SCT Banner application to drive all back-office processes. It is a proven suite of scalable applications on a single Oracle database. This set of applications helps the college achieve its monitoring and reporting goals. Technology at Ramapo and in many other places has become an end-user process rather than a centralized operation based in an information technology center. Gone are the days when staff members requested reports from an information technology office. College staff members are expected to extract customized data reports from Banner Self-Service modules. Technology is ubiquitous, guiding many aspects of the educational infrastructure. In a typical day, technology runs computerized energy management systems throughout the physical plant and the campus; enables students to select classes, choose a residence hall assignment, or pay bills; remotely links data coming from the Meadowlands observatory (about twenty-six miles away) to a teacher-education classroom on the main campus; and brings real-time stock data to a simulated trading floor in the Anisfield School of Business. The bulk of communication on campus is done electronically. Paycheck stubs have been eliminated; e-mail can be accessed from anywhere in the world; daily announcements arrive by e-mail; and communications with colleagues from anywhere can be done via a voice-over-internet protocol, such as Skype.

In addition to standard software applications, easy-to-use instructional technology is readily available. Examples include Student Response Systems, online instructional access through Luminis or Moodle; online assessment programs, such as Mahara, an e-portfolio program and WEAVEonline, a web-based assessment management system; online grading and assessment programs, such as Turnitin; and access to networking sites and the entire Web. The goal of a wireless campus is fast becoming a reality. Large portions of the campus and public areas of the residence halls are already equipped with Wi-Fi. The use of videoconferencing software and hardware, such as Polycom Viewstation SP512, for example, enables classes to take place virtually between Ramapo and Volgograd State University and St. Petersburg State University in Russia. Access to streaming video is available via Cantasia or Quicktime software.

Demand for technology inside and outside the classroom is increasing. The Instructional Design Center—staffed by an individual recruited from the faculty who is an expert in the use of technology in teaching, as well as other IT professionals—provides ongoing support for users of specific hardware and software; offers workshops and seminars for all community members; tests and reports on new applications as they become available; supports individual faculty in bringing their courses to electronic formats; and generally works to make everyone more comfortable with operating in a technological world. Outside the classroom, students increasingly expect access to whatever is available in the larger world at lightning speeds and at all hours. Throughout the college, staff, faculty and students expect to be able to use technology to advertise their events, conduct surveys, assess programs, and access the latest information in the Potter Library (and elsewhere). Distance learning is becoming a viable option, and summer session enrollments skyrocketed with the availability of online courses.

There is a constant demand for additional technological resources and a constant need for retraining as new technology replaces old. Yet the college must ensure that the significant resources allocated to IT support the strategic plan. To address that challenge, the Office of Information Technology Services produced a Technology Plan in 2008 (available on the visiting team Web site). This plan outlines goals in each of the five main areas within the department: Application Development, Client Services, Infrastructure, Instructional Design and Telecommunications. The plan is simply presented, but complex in its goals. It is realistic about the amount of resources that will be available, yet aggressive in its efforts to be as efficient as possible, so freed-up resources can be reallocated for other priorities.
FIGURE 3
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES PLAN/2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2-3 Years</th>
<th>3-5 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Client Services</strong></td>
<td>• Stabilize the organization • Stabilize reporting system • Refine imaging process • Determine upgrade policy</td>
<td>• Establish desktop remote process • Establish an application server process • Migrate to VM operating system</td>
<td>• Establish Web-based application process • Stabilize application server • Stabilize desktop remote process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>• Expand the wireless network • Strengthen security procedures • Increase monitor &amp; alerts Review server maintenance</td>
<td>• Begin to migrate toward a more efficient and effective hardware and disk storage environment with redundant capabilities</td>
<td>• Look toward Linux and more of the open-sourced products for better cost-performance structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applications</strong></td>
<td>• Stabilize Banner Phase 1 • Increase Web Applications • Expand Workflow Process • Develop Banner Phase 2 Plan</td>
<td>• Begin to move toward a paperless environment with more online and imaging storage and file sharing</td>
<td>• Establish a more Web-based application presence with more distribution of applications and reporting into end-users areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
<td>• Develop Alternative Learning Process • Introduce new Teaching Tools • Expand E-Portfolio • Review WebCT Long Term</td>
<td>• Move away from WebCT/Blackboard and into Sakai or Moodle open-sourced environment</td>
<td>• Establish a stronger “best of breed” in the Instructional Design technology applications • Support opening more options for faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructional</strong></td>
<td>• Review and clean-up open invoice issues • Review and upgrade security • Establish cell phone policy</td>
<td>• Begin to migrate the campus to a fully digital network using Voice over Internet Protocol</td>
<td>• Expand the Voice over Internet Protocol environment to include cell phones and palm devices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Office of Information Technology Services*

**OTHER RESOURCES**

The vice president for institutional advancement is the link between the college and the Ramapo College Foundation, a 501(c)(3) corporation. Still, the college president and the foundation’s Board of Governors communicate frequently. The role of the foundation is to provide short- and long-term financial assistance to the college to enhance the academic programs and the overall operation. Its mission is “to provide the resources that make the difference in Ramapo College of New Jersey’s quest for educational excellence.” Priorities for fundraising are set in consultation with the president and Board of Trustees. Members of the Board of Governors are briefed on major issues of the college. They are invited to major college programs, athletic contests, theater presentations, convocations, and commencements. The Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees have a joint meeting.
each year to review the main fundraising needs of the college and to finalize the goals for the upcoming year. The foundation audit is incorporated into the college audit, which is conducted annually. (A copy of the Foundation Annual Report and recent audit are available in the Resource Room.)

The college has experienced strong success with its fundraising efforts despite a most challenging economic period. Completing the second year of the “quiet phase” of a $40 million dollar comprehensive capital campaign, Ramapo has secured just over $21 million. To date, $5.81 million has been raised for capital projects, $518,723 has been secured for restricted gifts, $4.76 million has been received in endowment funds, $9.35 million has been awarded in grants, and $1.03 million has been donated in annual gifts. The college anticipates celebrating the “public phase” of the campaign by May 2010.

Thus far, the campaign has helped to significantly increase the number of endowed student scholarship awards, fund the first endowed dean, endow the first named faculty chair, and support the construction of the Anisfield School of Business, the Sharp Sustainability Education Center, and the Salameno Spiritual Center. During the public phase of the campaign, the college will strive to fund another academic school and complete its endowment goal.

As the current leader among the New Jersey public state colleges and universities for alumni participation, Ramapo College hopes to surpass its campaign goal. Ramapo’s current alumni participation rate is 13.3%—far surpassing the 6.7% national average for public liberal arts colleges. Participation at other New Jersey public colleges ranges from 4% to 11% (Voluntary Support to Education Report, Fiscal Year 2008, available in the Resource Room). The tremendous interest of many newer faculty members in securing national grants is also propelling the growth of the campaign.

FINDINGS OF THE SELF-STUDY

ACHIEVEMENTS

• The college has updated its strategic plan and focused the entire community on its goals and objectives through a new process that closely links planning, budgeting, and assessment.

• The college has increased the allocation of resources to support strategic goals despite very difficult economic times.

• The college has made a substantial commitment to sustainability as evidenced by the inclusion of “sustainability” in the mission statement and strategic plan; the president’s becoming a signatory of the Presidents’ Climate Commitment; the building of the Sharp Sustainability Center (to open in 2010); and substantial actions within the community to practice sustainability on and off campus.

• The college has constructed much-needed new facilities and is developing plans for infrastructure repairs/replacement and the upgrading of aging science labs.

• The college has made a substantial commitment to maintaining the campus grounds.

CHALLENGES

• The inability to accurately predict income from the state legislature hampers the college in its long-term planning, while the lack of funds for capital projects portends more difficulty in keeping aging facilities in good repair.

• The increasing interest in technology as a tool in the classroom and in personal lives will put pressure on the college to keep up with the latest advances as “old” technology ages ever more quickly.

• Difficult budget times inevitably cause stress in a community as it struggles to allocate (and reallocate) resources to ensure that strategic goals remain in focus.
RECOMMENDATIONS

• The already-planned assessment of the new planning process should be continued to correct flaws and implement innovations.

• Budget projections should be carefully monitored as it is likely that the state allocation will not increase significantly in the next few years and future planning will need to be carefully focused.

• Communications about planning and budgeting must continue to improve so all in the community can feel informed and involved.

• Both traditional (e.g., New Jersey Educational Facilities Authority fixed-rate bonds) and creative (e.g., engagement of an energy service company or ESCO; public/private partnership as provided under recently enacted legislation) means of financing high-priority new capital projects, as well as renewal and replacement projects, must continue to be explored.

• Campus morale should be a priority during difficult times. Ramapo’s administration and faculty leadership will have to determine what communications will be needed and what processes should be in place to limit the possibility that the complex times will result in a deterioration of morale.
CHAPTER 3

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

STANDARD 7
CHAPTER 3

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

STANDARD 7

GOAL 2: INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

(Ramapo College Strategic Plan, p. 9)

The College will strive to increase and diversify its revenues to provide the human and material resources needed to deliver high-quality programs and services.

• Objective 2.5: The College will enhance effectiveness and efficiency by integrating institutional planning, budget development, management, and assessment.

STANDARD 7: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

THE CONTEXT

The strategic planning process has facilitated a culture of assessment at Ramapo College. The college monitors institutional effectiveness through a regular process of planning and outcomes assessment. The goal is to produce continuous improvement and to provide evidence that the college is achieving its mission.

The institutional effectiveness process at the college is a continuous cycle of planning, implementing, and improving applied at every level of the institution. An institutional effectiveness plan provides answers to the following recurring questions:

• Who are we?
• What are we trying to accomplish?
• How well are we doing?
• How can we improve what we are doing?
• What evidence exists that we have improved?

PROCESS AND PLAN

In fall 2001, President Smith initiated a strategic planning exercise. He charged thirteen task forces and special ad hoc committees with conducting a broad-based institutional analysis of all academic, administrative, and support units. Input from a presidential Blue Ribbon Commission made the broad-based institutional analysis more complete. The Blue Ribbon Commission reviewed all administrative personnel issues and all non-academic, non-student-intensive programs and services that were not cost-effective (Chandler Commission Report, 2002, available on the visiting team Web site). An overall analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats strengthened the process. Information gathered from the Blue Ribbon Commission, the overall analysis, the task forces, and the special ad-hoc committees created the foundation for a broad institutional agenda. At a retreat in
June 2002, the Board of Trustees and senior leadership fashioned that agenda into the 2002-2012 Ramapo College Strategic Plan, titled Enhancing Institutional Excellence. The strategic plan reflected the work of a diverse array of stakeholders from throughout the campus who participated on the task forces, committees, commissions, and retreats.

*Enhancing Institutional Excellence* presented a ten-year road map with goals, objectives, action steps, and funding sources for each proposed initiative or program. The strategic plan also called for annual reviews and revisions at five-year intervals. In October 2005, the college completed its first inventory of progress toward accomplishing the objectives of the strategic plan. After three years, the college had completed 50% (139 of 277) of the prescribed action steps.

The arrival of President Mercer in 2005 presented a timely opportunity to improve the strategic planning process and to reconsider the plan’s goals and objectives. The revised plan could correct shortcomings and address new challenges, as follows:

- The twenty-two long-range goals were listed in no order of priority and had proven difficult to communicate, monitor, and assess.
- While the original plan called for annual evaluations, the first evaluation did not take place until three years after the plan was enacted.
- The economic environment had changed dramatically, forcing new reviews, timelines, and processes for setting and integrating priorities.

For this planning exercise, the college convened a Strategic Planning Task Force that began meeting in November 2006. Chaired by the president, the task force included representatives from on and off campus who met in small working groups. The task force produced a very different document for a very different time—one that enables the college to focus its efforts in a planned, integrated, and measurable way. The revised strategic plan was guided by six principles that are the basic assumptions underlying the plan’s goals (*Ramapo College Strategic Plan*, p. 7). Integral to the strategic plan is the college vision statement:

> “Ramapo College aspires to be the premier public college in the greater New Jersey/New York metropolitan area providing a high quality education across programs whose curricula are founded on a commitment to the liberal arts”. (p. 5)

The availability of funding greatly affects the ability to pursue strategic objectives (the range of outcomes to achieve the goals). With traditional sources unlikely to yield “extra funds” to pursue strategic initiatives, the college recognized the need to seek additional revenue sources and to free up funds by reallocating portions of the operating budget.

With a vision that was informed by campus constituents, the college took two important steps: It created a dedicated fund for strategic priorities and embarked on an initiative to link planning, budgeting, and assessment with the goals and objectives in the strategic plan. While Ramapo had previously reviewed efficiencies and effectiveness at the unit level, evidence tended to be anecdotal. This new initiative required a formal institutional structure that would integrate planning, budgeting, and assessment (see Figure 1).

Purposeful integration of planning, budgeting, and assessment is a hallmark of the strategic plan. In September 2008, the college put into action an integrated process for these functions. The “newness” of the process presented challenges that are expected to diminish over time. All divisions have submitted plans that show alignment with the three strategic goals, and information made available during all levels of planning, budgeting, and assessment drives the continuous process forward (sample unit plans in the Appendix).
The planning, budgeting, and assessment process encompasses three levels of planning:

- Level I: Strategic planning, which occurs in three- to five-year cycles
- Level II: Tactical planning, which follows a three-year cycle
- Level III: Operational planning, which takes place annually.

The process produces several types of output: annual operational plans, short- and long-term plans, and strategic initiatives. Human and fiscal resources plans are integrated into divisional plans.

**FIGURE 1**
PLANNING, BUDGET, AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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Source: Chief Planning Officer
The Institutional Effectiveness Committee is an important link in the planning, budgeting, and assessment process. The committee systematically assesses the goals and objectives of non-academic programs. Each unit director develops a three-year rolling plan that outlines the goals and objectives for the coming years as well as requests for additional funding to achieve those desired outcomes. A series of online forms assist unit directors with their submissions.

Requests must be tempered with an appreciation for two distinct realities: first, resources are finite, with restoration of state appropriations unlikely; and second, the college cannot be everything to everyone. Unit requests must draw specific parallels showing how their requests will enhance the three college goals of academic excellence: investing in the future, and enriching college life and community presence. Requests must be specific about desired outcomes and how achievement of those goals will be measured.

Recognizing that funding requests far outnumbered available resources, the chief planning officer in 2008 charged the Institutional Effectiveness Committee with awarding strategic funding to mission-critical requests most likely to achieve strategic objectives. The committee uses four financial ratios to gauge the affordability of strategic objectives and the amount of funds that can be allocated to achieve them.

The funding for strategic initiatives comes from a dedicated account. The college deploys 2% of its annual operating budget to pay for those initiatives that further the college’s mission, goals, and objectives as outlined in the strategic plan. This Strategic Priority Incentive Funding (SPIF) ensures that strategic initiatives continue to move forward. Once the Institutional Effectiveness Committee determines the affordability of strategic objectives, it prioritizes funding requests using Resource Allocation Mapping Process developed by KPMG and Prager, Sealy & Co. LLC (see Figure 2).

Individual unit plans, survey data, and benchmark comparisons inform the mapping criteria. Funding is contingent upon the ability of unit administrators to quantify their success in relation to tactical, operational, and ultimately strategic plans. The mapping matrix provides the decision-making framework to determine which programs and functions are not mission-critical. This allows resources to be redirected to mission-critical objectives. The matrix reduces subjectivity in the process by establishing criteria for levels of strategic relevance.

FIGURE 2
MAPPING MATRIX

Relationship of Finances to Mission (Quadrants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>Q3 Important</th>
<th>Q1 Critical Important</th>
<th>Q4 Less Important</th>
<th>Q2 Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Relationship of Market to Competencies (Sectors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARKET TRENDS</th>
<th>S3 Important</th>
<th>S1 Critical Important</th>
<th>S4 Less Important</th>
<th>S2 Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

MISSION

INTERNAL COMPETENCIES

Each year units reassess their rolling plans and evaluate the progress toward articulated goals. Continued investment is assessed based on data from student surveys, employee questionnaires, national benchmarks, etc. Funding may be shifted depending upon strategic progress and competing priorities. Unit directors must assess their own budgets and objectives, determine which will best align with college-wide objectives, and redistribute funds to meet their unit needs.
The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning tracks achievements for administrative units, while the Office of the Provost tracks progress—including achievement of student learning outcomes—for all academic units. The committees listed below, working under the umbrella of Institutional Effectiveness, monitor institutional resource allocation in relation to the achievement of mission and strategic goals. The committees strive to make their work transparent and to make sure information is easily disseminated within and across groups.

**BUDGET COMMITTEE**

The college’s budget development and planning process helps the college manage resources efficiently; maintain fiscal control; improve services and processes; and allocate resources effectively. The Budget Committee meets regularly to discuss the financial health of the institution and to make decisions based on a specific set of budget principles (*Principles of Budget Development* in the Appendix).

**POSITION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

The Position Review Committee meets weekly to review requests for new and replacement positions, including agency temps; grant-funded positions; upgrades and reclassifications; and bona fide offers of employment. The committee conducts a thorough analysis of current and future staff positions to facilitate institutional staffing decisions based on qualitative and quantitative data. The committee reviews each request within the context of the entire college. In its deliberations the committee weighs fiscal considerations and the reallocation of resources to fund strategic priorities.

**SPACE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE**

The Space Allocation Committee establishes procedures to allocate space; maintains an up-to-date space inventory that identifies what space is used and for what purpose; and fulfills space requests. After reviewing space requests based on specific criteria, the committee makes final recommendations to the President’s Cabinet. The cabinet reviews requests based on a specific set of principles (Space Allocation Criteria in the Appendix).

**CHANGING CULTURE: ACCOMPLISHMENT AND CHALLENGES**

The planning process for Ramapo College is fully operational. A significant benefit of the process is the ability to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats based on information gathered from students, other stakeholders, and internal and external scans. This organizational knowledge provides support for the key themes arising out of Ramapo’s vision, mission, goals, and objectives. The themes and various analyses form the basis for developing strategic priorities.

Based on the outcomes of planning at Level I planning, the strategic priorities and themes form the basis for divisional plans created at Level II. These include the academic plan, the financial plan, the human resources plan, the communication/marketing plan, the information technology plan, the enrollment management plan, the diversity plan, and the facilities/master plan. Divisional plans form the broad agenda for the academic school plans and individual unit plans.

Annual budgeting flows from the school and individual unit plans and feeds back to the divisional plans. Deans and unit managers translate short and long-term plans aligned with the strategic priorities, mission, and vision into action plans.

This continuous process allows for flexibility in planning and budgeting. Education and training for stakeholders, as well as transparent decision-making, are critical for ensuring the integrity of the process. By aligning funding decisions with strategic priorities, the college can ensure that resources will be available to execute the strategic plan.
The success of the planning process requires the active engagement of all stakeholders. The effort reached a significant milestone in September 2008 when units submitted annual reports and three-year plans. The level of engagement deepened as the community submitted questions and recommendations to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. For example, stakeholders requested more detailed information, less cumbersome software, and a better schedule to make the timing of submissions and approvals less awkward. A new Web site devoted to Strategic Priority Incentive Fund requests increased transparency, enhanced the integrity of the process, and encouraged further engagement by stakeholders. The Institutional Effectiveness Web site was improved after unit directors and division heads described the challenges of accessing information.

As the process matures, the goal will be to make user-friendly information available to all stakeholders in real time. The college is proud to be ahead of the curve in its planning, budgeting, and assessment process. It is the first public college in New Jersey to use the KPMG mapping methodology to enhance institutional effectiveness.

The college continually takes steps to improve the transparency and integrity of the evaluation and allocation process. The Web site of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness allows the campus to view the requests that were submitted and their relationship to the goals of the strategic plan. Additionally, to ensure integrity, the institutional effectiveness mapping process is designed to limit the subjectivity involved in resource allocation. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee also analyzes indicators, such as market trends and financial returns. This makes the assessment process more dynamic as the committee identifies:

- Areas where programs should be re-evaluated in light of Ramapo’s mission;
- Programs that should develop exit strategies so that funding can be shifted to more mission-critical programs;
- Opportunities for potential growth in programs; and
- New initiatives that align with the college’s mission and strategic vision.

Inherent in this process is the Institutional Effectiveness Committee’s power to prioritize all strategic requests. The Committee can allocate the finite resources it has based on the outcomes of the mapping process. The three-year rolling plans encourage each unit to critically analyze itself and to evaluate unit activities based on outcomes.

This new institutional process marks a significant change from past practice. With the new process for allocating resources, administrative roles and responsibilities are inherently defined by the college’s strategic goals. Unit directors and faculty are now directly involved in developing outcomes assessments. The process of tying funding requests to strategic goals reinforces the institution’s commitment to making those goals a reality. The Strategic Priority Incentive Fund allocations for Fiscal Year 2010 are as follows (see Figure 3):

FIGURE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Number of Requests Funded</th>
<th>Percentage of Overall Funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Advancement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; Finance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Institutional Effectiveness Meeting Documents, Feb. 4, 2009
The college has already benefited greatly from this process. In the course of prioritizing initiatives, stakeholders had to determine what was most important to the institution, thereby helping to define and refine the college's collective mission.

Creating a culture that embraces the planning, budgeting, and assessment process has its challenges. These include ensuring continual funding and the successful reallocation of existing money; protecting the integrity of the process from social and political influences; and providing support and training to all stakeholders to ensure an equitable platform for decision-making. Overall, the biggest challenge continues to be refining the process so that it can be more smoothly integrated into the operation of the college.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

A broad range of organizational knowledge supports the strategic planning process. Outcomes assessment, for example, at the division and unit levels feeds back to institutional planning and budgeting (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4

| Examples of Organizational Knowledge that Support the Strategic Planning Process |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Internal Analysis               | Administrative, employee, capital information                      |
| External Analysis               | Demographic information, regulatory information, market analysis, economic and employment trends, competitive data, faculty salaries, employee salaries, number of employees at the college, expenditures |
| Academic Outcomes               | National survey of student engagement, graduating senior survey, alumni survey, freshmen survey, accreditation results, evaluation of freshman orientation, evaluation of First-Year Experience, student evaluation of instructor/course |
| Financial Plan                  | Expenditures, capital expenses, budget expenses, strategic expenses, compliance expenses, financial ratios |
| Human Resources Plan            | Faculty achievements and scholarship, training needs assessment, survey of employee opinion concerning retirement and retirement incentives, 360-degree supervisor evaluation survey, Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award, employee questionnaire |
| Communication Marketing Plan    | In progress                                                        |
| Information Technology Plan     | Help Desk reports, classroom utilization reports, lab utilization reports, resource management reports, faculty evaluation of course management system, student evaluation of course management system |
| Enrollment Management Plan      | Enrollment management reports, demographic data, graduation rates, SAT scores, ethnicity, age, residence/non-residence, ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Study |
| Diversity Plan                  | Campus Climate Survey                                             |
| Facilities/Master Plan          | Facilities audit and assessments, Capital Projects Report          |
| Schools                         | Annual reports                                                    |
| Majors                          | Retention rates, grades, GPA, assessment results, graduation rates |
| Administrative Units/Departments| Annual reports, unit plans, program assessments                   |
For comparative and competitive information, Ramapo College benchmarks against New Jersey public colleges and the following schools in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC):

- College of Charleston
- Eastern Connecticut State University
- Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
- Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
- SUNY Geneseo
- The College of New Jersey
- Truman State University
- University of Mary Washington

The college strives for continuous improvement, and some areas are further along than others. Yet the college can point to numerous examples of changes and improvements that followed directly from efforts to assess effectiveness. The evolution of the planning, budget, and assessment process is a major example, but there are many others.

In 2001, the president convened a number of committees to provide information for the strategic planning process. The Chandler Commission collected data about employee ratios and then benchmarked this information against other state colleges in New Jersey. The comparative faculty ratios supported the need for a larger faculty and the strategic plan called for hiring five new faculty members per year.

In another example, the college-wide Diversity Action Committee (DAC) surveyed the college community using the Campus Climate Survey. The survey results supported the hiring of an ombudsperson in fall 2008 to support the Diversity Action Committee’s pledge “to respect and value personal uniqueness and differences” as stated in its vision statement. (DAC Climate Survey Summary available in the Resource Room).

Academic assessment has been an institutional focus since 2006. All academic majors were required to develop assessment plans. For each academic program, this involved developing goals and objectives; developing curriculum maps; and implementing assessment activities. Every five years, each academic major undertakes a self-study, which now requires a section on assessment. Assessment plans must be integrated into the design and development of new academic programs. In summer 2008, the provost redefined the vice provost position to include a focus on assessment.

Assessment also informed decisions in Residence Life. In 2006-2007, resident assistants/community assistants were responsible for individual programs for their respective floors, but student staff indicated that residents were not attending the programs they had organized. The following year, Residence Life changed the programming model to building-wide programs, eliminating individual programs. Unfortunately, results from the 2008 Association of College and University Housing Officers, International/Educational Benchmarking, Incorporated (ACUHO-I/EBI) resident student survey indicated that this model was not successful either. The study found that residents were even less satisfied with the programming in the residence halls.

After analyzing the survey results and the impact of recent changes, Residence Life developed a new programming model consisting of building-wide events and weekly programs called Community Developers. Scheduling them for the same day and time each week ensures residents always know when these programs will occur. This change proved to be very successful, with more residents attending programs. The 2008-2009 ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Study results indicated that residents were more satisfied with Residence Life programming overall (survey results available in the Resource Room).
Inherent in Ramapo College’s Strategic Plan 2007–2012 is the need to plan for external events, such as an economic downturn and reduced state support for higher education, that could impact the college negatively if not properly planned for. These same conditions emphasize the importance of the planning, budgeting, and assessment process. For the college to remain vital and move forward, it was imperative to find a way to make resources available for strategic initiatives. The president’s commitment to setting aside 2% of the operational budget for strategic initiatives went a long way toward building support for the new process. With funding secured and a transparent review process in place, enthusiasm grew with the reassurance that the institution could survive and even flourish in this economic environment.

**FINDINGS OF THE SELF-STUDY**

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Completed second full cycle of the planning, budget and assessment process.
- Institutional commitment to allocation of funds (2% of operating budget) for new strategic initiatives.
- Identified and implemented new assessment software (WEAVEonline).
- Successfully modified the internal processes to accommodate assessment initiatives.

**CHALLENGES**

- To continue to secure funding for strategic initiatives during a time of shrinking resources; this often means reallocating resources.
- To continue to transform the informal organization into the formal infrastructure by instituting new protocols and procedures as needed.
- To continue to move the institution forward in a context of shrinking resources (human, financial, physical space, and technological).
- To continue to move the culture of assessment forward.
- To maintain transparency in the decision-making process.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Develop a method for intra-unit and divisional communication and develop ways to link divisional action plans vertically and horizontally.
- Consolidate all the information, processes, procedures, and outcomes of resource committees under the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and include them on the Institutional Effectiveness Web site for purposes of transparency.
- Improve the communication and transparency of assessment processes across the campus community.
CHAPTER 4

STUDENTS
STANDARDS 8, 9 AND 6
CHAPTER 4

STUDENTS
STANDARDS 8, 9 AND 6

GOAL 3: ENRICHING COLLEGE LIFE AND COMMUNITY PRESENCE
(Ramapo College Strategic Plan, p. 10)

Academic life must be complemented by a vibrant campus life that provides students, faculty, staff, alumni, their families, members of the surrounding communities, and prospective students the opportunity to realize their full potential. Stronger relations within the College community, among the College and local, regional and statewide communities, and between the College and alumni will be actively pursued.

- Objective 1.5: The College will increase access and support for underrepresented students.
- Objective 3.1: The College will provide a wide range of activities and programs to meet the needs of resident and commuting students and to engage community members.
- Objective 3.3: The College will seek improvement to the transportation links to the surrounding community and to other transportation hubs.
- Objective 3.5: The College will promote campus safety and security and lifestyle practices that focus on safety, health, and avoiding the abuse and illicit use of alcohol and other drugs.
- Objective 3.7: The College will foster a hospitable and equitable environment for students, faculty, and staff.

STANDARD 8: STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND RETENTION

The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students’ educational goals.

STANDARD 9: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution’s goals for students.

STANDARD 6: INTEGRITY

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.
THE CONTEXT

This chapter demonstrates how Ramapo College meets Standards 6, 8, and 9 through its programs and services for students. It reviews the student experience on a continuum, from the admissions process through alumni involvement. The chapter addresses these standards together because they are very much interconnected in the student experience. The college’s ability to recruit, retain, and graduate students depends largely on its ability to deliver programs and services that support student learning and engagement. Similarly, student success is dependent upon the integrity of policies, procedures, programs, and services. The study group’s review of reports, existing data, performance reviews and interviews with colleagues and students revealed a common theme: a focus on student development and student learning, with an appreciation for diversity.

STUDENT PROFILE

In fall 2008, student enrollment was 5,847. Most undergraduate students were between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five (83.9%) and came from New Jersey (92.7%). Undergraduate students made up 95% of the student population and included 880 first-time freshmen and 621 transfers. Student ethnicity was 79.6% Caucasian, 8.6% Hispanic, 6.3% Black, and 5% Asian-Pacific Islander. In the same period, graduate students made up the remaining 5% of the population. A majority of these students were Caucasian females over the age of thirty. (See 2008 Institutional Profile, available in the Resource Room, for specific demographics.) While overall student enrollment has increased more than 12% since 2000, there has been very little change to the ethnic composition of the student body.

A majority of first-time freshmen (75.8%) indicated that Ramapo College was their first choice and often cited good academic reputation, college size, low tuition, and social reputation as primary reasons for choosing the college. (2008 Institutional Profile and Cooperative Institutional Research Program [CIRP] survey available in the Resource Room.)

ACADEMIC PROFILE

In fall 2008, undergraduate offerings included thirty-five majors, twenty-nine minors, and six certificate programs; graduate offerings consisted of three master’s degree programs. Students may also obtain certification in elementary or secondary education as part of their undergraduate degree or post-baccalaureate. The five majors with the highest enrollment were business administration (14.2%), psychology (11.4%), nursing (8%), communication arts (7.6%), and biology (6.9%). Almost half of graduate students (49.3%) were enrolled in the educational technology program, followed by nursing (13.6%), liberal studies (13.3%), and business administration (2.4%). (Admission to the MBA program was suspended in June 2004.) The remaining students (21.3%) were non-degree seeking (2008 Institutional Profile).

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The four major divisions of the college—Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administration and Finance, and Institutional Advancement—provide programs and services designed to meet the aforementioned standards and the college’s strategic goals of enhancing academic excellence, investing in the future, and enriching college life and community presence. (A chart listing the major student services is in the Appendix.) Some divisions have undergone significant reorganization over the past five years with the goals of linking related student services; strengthening the connection between budget, planning, and institutional effectiveness; and reinforcing student learning.

CAMPUS CLIMATE (Integrity)

Campus life is vibrant, and opportunities for student learning and engagement are plentiful and diverse. Students participate in seventy-one clubs, twenty-two fraternities and sororities, and twenty-two intercollegiate athletic teams. Students attend lectures and discussions, performances, productions and trips; engage in service learning, study abroad, cooperative education, and experiential learning; compete in intercollegiate or intramural sports;
perform in musical and theater productions; and serve on all-college committees, judicial boards, and search committees. The college offers many opportunities for students to serve as peer facilitators, tutors, advisors, and mentors in order to educate, support, and assist one another. The goal is to produce active, responsible, and engaged citizens who contribute to the vibrancy of college and community life.

Current students, alumni, and other visitors often remark on the friendly atmosphere on campus, and in 2008, the New Jersey Psychological Association awarded the college the Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award. The relatively small size of the campus, accessibility of the faculty and staff, and partnerships between units and divisions foster collaboration and communication. The faculty and staff view student learning and success as a priority. They actively engage students, attend campus and student-sponsored events, and serve as club/organization advisors and mentors.

The college has been a pioneer in environmentally green practices, and sustainability is a guiding principle in the strategic plan. In November 2007, at the urging of the Environmental Alliance Club, the president signed the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, which commits the college to climate neutrality with specific annual benchmarks. The president appointed a Climate Commitment Task Force and charged it with leading the college in carrying out these objectives. In addition to supporting ongoing efforts related to energy savings, recycling, and paperless practices, the task force partnered with students in a senior level environmental course to conduct an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions. The task force also initiated the development of an ENERGY STAR policy for purchasing and a policy for new buildings and renovations to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System silver standards or better. Students played an active role in these endeavors, including forming the organization ISTEP (Students Together for Environmental Progress), which works to make “positive, measurable changes on campus by promoting a sustainable environment” (ISTEP Web site).

The college was also a pioneer in providing a barrier-free learning and living environment and continues to lead the way in accessibility and support for students with disabilities. The Office of Specialized Services facilitates mandated equal access and provides eligible undergraduate students with federally funded academic support services beyond those in place for all students. In 2007-08, 273 students (4.6%) with documented disabilities, including non-matriculated students, sought services through the Office of Specialized Services.

Achieving and celebrating diversity within the student body, faculty, and staff are major goals of the college. The college demonstrates this commitment through its mission and goals, the efforts of the Diversity Action Committee (discussed more fully later in this chapter), and the wide variety of campus services and activities that promote a welcome and supportive environment for all. The vitality of the Women’s Center, the existence of a Queer Peer Services coordinator, and organizations such as the Black Student Union, Filipino American Student Association, Association of Latinos Moving Ahead, and International Students Organization, reflect the college’s commitment to create and nurture diversity on campus.

STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

New Jersey exports more students to colleges in other states than any other state. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Education, in fall 2006, the state exported 34,494 students to other states while importing only 4,395. New Jersey’s senior public colleges were first organized as comprehensive institutions during the late 1960s. Prior to that, the main mission of the six senior public colleges was to educate prospective teachers. As a result, students interested in a wider range of programs migrated to private colleges within the state and, in increasing numbers, to colleges outside the state. This pattern did not change when the public colleges, which now included Ramapo and Stockton Colleges, began to offer a wider range of majors. A history of students leaving the state, a persistent feeling among young people that “going away to college” could not be accomplished in so small a state; and the lack of a storied history for the public higher education system contributed to the lack of interest in public higher education among New Jersey’s high school students.
For decades, the public colleges in New Jersey worked hard to undo years of public misinformation. The colleges vastly expanded their academic offerings, added significant residential capacity, hired outstanding faculty, and embarked on a campaign to reintroduce the colleges to the citizens of the state (and elsewhere). Still, many people perceived Ramapo College as a two-year college or did not know it existed. Rankings and listings in various publications increased visibility of New Jersey’s public colleges and created renewed interest among state residents. U.S. News & World Report recently ranked Ramapo College and three other New Jersey schools among the top five public colleges in the Master’s Universities-North category.

By 2000, the college had developed a plan, called Enrollment by Design, which attempted to project enrollment for the next fifteen years based on the realities of the institution and the prospective student population. In 2007, the associate vice president for enrollment management created a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) team. The team’s purpose was to make enrollment planning an institutional priority with broad participation and a focus on attracting quality students in a competitive environment. The team developed and managed a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan (approved in December 2008) and made recommendations regarding planning, recruitment, marketing, retention, and scholarships. (SEM Plan, structure and composition available in the Resource Room.) This group met monthly to discuss risk and reward opportunities, review campus events and concerns, and discuss general enrollment and campus-wide issues. Additionally, the college established three campus-wide subcommittees to concentrate on critical areas of enrollment. These subcommittees are the Planning Committee, the Marketing Committee, and the Scholarship Committee. The three major goals identified through the plan were 1) improving the academic profile of the freshman class; 2) improving retention and graduation rates; and 3) increasing the ethnic/racial diversity of the student body. The Planning Committee, a smaller body of key constituents, meets biweekly to review internal data, examines market trends, and makes adjustments to the plan. This committee is charged with developing, maintaining, and championing the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan.

RECRUITMENT

After an analysis of the external environmental factors that will impact the college’s enrollment over the next five years, the Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Committee identified targeted populations where Ramapo must enhance its presence and recruitment efforts. According to the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education, the number of New Jersey high school graduates peaked in 2008 and will decrease approximately 4% between 2008 and 2013. Additionally, the numbers of high school graduates in the surrounding states (New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Connecticut) are also projected to decline, which will create a more competitive environment for recruitment. The team identified out-of-state and international students as critical to recruitment efforts for the college to remain competitive. Essentially bordering New York State, Ramapo has a unique opportunity to recruit out-of-state students, particularly from Rockland County. The Office of Admissions has assigned this area to a specific recruiter for further development. Additionally, each admissions recruiter has been assigned an “emerging market” territory in other out-of-state areas to explore the college’s viability in other markets.

As a result of these activities, the college’s first-time freshman applications, admissions, and enrollment increased significantly (see Figure 1). Further, with the recent reorganization of the Roukema Center for International Education, the college expects that international student recruitment and service will be enhanced. Lastly, in anticipation of the demographic changes, Ramapo has begun to look beyond the traditional-age student to meet future enrollment goals. To this end, in 2008, an associate director for adult learning and graduate admissions was added to the enrollment management staff. The Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Committee began to further explore both of these populations—adult learners and graduate students—in 2009.
All admissions policies, standards, and criteria are implemented to reflect the major goals of the college’s strategic plan. As part of the 2008 Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, the college identified three major admissions goals: 1) to stabilize first-time enrollment at 900 students annually; 2) to raise the level of academic preparedness of the entering class; and 3) to increase student diversity as defined by the strategic plan. The overall enrollment goal was exceeded in 2008, although the number of first-time, full-time students was slightly below nine hundred. The overall enrollment and the first-time and transfer goals were all met or exceeded in 2009.

Academic quality has also improved (see Figure 2). In 2000, the academic profile of a first-time, full-time student was a ranking in the seventy-third percentile of his/her graduating class with a 540 verbal SAT and a 550 math, for a combined score of 1090. In 2008, the profile was a student in the seventy-eighth percentile of his/her graduating class, an increase of 5%, with a 565 critical reading SAT and a 585 math, for a combined score of 1150, a 60 point increase. The fall 2009 statistics, although not yet finalized at the time of this writing, indicate a further increase in all areas.

FIGURE 2
MEAN ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS OF REGULARLY ADMITTED

First-Time Full-Time Students

2000-2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2000</th>
<th>Fall 2002</th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>Fall 2006</th>
<th>Fall 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Rank</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT-Verbal</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT-Math</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>587</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined SAT</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>1,135</td>
<td>1,164</td>
<td>1,176</td>
<td>1,150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Institutional Profile
To meet the aforementioned student profile goals, the college offers merit-based academic scholarships to high-achieving prospective students. Students are evaluated based on their high school grade point average, class rank, and standardized test scores. The college advertises available merit scholarships and eligibility criteria on the Admissions Web site, in the Admissions View Book, during Open House and Immediate Decision Day programs, and through the Office of Financial Aid. Students who are offered Presidential or Provost Scholarships receive a phone call from the president and are invited to a reception held at his residence. Presidential and Provost Scholarship students who choose to live on campus are placed in housing with their peers.

As suggested in both its mission and the enrollment goals, the college attempts to integrate international education through its curriculum, co-curriculum, and campus community. In 2007-08, 163 international students from fifty-three countries were enrolled at the college. The college also strives to increase its ethnic minority population by offering a series of on-site admissions programs in urban areas throughout the state. It supports visits from urban high school students to the campus and works with outside support programs, such as Operation Link Up, which serves high school students in local cities (e.g., Paterson and Newark). Despite these efforts, the college’s ethnic diversity profile is not as strong as desired. Between 2000 and 2009, the percentage of students from minority groups has remained virtually unchanged.

For 2009-10, the Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Committee is developing a comprehensive diversity recruitment plan to increase the ethnic diversity of the college. The group is setting specific goals and targets to monitor and ensure results. The college recognizes that a number of factors make it difficult to attract minority groups, including a paucity of public transportation, a lack of some high-interest majors and the lack of diversity (people and services) in the immediate community. Despite these roadblocks, the college is committed to achieving its goal of increasing the ethnic diversity of the student body.

**CHALLENGING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE THEIR BEST**

The college seeks to enroll a diverse student body and to challenge students to realize their individual potential. Whether a student is high achieving and seeking a high level of academic rigor, or he/she exhibits the potential to achieve but requires additional support, the college has programs and services to meet the need. High-achieving and self-motivated students who are curious and enjoy learning as an end in itself may apply for admission to the Ramapo College Honors Program. Unlike many programs in which applicants must simply meet academic criteria and apply, the philosophy of the Honors Program is that “good academic standing is a consequence of the engaged values of a College Honors student, not the primary goal” (College Honors Program Web site). (See Chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of the College Honors Program.)

The college also participates in the New Jersey State Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program, which is designed to increase access for educationally and economically disadvantaged students. EOF program staff members participate in admissions events and work collaboratively with Enrollment Management to recruit qualified students into the program. Program admission is based on high school grades, class rank, standardized test scores, extracurricular activities, letters of recommendation, and financial need. The academic profile for EOF students admitted in fall 2008 was a 3.0 recalculated grade point average, a ranking within the top 20% of the graduating class, and a combined critical reading and math SAT score of 900. Students who are admitted through the program participate in a comprehensive pre-freshman summer program and benefit from an array of individualized support services, including career development, mentoring programs, developmental coursework, general tutorials, and a College Reading and Study Skills course. To further its commitment to the success of the EOF program, the college dedicated Strategic Priority Incentive Funds (discussed more fully in Chapters 2 and 3) to supplement federal funds in order to fully fund the first year for all Educational Opportunity Fund students. The hope is to increase the first-year retention rates of EOF students and limit the financial impediment to completing the first year. The EOF program also offers second-year stipends for those students who meet established criteria. The Ramapo College EOF program currently serves more than 300 students.
Additionally, the college enrolls approximately 10% of the freshman class as “special admit” students. These students do not meet the college’s regular admission standards but demonstrate the potential to be successful and make contributions to the community (determined by interviews, artistic portfolios, recommendations from guidance counselors, or recommendation and sponsorship of a college employee or unit). Student athletes who are accepted as special admits also receive additional support through the Athletics Department in the form of individual advisement and weekly study halls.

Transfer students made up 41.1% of the undergraduate student population in fall 2008. Most transfers (58%) came from New Jersey community colleges. Because transfers are a diverse group, they bring with them unique challenges and needs. The college’s General Education program creates a foundation for courses within the majors; however, some students transfer in the equivalent of these courses, allowing them to “skip” the courses that many consider to be the essence of a Ramapo College education. Ensuring that transfer students are welcomed and integrated into college programs is a continuing priority.

A plan to reduce the overall number of transfers is in place, but there is likely to be pressure from the state to admit transfers given the increasing popularity of the community colleges, the NJ STARS program, and the NJ Transfer law. NJ STARS is a scholarship program that covers the cost of up to five semesters of tuition and approved fees at New Jersey’s nineteen community colleges. It is available to New Jersey residents who graduate in the top 20% of their high school class. Students must first apply for all other federal and state financial aid available to them, and NJ STARS will cover the remaining cost of tuition and fees. If a student is not eligible for financial aid, NJ STARS will cover the entire cost. Students who choose to take advantage of this program will spend their first two years at a community college and then transfer to a four-year public college or university in New Jersey. Currently Ramapo College accepts five to seven NJ STARS students per year.

Fewer high school seniors and increased selectivity are likely to lead to increased numbers of transfer students. All of the policies and procedures used in the evaluation of transfer credits are published on the Admissions Web site. There are currently four articulation agreements in place with two-year colleges in New Jersey, and two articulation agreements with two-year colleges in New York.

The college uses the NJ Transfer statewide evaluation system to ensure that information on the transferability of credits from all New Jersey two-year institutions is readily available to prospective students. Curriculum and data changes (course identifications, credit changes, etc.) that have occurred over the last several years have compromised the ability of the college to maintain complete accuracy on the NJ Transfer Web site. A task force from the Office of Admissions and the Center for Academic Advisement and the First-Year Experience will be established to assess and correct any inaccuracies by the end of 2010. In addition, the college should further develop and assess desired outcomes and goals for transfers, separate from the general student population, given the significance of this population and the unique challenges that transfers face.

MEETING FINANCIAL NEEDS AND KEEPING COLLEGE AFFORDABLE

The Financial Aid Office administers granting programs awarded to students based on need, as prescribed by the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA). This office administers federal, state, and institutionally funded merit-based scholarships. In addition, the office works with the Ramapo College Foundation and various outside agencies to administer private scholarships and federal, state, and private loan programs. Over 70% of Ramapo College students relied on some form of outside funding in 2007-08. The total amount of money distributed, including loans, was $42.6 million. Over the past five years, there has been an increase in both Pell grants (13.2%) and Targeted Assistance Grants (44.4%). The most significant increase in aid, however, has come from loans: Parent Loans for Dependent Students increased 116%, New Jersey Class Loans increased 90.7%, and private loans increased 353.3%.

Students with identified financial need may also participate in Federal Work Study, which allows them to earn money for working on and off campus. Additionally, 10% to 15% percent of the incoming freshman class each year earns academic scholarships based on outstanding achievement in high school (2008 Institutional Profile).
TRANSITIONS: HELPING STUDENTS ACCLIMATE AND ADJUST

The college views the transition and adjustment of new students as a phased process that includes orientation, advisement, and registration, first-year student assembly, personal development workshops, and the first-year seminar. Aside from the First-Year Seminar, these programs and services are coordinated by the Center for Academic Advisement and the First-Year Experience (CAAFYE).

PHASE 1

Students participating in the first phase of orientation receive information in their acceptance packets regarding placement-testing requirements in reading, writing, and/or mathematics. Based on those results and the intended major, academic advisors pre-package first-year students into beginning level coursework. At orientation, each student receives assistance in registering for a First-Year Seminar and making any other necessary schedule changes. Students can also attend peer-led workshops; sign up for access to the college’s various computer networks, and go on a campus tour.

Transfer students also attend an orientation and advisement session. Upon acceptance to the college, they receive a course equivalency report that outlines what courses have been accepted from their prior institution and how these apply to Ramapo College requirements. At that time, they also receive information regarding special requirements they must meet, such as placement testing in reading, writing, and/or mathematics. Based on the results of the assessment and the student’s declared major, professional and faculty advisors guide students in selecting and registering for the appropriate courses.

International students and students affiliated with the Educational Opportunity Fund Program, Athletics, or the Office of Specialized Services have access to additional advisement and support during their transition and throughout their academic careers. The college recognizes that these students may have challenges or needs that require specialized support.

PHASE 2

The second phase of the orientation process takes place when first-year students arrive at the college. First-year residents check into their residence halls prior to upper-class students. This gives them an opportunity to settle in and participate in programs and activities that are specifically designed to help them acclimate to the environment, meet their peers, and learn what the college expects of them. Highlights of the program are the First-Year Student Assembly and Arching Ceremony. The Arching Ceremony is a Ramapo tradition during which first-year students move in procession from the Assembly in the Bradley Center to the Arch, a major symbol and college landmark located in the center of campus. Their family members line the processional path and applaud them as they pass through. The president greets them at the Arch, where he shakes each student’s hand and welcomes him/her to the college. This procession foreshadows the future trip each student will make through the Arch as part of commencement exercises, going in the opposite direction and cheered on by faculty and staff.

PHASE 3

The First-Year Seminar (FYS) is a required course in the General Education curriculum that serves as the introduction to general education and liberal learning. It enhances the students’ orientation to the rigors of college-level work. First-Year Seminar develops students’ critical-thinking skills using open discussion, reading, writing, and experiential learning. Full-time faculty and staff primarily teach the course, usually accompanied by a trained peer facilitator. The peer facilitator offers a student perspective and provides advice and support to aid new students in making the transition to college. As part of this course, students participate in a common reading, which links them to one another and the institution. (The rest of the college is also encouraged to read and discuss the selection). In recent years, the author of the assigned book has been the speaker at Convocation, an annual event that serves as the official beginning of the academic year. Recent examples are Reading Lolita in Tehran by Azar Nafisi, Fast Food Nation by Eric Schlosser, The Canon: A Whirligig Tour of the Beautiful Basics of Science by Natalie Angier and The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow.
First-time full-time students receive academic advisement from professional staff in the Center for Academic Advisement and the First-Year Experience as well as from their First-Year Seminar instructor and peer facilitator. In their sophomore year, students may be assigned an advisor in the center. If they have declared a major, they may be assigned a faculty member in their discipline. By junior year, all students receive academic advisement from faculty members who teach in their major. They may also seek assistance from the staff in the center.

The center conducts formal assessment of student satisfaction with the orientation process and follows up with further assessment at the end of the first semester to measure student satisfaction and academic and social adjustment. The results of these assessments indicate that students are “generally satisfied” with their orientation experience, as well as with their first-semester experience. CAAFYE also tracks student satisfaction with academic advisement. Based on results from the spring 2008 National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE), first-year students evaluated the advisement they received as good (average response of 2.94, with 2 representing fair and 3 representing good). Seniors, using the same scale, evaluated the quality of advisement as 2.68. The data prompted a survey of all first-year students, continuing students, and faculty to determine the effectiveness of the current academic advisement model and identify opportunities for improvement. The results are being analyzed and are expected to help inform the development of a five-year academic advising plan.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

STUDENT RECORDS (Integrity)

Maintenance of student records has become increasingly Web-based, allowing students, faculty, and staff greater access to student information, transcripts, course registration information, policies, and procedures. With greater access to such data, students can play a more active role in their progression toward graduation. Students can use the self-help features in the online system to check bills, verify transfer credits, check grade point averages, and monitor progress against program requirements.

The Registrar’s Office provides information on academic policies, procedures, and calendars, and posts the semester class schedules online for undergraduate and graduate programs. This office maintains students’ academic records. To protect the rights of students regarding these records, the college has policies and guidelines that describe the records maintained and the provisions for releasing information, student inspection review, and record changes. All transcript, grade collection, and distribution records are maintained in accordance with legislation and established policies. Grade adjustments, program changes, course withdrawals, enrollment verifications, and transcript processing are among the services provided. Responsible offices follow the applicable government policies and guidelines (GLBA, FERPA, and HIPAA).

TUTORING

Students are offered a wide range of tutoring services and classroom support from pre-college to the graduate level. In the Center for Academic Success, professional tutors and peer tutors provide one-on-one instruction on specific topics. Peer tutors participate in a four-day training class prior to the fall semester and are required to attend faculty/staff presentations on pedagogy and demonstrate mastery in their areas. In fall 2008, the center documented 1,784 tutorial visits, which represents more than a 10% increase over the prior four years. The center’s self-evaluations and reports of its tutoring services suggest a measurable positive impact on student grades. A 2007 Writing Center report reveals that 74.7% of the students who used these services received a B- or higher in the related course (2008 Center for Academic Success data, available in the Resource Room).
RETENTION AND GRADUATION

The college has experienced significant improvement in retention over the past decade. Current first-year-to-second-year retention rates are particularly impressive, with 87.9% first-time full-time students returning for a second year (see Figure 3). Second-year and third-year retention rates are also very good, at 82.3% and 74.7% respectively (see Figures 4 and 5).

FIGURE 3

![1st-Year Retention Rate](image)

FIGURE 4

![2nd-Year Retention Rate](image)
The improvement in graduation rates is equally impressive. Full-time students who began their studies in fall 1998 had a four-year graduation rate of 36% and a six-year rate of 62.3%. By comparison, students who began in fall 2002 had a four-year graduation rate of 48.2%, a five-year rate of 67.1% and a six-year rate of 69.7%. By 2004, the four-year graduation rate for full-time, first-time students rose to 64.4% (see Figures 6, 7, 8).
Students with disabilities have found similar success at the college. First-year-to-second-year retention for students affiliated with the Office of Specialized Services who began in fall 2007 was 87.5%, which is comparable to the overall retention rate for the college. The U.S. Department of Education (2000) reports that nationwide, 53% of students with disabilities graduate within five years versus 64% of their non-disabled peers. At Ramapo, 47% of students affiliated with the office beginning in fall 2002 graduated in four years, 58% in five years, and 59% after six years. (2008 Institutional Profile)
ENGAGING STUDENTS AND PROMOTING LEARNING

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (Integrity)

In 2004, Interim President Pfeiffer established the Diversity Action Committee, consisting of faculty, staff, and students, to explore the college's accomplishments and challenges related to diversity. The committee was created to support, promote, and celebrate students, faculty, and staff of diverse ages, genders, religions, sexual orientations, ethnicities, disabilities, and economic backgrounds.

In spring 2005, the Diversity Action Committee conducted a Campus Climate Survey, developed by Rankin & Associates, to all faculty, staff, and students to assess current strengths and weaknesses and develop an action plan. The findings of the survey (available in the Resource Room) indicate that the college strives to create a diverse and equitable environment; however, there are still members of the community who do not feel sufficiently heard or welcome. While such challenges are not uncommon in higher education institutions across the country, the college has taken affirmative steps to improve the campus climate. One major step was to hire a part-time ombudsperson to serve as a neutral, independent and confidential party who can assist faculty, staff, and students in resolving disputes. In addition, the Diversity Action Committee established the annual Diversity Convocation and secured an increase in funding for the Schomburg Distinguished Visiting Scholar Program, which brings to the campus speakers and events that relate to the experiences of minorities. In addition, the Diversity Action Committee sponsors or co-sponsors guest speakers/lecturers and the Dangerous Discussions workshop series, which have included the topics of race, disability as a social construct, and social class. The college's commitment to diversity and inclusion is also illustrated through services and activities offered by the Women's Center, Specialized Services, International Student Services, Queer Peer Services and the Minority Faculty and Staff Association, among others.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

As indicated in the college's mission and strategic plan, development of the “whole” student is critical to student learning, engagement, and success. The college believes that through participation in a broad range of purposeful programs and services—including clubs, organizations, leadership positions, and other opportunities—students will learn to think critically, value diversity, and make positive contributions to college and community life.

Student involvement in out-of-class activities is significant. Of the 449 usable responses (33%) to the 2008 Graduating Senior/Recent Alumni Survey, 67.1% of respondents indicated that they had attended one or more multicultural events and 65.8% reported attending one or more international events. More than 50% of respondents reported having been involved in a volunteer/service learning project, residence hall activity, multicultural event, study abroad, or internship. More than one-third (38.3%) were inducted into a national honor society, 31.8% attended an academic conference, 28.9% worked with a faculty member on a research project, and 23.4% completed a co-op. Also notable, students serve on college-wide committees, search committees, and judicial boards, and they sit on the college's Board of Trustees.

Student involvement in clubs, organizations, and intercollegiate sports is likewise significant. The college has seventy-one clubs and twenty-two fraternities and sororities that reflect varied ethnicities, religious/spiritual beliefs, political views, areas of interest, and opportunities for community service and elected office. (The list is available on the visiting team Web site.) Students develop skills in leadership, budgeting, publicity and promotion, planning, contract negotiation, and conflict and crisis management. Students are also involved in campus life through their participation in college-sponsored programs and events.

In recent years, students have expressed interest in hosting major speakers and performers and in participating in traditions that can carry from year to year. In response, the Office of Student Development hosts two major concerts/performances each year and throughout the year sponsors renowned speakers, authors, and performers who often draw sold-out or near-capacity attendance. Additionally, funding and staff support are provided for student-initiated large-scale programs, such as the Student Government Association's “Octoberfest,” which began in 2007 and has become an annual tradition. Students also played a more active role in celebrating Founders Day,
an annual recognition of the college’s “birthday.” What was once a celebration mostly for faculty and staff, and particularly the founders of the college, now includes significant involvement of students. Students also continue to serve as advocates for social justice and change, evidenced by organizations such as Save Darfur, Ramapo Pride, and Colleges Against Cancer, as well as the Student Government Association’s active involvement in educating the community regarding higher education funding.

The college recognizes that significant learning occurs outside the classroom. Increasingly, co-curricular programs have intentional learning components and a focus on outcomes. Many programs have specific learning outcomes and participants are asked to complete surveys that include questions about outcomes. Furthermore, faculty members are encouraged to sponsor out-of-classroom programs and events that link the curricular to the co-curricular, facilitate student learning, and provide informal opportunities for them to serve as mentors. To that end, in 2004, the Office of Student Development established a faculty grant program, the Platinum series, which supports faculty-initiated activities, such as a lecture series, museum or theater trips, and walking tours of historic sites. Since the inception of this program, dozens of events have enhanced the co-curriculum (see further discussion of Platinum in Chapter 6).

Another area of improvement since 2000 is off-campus transportation. In response to the needs of a more residential student population, the college contracted with Shortline Bus Company to provide local shuttle service to area shopping centers, the train station, and points of interest. The college also negotiated with Shortline to add the college to the bus route to and from New York City. These services not only provide students with opportunities to get off campus, they enable them to explore what New York City has to offer and to participate in class trips and internships.

Fitness and sports and recreation are important to Ramapo College students. The Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center, a 117,000-square-foot facility, which opened in spring 2005, supports a wide range of intercollegiate and intramural athletic programs and provides spaces for students to socialize, practice, swim, exercise, train, and attend classes. The college competes in NCAA Division III athletics and is a member of the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) and the Eastern Colleges Athletic Conference (ECAC). As of spring 2009, there were twenty-two varsity programs with approximately 350 athletes and twenty different intramural sports programs with 5,500 participants (individuals may have participated in more than one activity) over the course of the year. Several of the varsity sports programs have enjoyed consistent success, especially over the past five years, with many qualifying for post-season tournaments and competition within their respective conferences.

Both the college and the NCAA Division III recognize intercollegiate athletes as students first and athletes second. Therefore, policies are in place to monitor student-athlete progress at regular intervals. In fall 2008, 222 (63.4%) of Ramapo’s student-athletes attained at least a 2.8 semester GPA. (Athletics PowerPoint presentation, on the visiting team Web site).

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND CAREER SERVICES

Experiential Learning is one of the four pillars of the college’s mission and is emulated in the Middle States Characteristics of Excellence. Career development is recognized as dynamic, experiential, and directly related to each person’s values, interests, skills, and personality. The Governor William T. Cahill Center for Experiential Learning and Career Services (Cahill Center) provides students with opportunities to participate in international and domestic cooperative education, service learning, community service, alternative spring break experiences, the American Democracy Project, and Student Literacy Corps. The unit also oversees the Student Assistant Program and Federal Work Study. Cahill maintains data on each facet of its offerings, including detailed demographics and “personal impact statements” from participating students, which often reflect that their experiences in these programs have had a significant impact on their learning and understanding of the world they live in.

According to the 2008-09 Cahill Center annual report, during fall 2008, 933 students participated in career workshops and programs; 275 attended Graduate School Day, where they met with representatives from sixty-three programs; 201 current students and sixty-three alumni registered with the online job bank of seventy-seven employers; and thirty-one students enrolled in one of two available credit-bearing career courses. The Cooperative
Education program facilitated seventy-seven placements in fall 2008, wherein $137,040 and 308 credits were earned. Of the fall 2008 cooperative education students who responded to a survey, 48% were offered full-time positions and 87% indicated that they would recommend their placement to other students. Through the Student Assistant Program, Federal Work Study, and Community Service programs, 925 students were hired at 715 placements, many of which are conveniently located on campus. In recent years, the Cahill Center staff has had to reevaluate programs and services to respond to changing demands and diminished resources.

LIVING ON CAMPUS

Beginning in the late 1990s, the college began a transition that would take it from being a mostly commuter college to the second-most residential college among New Jersey’s senior public colleges. The transition occurred in stages as each new hall opened (1999, 2000, 2003, 2005, and 2007), thereby giving the campus time to adjust to each increase in the residential population. Despite a tripling of housing capacity, there still exists more demand than beds. Although freshman interest in campus housing has remained fairly steady for the last several years (around 85%), the number of transfer students who are interested in living on campus has doubled (to almost 50%). In response, the college renovated Mackin Hall and Bischoff Hall to accommodate three students in each room, thereby further increasing capacity. Local hotels also have been used to provide short-term additional accommodations for students until campus rooms are available. Strategic Enrollment Management Plan goals for increasing retention and diversity, however, are likely to increase the demand for campus housing.

As residential capacity increased, a number of major enhancements were made to respond to students’ interests and needs. These include expanded dining/computer/library hours; on- and off-campus shuttle services; increased number of public safety officers and new services; more intramural and recreation programs; additional staff in Health and Counseling Services and Judicial Affairs; and increased weekend programming.

The Residence Life program has evolved over time as different staffing and programming models were tried and refined. The present model includes a master’s level professional who is in charge of each hall/complex and works with a team of student employees. To date, the model is working well. Halls are well maintained and students regularly report high satisfaction with the quality of the halls and the campus living experience. According to the Resident Study conducted by the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International/Educational Benchmarking Inc., student satisfaction with facilities rose from a mean of 5.35 in 2005-06, to 5.5 in 2006-07, and 5.54 in 2007-08 (on a scale of 1-7, with 7 being the highest level of satisfaction). Similar results indicate increasing satisfaction with other program areas. Staff and auxiliary services personnel review survey results and make recommendations based on them. In general, Ramapo College residents report higher levels of satisfaction with campus living than residents at other schools against which Ramapo benchmarks, as well as residents at all colleges that participate in the survey. (Complete survey results are available in the Resource Room.)

Becoming a residential college “transformed” the campus. It is now alive at all hours with a high level of involvement in campus activities and hall-sponsored programs. The halls are within easy walking distance of all campus facilities, so it is very convenient for students to participate in campus programs, meet with their study groups, or practice for theater productions. The number of students who remain on campus on weekends grows each year as Student Development and Residence Life add programs on Friday evenings, Saturdays, and Sundays. In addition, regularly scheduled bus transportation to New York City is a benefit for students who have internships in the city, those who enjoy theater and cultural events, and faculty looking to enrich classes with field trips.

Results from national surveys and the previously mentioned study of graduating seniors and recent alumni emphasize the correlation between student satisfaction and success and their experiences with campus living. The staff of the Office of Residence Life is dedicated to providing comfortable and safe residential facilities that are conducive to student learning and engagement.

OTHER SERVICES

Whether residents or commuters, students rely heavily on the college’s information technology services, dining services, and campus store.
Technology is ubiquitous on campus and integral to student success. The college seeks to meet all student, faculty, and staff technology needs for hardware, software, and support and service. The Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) maintains more than thirty computer labs on campus, some of which are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. ITS also provides technical support for students, faculty, and staff through maintenance of an all-campus wireless network, Internet access for the residence halls, and the Luminis portal, which provides multiple services such as e-mail and Moodle (course management system).

The information technology upgrade/replacement strategy is based on classroom usage, which is determined by a series of reports and interviews with students, deans, faculty, and staff. This strategy is also used for the computer labs/classrooms and offices. The unit strives to equip the labs with no computer technology that is more than three years old and no audio/visual equipment more than four years old. As new computer and audio/visual equipment is added, older technology is rotated to labs and classrooms that are less used.

Ramapo Dining Services, contracted through Sodexo, is another integral part of the college experience that is responsive to student needs. The dining facilities have changed significantly in the last decade, including the addition of a convenience store and the renovation of the Birch Tree Inn (resident dining facility) and the Atrium (retail dining facility). Each facility is designed to meet the needs of a community that expects quality, variety, healthy options, regional favorites, and sustainability. Fair trade coffee, fresh salads and wraps, and “green” practices and products are examples of how dining services support the mission of the college and respond to student, faculty, and staff requests. Information on dining locations, hours of operation, nutritional content, meal plans, and menus are posted online and within the facilities.

Each year, Dining Services evaluates and improves its services by soliciting feedback from customers. Methods of assessment include an annual customer satisfaction survey, comment cards in each of the facilities and mailed to catering customers, responses on the resident survey, Facebook interaction, and regular meetings with the Dining Services liaison from the Student Government Association. In a 2008 Sodexo survey of all four dining areas, 63% of the students who responded said they were either “satisfied” or “extremely satisfied.” This compares favorably to institutions the college benchmarks against and represents a 2.5% increase over 2007.

The Campus Store, operated by Follett, carries textbooks, school supplies, apparel, accessories, electronic equipment, supplies for residents, sundry items, and food and beverages. The store offers online purchasing and frequently assesses student satisfaction through customer surveys and secret shopper surveys. In addition, store management works with faculty and students to offer alternatives, such as online books and used books in order to keep textbook prices down. For example, used books rose from 37.3% of books offered in 2007-08 to 40.7% in 2008-09, representing a significant savings for students.

ACCESS AND DIVERSITY (Integrity)

The Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program seeks to “provide access to higher education and support for highly motivated students who exhibit the potential for success, but who come from families/communities disadvantaged by low income and a lack of access to quality educational preparation necessary to attend college” (Educational Opportunity Fund Program Mission Statement). Before entering their first semester of college, Educational Opportunity Fund students participate in a summer program to help them transition to their new environment. At that time, they take classes and interact with a mentor. Their first semester courses are determined and registered for them, ensuring that they are placed in the appropriate courses and with schedules that maximize their ability to succeed. During their first and second years of college, students receive peer mentors, career exploration courses, remedial classes, tutoring services, and mental-wellness-related services. During their junior year, students receive tutoring services, a career placement course, and graduate school preparation. Finally, during their senior year, students receive graduate school preparation and academic and emotional support and participate in a senior-preparation retreat. The Educational Opportunity Fund program encourages students to be community leaders and maintain a civic-minded attitude toward their college peers and communities. Assessment results have driven changes within the program, such as expanding and modifying remedial classes; remodeling the Peer Mentor program; and modifying techniques used by professional academic advisors in one-on-one sessions (Educational Opportunity Fund Self-Study, 2008, available in the Resource Room).
Students with disabilities, traditionally underrepresented nationwide, likewise find a welcoming atmosphere at the college, which made a commitment to being physically and attitudinally accessible before the federal government enacted Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The college made this commitment even before the campus buildings were erected. The Office of Specialized Services serves a dual role: to facilitate equal access to curriculum, the physical plant, and programming, and to provide academic support services for eligible students with disabilities. Students who disclose their disabilities have their progress toward their degrees monitored closely, and student satisfaction surveys are conducted at regular intervals.

The office offers students transitional programs, including workshops; individualized academic advisement; interpretation of disability-related documentation; joint determination of approved academic adjustments to equalize access (reviewed each semester); self-advocacy practice; facilitation of equal access; and guidance in navigating campus systems.

Several optional services funded by federal grants are available for matriculated undergraduates. These include a Summer Bridge experience, peer and professional tutoring, independent living counseling, learning strategies consultations, cultural enrichment, career development counseling, social activities, adaptive technology training, and mentoring. The Office of Specialized Services relies heavily on the support of a series of Student Support Services grants from the U.S. Department of Education TRIO program to fund both staff and services. In the current economy, the federal government has suspended these grant competitions for the next cycle, leaving the institution with a potential funding shortfall of approximately $300,000 in August 2011 if the grant is not renewed. Such a lack of funding could seriously impact the college’s ability to efficiently meet legally mandated academic accommodations and provide the support services that directly affect the retention and graduation of undergraduate students with disabilities.

In addition to current support programs, many colleges and universities are preparing for a wave of veterans, lured by new education benefits under the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, also known as the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Since its inception, the college has sought to provide a welcoming environment for veterans and has dedicated resources to serve this population. However, the number of veterans has been relatively small in recent years; thirteen veterans or relatives of deceased veterans were known to have been enrolled in fall 2008 (Institutional Profile). The new GI Bill is expected to generate a more significant population with different challenges and needs. The college is examining every facet of campus life to determine how to meet the needs of this population and ease the transition from barracks to residence halls. Arrangements are currently underway to collaborate with the War Related Illness and Injury Study Center of the U.S. Veterans Administration to conduct relevant programming. Given that the Ramapo College facilities were designed forty years ago to be physically accessible for returning Vietnam veterans, re-focusing on the needs of this component of the student body will be bringing the college “full circle.”

HEALTH AND SAFETY (Integrity)

Many students seek, or are referred to, medical and psychological services to assist them in eliminating barriers that interfere with academic performance and their ability to persist and graduate. The Center for Health and Counseling Services provides individual, group, and educational outreach services to help students achieve these goals. Students access direct services via appointments, walk-ins, or referrals. Health Services and Counseling Services are part of the same unit but are physically separate from one another and operate somewhat independently.

Health Services resides in a freestanding building near the south entrance of the college. The nurse practitioners, registered nurse, and a consulting physician who staff Health Services provide diagnostic and primary health care for a variety of illnesses, as well as education and prevention services. Additionally, the college has an Emergency Medical Service (EMS), which was established by students in 1999 in response to the increasing demand of a more residential population. Fully staffed by students, EMS responded to 252 emergency calls in 2008-09 and celebrates its tenth anniversary in fall 2009.

In addition to providing counseling and health services, these units conduct educational outreach via new-student and parent orientation sessions, classroom presentations, and in response to requests from student groups, faculty, and staff. Peer educators provide and support educational programs, such as the annual wellness fair and
the CHOICES program, which focuses on educating students about the effects of alcohol on their behavior and promoting self-evaluation of drinking patterns. Some students may be referred to CheckPoint, a health and safety educational program designed as a proactive intervention in the areas of alcohol, other drugs, related violence, and anger management.

MINI PROFILE

CENTER FOR HEALTH AND COUNSELING SERVICES
CHECKPOINT PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

CheckPoint is a health and safety education and intervention program for alcohol, other drugs, related violence, and anger management. Students are most often referred to the program through the college judicial affairs process when found in violation of campus alcohol/other drug policies.

ASSESSMENT

In Fiscal Year 2008, 613 students were mandated to CheckPoint. Given the increasing volume of students who are mandated to attend CheckPoint and the fact that there is only one full-time employee responsible for administering the Alcohol and Other Drug and Violence (AODV) prevention and education program, the program needed to be redesigned to accommodate the number of students in need of assessment and education and/or counseling.

In January 2009, Counseling Services incorporated AlcoholEdu (an online alcohol prevention program) into its CheckPoint program to continue to provide students with necessary education and prevention without increasing the demand on limited human resources. This allows the coordinator of substance abuse and violence prevention to quickly assess students at high-risk and to provide the necessary education and counseling. It also allows the coordinator to focus more time and effort on community outreach and prevention education.

OUTCOMES

AlcoholEdu, along with the overall CheckPoint program, has proven to be effective in educating students about alcohol and other drug use and its negative consequences. During the period June 1, 2008, to May 31, 2009, there were 562 CheckPoint sessions (including 195 initial online assessments), of which 6% were “repeaters.” Statistics from previous academic years (2001-02 through 2007-08, combined) indicate a recidivism rate of 26%.

Furthermore, Ramapo EMS reports indicate a reduction in transports to the hospital for alcohol poisoning and/or drug overdoses from 2007-08 to 2008-09:

- Fall 2007 = 22 students transported for AOD
- Spring 2008 = 17 students transported for AOD
- Fall 2008 = 17 students transported for AOD
- Spring 2009 = 12 students transported for AOD

While changing variables, different data-collecting techniques and only one full semester of data for AlcoholEdu make it difficult to draw firm conclusions, it is clear that the program has had a positive effect in educating students, reducing recidivism and freeing up staff time for more critical programs and services.
The Behavioral Intervention Team, established in 2008, assists students in achieving their academic pursuits and in promoting their health and well-being. The director of Judicial Affairs chairs the team, which includes representatives from Counseling Services, Specialized Services, Public Safety, Residence Life and the faculty. This group focuses on prevention and early intervention in situations involving serious distress or engagement in harmful or disruptive behaviors.

The health and safety of students as it relates to critical incidents regarding alcohol use, misuse, and abuse are of paramount concern to the college. Students can be reluctant to contact authorities when they or someone else is in need of urgent medical care due to intoxication. Often they fear the incident will lead to disciplinary action for themselves or others. With this in mind, the college instituted a Good Samaritan Policy in 2008. The policy enables students to report concerns without fear of formal adjudication for code of conduct violations. The judicial affairs office does, however, track cases and recommends follow-up counseling as needed.

The Public Safety office works with external law enforcement and emergency services and internal constituents to provide a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. The department regularly publishes reports, as required by law, on incidents occurring on campus and works closely with the Student Government Association liaison to ensure that student questions and concerns are addressed. Students with concerns or needs related to safety may contact the office directly, file a complaint online (anonymously, if desired) or alert the appropriate employee or office.

In 2008, Ramapo College enhanced its emergency response plan and launched an initiative to develop incident control, business continuity, and a culture of “preparedness” on campus. The college was responding to families’ concerns and a directive from the New Jersey governor following nationwide campus tragedies. A director of business continuity was appointed from within the staff to develop a campus-wide business continuity plan. With input from each of the major units and programs involved, the director identified one particular area of concern: low participation rates for the emergency alert notification system, Alert Me Now, which provides cell text and voicemail emergency notifications. To address this concern, the college now asks students to provide emergency contact numbers when they register for courses or to officially “opt out” of the program. This initiative increased participation from 30% to 90%. For less-imminent threats, broadcast e-mails and/or posted notices with the subject heading “Timely Warning” are distributed or posted.

RESPONSIVENESS AND INTEGRITY

Students receive information about their rights and responsibilities as members of Ramapo College during orientation and again (for those who live on campus) when they arrive at their residence halls. This information is available on the college Web site, in the Student Handbook and the Guide to Community Living (available on the visiting team Web site).

Additionally, there are a number of methods available to students who wish to register a complaint, submit an appeal, offer suggestions, or provide positive feedback. Informally, they can address faculty and staff directly, meet or write to the appropriate unit or division head, submit a comment or suggestion via the college’s Web site, or contact the Student Government Association. The processes for lodging formal complaints or inquiries are outlined in the Student Handbook and on the college’s Web site.

COMPLIANCE

The Affirmative Action and Workplace Compliance officer, who is also the Section 504/ADA coordinator, addresses all formal complaints of civil rights violations on campus. The officer reviews policies and procedures and consults the deputy attorney general as needed to ensure consistency and to preserve the students’ right to free speech under the First Amendment. Students who believe that they have been discriminated against are referred to the college’s Anti-Discrimination Policy Statement and Discrimination Complaint Procedures, published in the Student Handbook for grievance resolution. Over the past four years, students filed forty-seven complaints through this office. Most student-against-student complaints were resolved through informal meetings and mediation. Founded
complaints against faculty and staff most often resulted in letters of warning or reprimand or mandated training (Electronic communication from director of affirmative action and workplace compliance).

ACADEMIC JEOPARDY

The Committee on Academic Standards and Procedures (CASP) reviews cases of students who fall into academic jeopardy to determine if the students will be permitted to continue their studies at the college and under what conditions (probation, suspension, etc.). In making its decision, the committee assesses the best course of action based on the student’s explanation for his/her current circumstance; grades; likelihood of meeting graduation requirements; plan for getting back on track; and support from faculty or staff who advise, teach, or counsel the student. Over the past three academic years (2005 through 2008), 307 students were dismissed for failing to meet the required academic standards. Of these, 181 appealed and 122 were reinstated. Further data should be collected to determine the success rate of those reinstated.

GRADE APPEALS

Students have the right to appeal grades, as outlined in the College Catalog (available on the visiting team Web site). The first step in the process is to speak with the appropriate faculty member. The majority of the petitions are resolved at this stage, although the dean of each professor’s school is occasionally asked to review a case if a faculty member declines the grade appeal. Matters involving academic integrity, such as cheating and plagiarism, are referred to the Office of the Provost for investigation.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The Office of Judicial Affairs provides education and intervention related to student conduct, particularly as it relates to the college’s Code of Conduct. The college’s philosophy is that responsible student behavior and conduct is fostered by example, counseling, guidance, admonition, and adherence to college policies, procedures, and regulations. While this office seeks to educate students about the purpose and importance of abiding by policies, it also issues sanctions, when needed, to ensure future adherence to policy and to protect the general population from disruptive behavior. The office oversees adjudication of cases involving Code of Conduct violations and uses judicial boards that consist of students, faculty, and staff to hear the more serious cases. The number of cases adjudicated rose from 500 in 2002 to 907 in 2007, of which 667 were violations in residence halls. The overall increase in cases can be attributed to the increase in the number of resident students.

BEYOND THE BACCALAUREATE

The college encourages alumni to remain connected to and actively involved in the college through its Alumni Association, major college events and celebrations, and continued educational opportunities. Alumni are eligible for tuition-free coursework (one course per semester); enrollment in post-baccalaureate certification sequences or graduate programs at the college; and additional career-related support from the Cahill Center for Experiential Learning and Career Services. With the notable exception of on-campus housing, alumni students may access most of the support and services available to current students.

In the 2007-08 Graduating Senior Survey/Recent Alumni Survey, more than 82% of respondents said they intended to continue their education. This finding demonstrates achievement of the college’s goal of graduating students who are lifelong learners. Of those planning another degree, 57.5% said they would seek a master’s, 20.8% a doctorate, 19.5% a second bachelor’s, and 2.2% other professional pursuits.

There are ample opportunities for alumni to continue to make contributions to the college, such as serving on the Alumni Association Board and its subcommittees; participating in panel discussions and presentations; attending campus events; volunteering as a mentor; attending reunions; and donating to the college. Alumni are often invited to watch varsity contests, attend clinics, or help with community service projects. According to Graduating Senior/Recent Alumni surveys from the last five years, 90% of respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they received
a quality education from Ramapo College and that the courses in their major were of high quality. More than 80% would recommend Ramapo to others. Alumni giving has increased significantly over the past five years, with a 173.8% increase in the total dollars given and a 55% increase in the number of donors (2008 Institutional Profile).

FINDINGS OF THE SELF-STUDY

ACHIEVEMENTS

• Construction of five new residence halls, resulting in a residential campus
• Expansion and renovation of the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center
• Creation of the Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Committee and subcommittees
• The addition of concentrated emergency planning and crisis intervention through offices and programs such as Business Continuity and the Behavioral Intervention Team
• Strengthening the public transportation system
• Formation of the Diversity Action Committee (DAC) and subsequent Campus Climate Survey
• Increasing enrollment while maintaining or raising admission standards
• Improved retention, particularly of first-year students

CHALLENGES

• Currently the college is operating at an enrollment level of close to 5,000 FTE. This is near the capacity of the academic and student activity facilities. The college is facing capacity issues in biology, psychology, business administration, and nursing, but struggles to fill seats in other academic areas.
• Many units experienced attrition or reduction in resources, which caused the college to reevaluate programs and services and, in some cases, to reduce staffing or diminish offerings.
• Curriculum and data changes enacted at the college over the last few years have compromised the college’s ability to maintain complete accuracy on the NJ Transfer Web site.
• Increasing campus diversity

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Assess the effectiveness of out-of-state, international, and diversity recruitment efforts designed to achieve the college’s goals related to diversity and adjust as needed.
• Assess the effectiveness of recent reorganizations and adjust as needed.
• Evaluate the effectiveness of the current academic advisement structure and make improvements as needed.
• Rely less on the TRIO grant for funding programs and services for students with disabilities.
• Assess the needs and outcomes of transfer students in order to refine/improve services related to advisement, registration, and overall student services.
CHAPTER 5

FACULTY
STANDARDS 10 AND 6

Central to achieving the strategic mission of “providing a high-quality comprehensive education based on the liberal arts” is the recruitment, retention and development of a first-class faculty.

GOAL #1: ENHANCING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
(Ramapo College Strategic Plan, p 8)

The College will implement a sustainable program of faculty development designed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and increase opportunities for faculty scholarship.

STANDARD 10: FACULTY

The institution’s instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

STANDARD 6: INTEGRITY

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

THE CONTEXT

Ramapo College faculty members constitute a diverse and committed group of individuals who are fully engaged in supporting the mission of the college. The faculty has grown significantly since the last self-study, when it numbered 155. In the fall 2008 semester, 211 faculty members were employed at the college. Of these, 31.8% were full professors, 28.9% were associate professors, 35.5% were assistant professors and 3.8% were librarians (2008 Institutional Profile). Additionally, 62.9% of faculty members were tenured (Excellence and Accountability Report, 2009).

Over the past several years the college has been faced with the challenges related to the retirement of founding faculty members. Since 2004, nineteen faculty members have retired. As a result, the need to attract new faculty members and support them in fulfilling the college’s mission has become an important initiative on campus. In 2003 the administration, aiming to remain competitive with the institutions that Ramapo benchmarks against, committed to adding five full-time, tenure-track faculty each year in addition to those hired to replace retirees. Over the last five years, the college has hired fifty-six new, full-time, tenure-track faculty members to replace retired faculty and to support the growth of our programs. As Figure 1 illustrates, in just the last five years the faculty has grown nearly 10%. Furthermore, adjunct numbers have remained relatively stable.
## FIGURE 1
### FACULTY BY RANK [1]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professor</strong></td>
<td>67</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Associate Professor</strong></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Professor</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Librarian</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>-11.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>201</td>
<td></td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
<td>211</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[1] Includes both tenured and non-tenured faculty. Includes Deans, but does not include faculty serving in administrative positions. Excludes full-time substitutes hired to replace faculty on paid leave or sabbatical.

Source: 2008 Institutional Profile

Underlying all search, hiring, and retention procedures is the goal of academic excellence. First and foremost, the college seeks faculty members who are excellent teachers and scholars. At present, 93% of the full-time faculty members have a terminal degree in their fields; 76% have doctoral degrees and 17% have terminal master’s degrees (*Analysis of Faculty Profiles in the 2008–09 College Catalog*). A survey of faculty members (N= 99) clearly indicates that, as a whole, the faculty are very productive. The survey (March 2009) asked faculty members to report the number of scholarly works they produced over the last five years. (The results are displayed in Figure 2.)
FIGURE 2
REPORTED NUMBER OF SCHOLARLY WORKS ACCOMPLISHED BY FACULTY BETWEEN 2004 AND MARCH 2009 (N = 99)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Scholarship</th>
<th>Number of Faculty Reporting Each</th>
<th>Percent of Faculty Reporting Each</th>
<th>Total Number of Individual Pieces Authored</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Type of Work</td>
<td>Type of Work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Chapters</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Reviews</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalistic Pieces</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Writing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays/Scripts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Presentations</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Grants</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees Earned</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts Exhibitions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Productions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Exhibitions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: March 2009 Faculty Survey Data

Teaching excellence is an important objective at Ramapo. Small class sizes facilitate the mentoring of students and provide them with a more engaging atmosphere. Survey data collected by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning indicates that compared to other colleges, Ramapo students report enriching learning experiences and support from faculty (2008 NSSE data, available on the college’s Web site and in the Resource Room). In the 2008 Graduating Senior Survey (available on the college’s Web site and in the Resource Room), 89% of students reported having received high-quality instruction at the college and 90.4% described the courses in their majors as high quality. In addition, 89.3% of seniors reported that their Ramapo education helped them grow culturally, socially, and ethically.

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

“Inclusive Excellence is a strategy for enhancing diversity. It moves beyond numerical diversity to the creation of a systemic presence of diversity and its associated elements. It is the complex processes by which equity and excellence in all aspects of the College community are furthered” (Addendum #1 to the Strategic Plan). Diversity, broadly defined, among the faculty and staff has long been a goal at Ramapo College. The college also complies
with the New Jersey State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace, which provides every current or prospective employee the right to a work environment free from discrimination or harassment.

Given the college’s mission and strategic plan, the most relevant forms of faculty diversity to enhance student learning and create a welcoming intellectual atmosphere include the dimensions of gender, race/ethnicity, international experience, applied experience, disability, sexual orientation, and forms of scholarship related to diversity and cross-cultural understanding. Some aspects of inclusiveness are easily measured; others are confidential and have not been systematically measured (e.g., disability, sexual orientation). In striving for inclusive excellence, the college has achieved mixed success. The college actively seeks to increase diversity and eliminate discrimination in hiring, and the 2006 Campus Climate Survey Summary indicated that the majority of faculty (76%) said they had observed fair hiring practices. Nonetheless, 24% of the 176 faculty respondents reported observing some discriminatory hiring incidents.

A look at the demographic data reported in the 2008 Institutional Profile reflects the changes in faculty gender and ethnicity demographics since 2004, during which time the faculty grew from 193 to 211 members. Gender proportions have changed from 43% female and 57% male in 2004 to 46.4% female and 53.6% male in 2008. There is also a considerable age range among the faculty, as seen in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3

![Distribution of Faculty by Age](image)

Source: Human Resources

In the area of ethnicity, challenges still remain (see Figure 4). As these data reveal, the college has made little progress in increasing its representation of ethnic minority faculty. A large majority of faculty members (79.1%) are White, Non-Hispanic, and the college has no reported American Indian members on the faculty.
FIGURE 4
FACULTY BY ETHNICITY FALL 2004-FALL 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>80.1%</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>79.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2008 Institutional Profile

International visiting scholars help to diversify the faculty at the college. Each year, Ramapo hosts Fulbright scholars in addition to exchange scholars from around the globe. These scholars are provided with housing on campus and are able to register for courses offered at the college while they serve as faculty members. Figure 5 illustrates the number of international scholars who have taught at Ramapo since fall 2002.

FIGURE 5
INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS ON CAMPUS FALL 2002-SPRING 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th># of Scholars</th>
<th>Countries Represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2002- Spring 2003</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russia, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July, 2003 – November, 2003</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2003</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russia (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2003- Spring 2004</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2004- Spring 2005</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>China (2), Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2005- Spring 2006</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Russia, China, France, Spain (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2006</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2006-Spring 2007</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Argentina, Spain, France, Morocco, China, Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2007</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2007- Spring 2008</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>China, Russia, Morocco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2008</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2008- Spring 2009</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>China, Italy (2), Russia, Egypt, France</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cahill Center Reports
In addition to the international scholars, many faculty members at Ramapo bring to the classroom their international and intercultural experience and scholarship. A survey conducted in March 2009 by the study group showed that a large percentage of faculty scholarship focuses on intercultural and international issues. In the survey, twenty-seven of the ninety-nine respondents (27.3%) reported international expertise and 41 (41.4%) reported intercultural expertise. Moreover, of the ninety-nine faculty respondents, 36 (36.4%) reported fluency in at least one second language and 41 (41.4%) said they had lived in other countries for a significant period of time. As a group, faculty members reported fluency in seventeen languages and reported having lived in thirty-two countries for a significant period of time.

With respect to those aspects of diversity that are not easily measured, it should be noted that faculty members with disabilities requesting accommodations are provided such upon request. For example, the registrar has provided classrooms with specialized equipment, classrooms in quiet areas, and classrooms near reserved parking spaces for faculty members with disabilities. As our campus was designed to be barrier-free, there is less of a need than at other colleges for our faculty to request disability-related accommodations, since they are already in common practice. The college also strives to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for faculty members across lines of gender identity and sexual/affectional orientation.

**ADJUNCT FACULTY**

In 2008, adjunct faculty taught one-third of Ramapo’s course sections (Office of Institutional Research). Figure 6 presents data related to the adjuncts at the college. The adjunct rate increase in 2008 is, in part, related to a change in sabbatical policy that enabled more faculty members to take leaves (see discussion later in this chapter).

**FIGURE 6**

**ADJUNCT FACULTY 2004-2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2004</th>
<th>Fall 2005</th>
<th>Fall 2006</th>
<th>Fall 2007</th>
<th>Fall 2008</th>
<th>2004 to 08</th>
<th>2007 to 08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Adjuncts</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>195[2]</td>
<td>-6.7%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sections Taught by Adjuncts</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>-11.0%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Sections</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>-10.3%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Sections Taught by Adjuncts</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>-0.7%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Hours Taught by Adjuncts</td>
<td>1,015</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>901</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>1,133</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Teaching Credit Hours</td>
<td>3,090</td>
<td>3,124</td>
<td>3,208</td>
<td>3,212</td>
<td>3,410</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Teaching Credit Hours Taught by Adjuncts</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[1] Excludes faculty overloads, professional staff who teach, and Visiting Scholars.
[3] Excludes independent studies, co-ops, internships without weekly class meetings, sections with 0 beginning enrollment, National Student Exchange sections, and sections offered to students abroad.

Source: 2008 Institutional Profile
The policies and procedures for appointing, supervising, and reviewing Ramapo College’s adjunct faculty members are the same as those for full-time faculty. But for adjunct faculty these procedures are implemented at the unit level. Students evaluate adjuncts using the same procedures they use when evaluating full-time faculty. Peers and the specific convener also evaluate the teaching effectiveness of adjuncts on an annual basis. Compensation for adjuncts is standard based on the AFT Current Agreement. To improve communication with adjuncts, the Employee Relations Office is developing a Handbook for Adjunct Faculty. In addition, in collaboration with the AFT, the Office of the Provost sponsors an adjunct orientation session at the start of each semester.

**FACULTY SELECTION (Integrity)**

Ramapo’s new Curriculum Enhancement Plan took effect in the fall of 2006. The plan involved converting to our current unit system and redefining the faculty workload as comprising 6 teaching units. This change has improved the college’s ability to recruit better academically credentialed faculty.

Through its recruitment and hiring practices, the college seeks to enhance the diversity of its faculty. The guidelines for faculty search procedures suggest that the institution cast a wide net through publication, advertising, and sharing information with other institutions regarding vacancies. The Office of Affirmative Action and Workplace Compliance works with search committees toward that goal. (See Search Procedures for Faculty and Unclassified Staff on the Human Resources Web site.)

The Office of Affirmative Action trains all search committee chairs, who then serve as monitors for their search to ensure that the committee procedures embrace inclusiveness and avoid any discriminatory actions. The wording of advertisements, the methods used, and the crafting of position descriptions are designed to increase the breadth of the pool of applicants. Recruitment for faculty positions includes such methods as posting on listservs within the disciplines and within specialized disciplinary groups, networking with relevant graduate programs and professional organizations, recruitment at relevant conferences, and published advertisements in a wide array of publications and Web sites (Chronicle of Higher Education, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, Hispanic Outlook, Star-Ledger, New York Times, HigherEdJobs.com, and Ramapo.edu). The college also recruits at the Southern Regional Education Board Teaching and Mentoring Conference each October, which provides training for 500 minority scholars from around the nation. The college supports international faculty in terms of their residency requirements for working in the United States. For example, currently the college is sponsoring seven international (H-1B) faculty members.

**PERSONNEL PROCEDURES AND FACULTY EVALUATION (Integrity)**

Ramapo’s policies and procedures for personnel action and faculty evaluation are intended to promote the development of faculty members and to provide them with opportunities to reflect on their development over time. These policies represent the college’s commitment to attaining and maintaining excellence. The inclusion of the entire Ramapo community—students, colleagues, deans, tenure and promotion committees—reveals an institution committed to fostering each faculty member’s growth. Information gathered from faculty evaluations is used to promote continued growth and to make determinations about reappointment, tenure, and promotion.

The procedures for personnel action and evaluation are clearly defined in Section 5 of the Faculty Handbook, “Criteria for Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion and Reappointment with Tenure.” According to these criteria, personnel action and the evaluation of faculty members are based on an assessment of performance in four areas: 1) effective teaching, 2) scholarly achievement, 3) contribution to college and community, and 4) fulfillment of professional responsibilities. The Faculty Handbook provides faculty members with a more detailed description of criteria and the evidence required.

Prior to tenure, faculty members are evaluated annually by the Unit Personnel Committee, Unit Council, dean, and provost. After tenure is granted, faculty members are reviewed every five years through the Career Development process.

The procedures for evaluating teaching effectiveness reflect a commitment to gather a broad scope of information, which reflects a more objective evaluation of teaching effectiveness. Prior to tenure, teaching effectiveness is
evaluated using five sources of information. These sources include student opinions, peer observations of teaching, dean observations of teaching, a self-evaluation, and a thorough review of teaching documents during the re-appointment, tenure, and promotion processes.

Scholarship is also broadly defined in the Faculty Handbook so as to encompass multiple forms of scholarly work. This may include publications; presenting a paper or chairing a session before professional organizations, conferences, and seminars, including Ramapo College forums; exhibits, compositions, performances, and exhibitions in the fine arts and other creative work; effective contribution to professional organizations; obtaining grants and other funding; application of scholarly expertise to teaching and learning; application of scholarly expertise to community problems and projects; application of scholarly expertise in private consulting; course and program development; and completion of additional degrees where relevant to the candidate's teaching and scholarly expertise.

Contribution to the college is required for reappointment, tenure, and promotion. Contribution to the community is strongly encouraged and strongly considered in all personnel action. Service at the college is expected at all levels: All-College, Unit, and Convening Group. Examples of service include advising student groups and membership in committees or task forces that address the needs of the college and its programs. These service requirements reveal the college's commitment to engage faculty members in the development of the institution.

Professional responsibility requirements are defined according to the standards of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) as published in the AAUP Statement of Professional Ethics. It is expected that all faculty members will abide by these standards throughout their tenure and in all faculty practices. These procedures are designed to ensure that policies related to faculty are applied in an equitable manner for both tenure track and non-tenure track full-time faculty. The college has a specific policy addressing the fair application of policies “Ramapo College of New Jersey Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace” and there is extensive faculty representation on all committees that work on personnel actions. In addition, there are many mechanisms in place to inform faculty members of these procedures and to promote equitable application of them in all personnel matters.

The process of informing faculty members of these procedures begins in orientation, which is offered to all new faculty members through the Provost's Office. Orientation involves several meetings over the course of a semester. It covers information such as affirmative action, grading, technology, reappointment, grants, and advising. This orientation is supplemented at the unit and convening group levels with information and support related to expectations in all four areas of evaluation. The Faculty Resource Center, in conjunction with the Employee Relations Office, offers various information sessions on topics related to reappointment, tenure, promotion, and career development.

The Faculty Handbook, available online, serves as a supplement to the AFT Master Agreement and contains locally negotiated terms and conditions for faculty. The Faculty Handbook and the Master Contract are given to all faculty members when they are initially appointed and as revisions or updates are available.

Faculty members are also encouraged to review the information available in the Employee Handbook, which is also available online. This handbook is a summary compilation of information contained in several independent sources, which include the policies and regulations of Ramapo College's Board of Trustees and administrative rules and regulations. The handbook seeks to provide a compact reference on topics of interest to the faculty and staff. It is not intended to give complete and detailed information about all of the college's policies and procedures. Its function is to serve as a guide to administrative and academic regulations, procedures and obligations as they now apply at the college. The Faculty Assembly also serves to inform faculty of new and/or revised policies and procedures.

In cases where faculty members believe that procedures are not implemented in an equitable manner, faculty members may choose to use various supports available to them. In matters that involve grievance, discipline, or dismissal, faculty members may seek guidance or support from the union's grievance officers and/or the Employee Relations and Ethics Officer. The Affirmative Action Office receives, investigates, and adjudicates complaints regarding discrimination or sexual harassment in compliance with state and federal laws.
In 2008 the college created the position of Ombudsperson. The ombudsperson provides impartial services to all members of the college community. The position is separate from management and serves as a buffer between management and employees by advising them of their rights and the various policies that might apply to their particular case. The ombudsperson also provides mediation services. Those services are confidential with limitations as the complaints approach more serious situations, such as employment discrimination. The ombudsperson reports directly to the president and advises him on issues related to the culture of the college or other context variables that may become problematic.

When cases cannot be resolved by the ombudsperson, faculty members may choose to move forward to a formal grievance, which is processed by the Employee Relations Office. The role of the union is to represent the interest of faculty in these proceedings and to provide services as outlined by the current contract. It is important to note that since 2004 only one complaint has been carried through the entire grievance process. All other complaints have been successfully resolved without the necessity of a formal grievance process.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Over the past several years, Ramapo College has enacted many methods of encouraging faculty development. The new strategic plan asserts this initiative in goal 1.3: The College will implement a sustainable program of faculty development designed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and increase opportunities for faculty scholarship.

The policies, programs, and funding opportunities that support faculty development are described in the subsections that follow.

RE-APPOINTMENT, TENURE AND PROMOTION CRITERIA THAT EMPHASIZE FACULTY GROWTH

Faculty growth and development are expectations for achieving reappointment and tenure (see previous section on Personnel Procedures). The criteria in the Faculty Handbook emphasize professional growth in the areas of service, teaching excellence, and scholarship. As such, the approach to faculty evaluation at Ramapo is developmental, and potential areas of deficit are identified and addressed early in the faculty member’s career. Consequently, since 2005, all faculty members who have applied for tenure have been successful.

FLEX UNIT

Beginning in the fall of 2006, and as a result of the Curriculum Enhancement Plan and the conversion to the unit system, the annual faculty workload was redefined as comprising 6 teaching units (3.6 credits each) and 1 “flex unit” (2.4 credits). The flex unit represents non-teaching duties that are within the general workload, and formalize the expectation for consistent scholarly activity. Specific scholarship and/or service activities that fulfill the flex unit requirement are proposed by each individual faculty member and are reviewed by the convening group on an annual basis. The proposed activities are then submitted to the Unit Dean for approval. Proposed flex unit activities and responsibilities must further the goals and objectives of the unit and convening group and be consistent with the mission of the college (Unit Plan/Curriculum Enhancement Plan Memorandum of Agreement).

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The Career Development Program at the college is intended to enhance the natural dedication of individual faculty members and librarians (who have concurrent academic rank and tenure) to pursue a vigorous course of continuing professional development subsequent to receiving tenure at the college. Every five years, tenured faculty members and librarians shall engage in an in-depth self-study to determine how they may best advance their professional growth. Faculty members and librarians shall undergo an assessment review after being tenured for five years and shall be subject to review only once in each succeeding five-year period.

As part of this process, faculty are required to engage in intensive self-assessment that includes an assessment of
their contributions to the college, including contributions to the direction and mission of the unit, school, and college over the last five years and their intentions for future contributions. In addition, faculty members are required to conduct an assessment of their teaching effectiveness and to submit a statement of their own professional objectives and how they might best be achieved. Lastly, this process includes an assessment of professional strengths and areas for improvement.

Career development packages are submitted to and reviewed by the Unit Assessment Committee, the All-College Career Development Committee, and the provost (referred to as the president’s designee). Based on this assessment process, various forms of career assistance can be made available to faculty as needed. These can include tuition reimbursement, travel expenses, and funding to cover items necessary for completing research projects (Employee Relations).

SABBATICAL LEAVE

Sabbatical leave applications may be submitted for the purpose of pursuing a substantial project designed to yield publishable results and/or enhance competency as a scholar or teacher. Sabbatical leaves may also be granted for the pursuit of an accredited terminal degree program in an appropriate field of study. Performances and exhibitions in the fine arts are also valid reasons for sabbatical leaves. In accordance with the recently negotiated 2007-2011 AFT contract, one-semester sabbaticals are awarded at the rate of full pay, and two-semester sabbaticals are awarded at the rate of three-quarters pay. Applications for sabbatical are submitted to the unit for review and comment and then are forwarded to the All-College Research Committee. Since 2004, sixteen faculty members have applied for and been granted half-year sabbatical leaves and four have applied for and been granted full-year sabbatical leaves (see Figure 7).

FIGURE 7

In 2008, changes in the AFT contract resulted in more applications for sabbatical opportunities. As budgetary
constraints limited the number of sabbatical leave opportunities available to faculty members, the Faculty Assembly created a Task Force on Sabbatical Leave and charged this group with developing recommendations to the provost, to be used for evaluating sabbatical applications submitted at the College beginning in 2008. (Task Force on Sabbaticals Report available in the Resource Room.)

FACULTY RESOURCE CENTER

In 2003 the college created the Faculty Resource Center to promote faculty growth in teaching excellence, scholarship, and service. All faculty development initiatives are available to any interested member of the community, including adjunct faculty and teaching staff. Since its inception, the Faculty Resource Center has supported teaching excellence through a wide variety of programs and services, including faculty learning communities, teaching and writing circles, scholarship circles, topical workshops, guest lectures, individual consultations, and peer observations. The center also maintains a small library of materials related to teaching and learning in higher education and provides financial support to faculty members engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning. The center also disseminates literature and other information related to teaching excellence via broadcast e-mails to all faculty members. Participation in Faculty Resource Center programs is voluntary.

Since the center was established in 2003, 126 topical workshops have been offered, attended by 1,102 faculty members and teaching staff. The center has co-sponsored eighteen workshops focused on diversity issues with our Campus Diversity Action Committee as part of the “Dangerous Discussion Series.” Participation in these workshops has totaled 123 attendees. Faculty circles focused on teaching, writing, and scholarship have been very popular with faculty members and involve semester-long commitments to investigate and discuss issues related to teaching excellence and scholarship. Since 2003, 54 circles have been offered and have drawn 303 participants. (Faculty Resource Center Annual Reports available in the Resource Room.)

GREATER EXPECTATIONS TEAM

The Office of the Provost sponsors the Greater Expectations Team, established in 2005 to promote engagement, inclusion, and high achievement in our students by promoting excellence in teaching. The team is composed of faculty who promote campus-wide initiatives aimed at achieving excellence. Several teams of five to six faculty members and an administrative team leader have attended Greater Expectations Summer Institutes, offered by the American Association of Colleges & Universities, to develop training for Ramapo’s faculty. The training is offered during all-college faculty meetings, usually before the start of each semester. Training has focused on promoting engagement (September 2005 and January 2006), course redesign (May 2006), and assessment (April 2007, September 2008, and January 2009). (Greater Expectations Annual Reports available in the Resource Room.)

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN CENTER

The Instructional Design Center (formerly the Technology Education Center) provides training and individual support focused on technologies for teaching and learning (see Instructional Design Center Reports). Since 2005, the center has spearheaded significant training initiatives, including faculty institutes, topical workshops, and individualized training and support. Training has focused on the use of course management technologies, the development of online courses, and the use of various available tools, such as electronic portfolios and survey tools. (Instructional Design Center Report on Faculty Development Initiatives available in the Resource Room.)

According to the spring 2009 attendance report of the Instructional Design Center, 475 faculty and staff members have attended training workshops since spring 2007. In addition, 206 faculty and staff have participated in online training initiatives and faculty institutes (one- or multi-day sessions offering various workshops simultaneously).

FACULTY RESOURCE NETWORK

The Faculty Resource Network at New York University is an award-winning professional development initiative that sponsors lectures, symposia, and intensive seminars for faculty members from a consortium of colleges and
universities. The mission of the Faculty Resource Network is to “foster connection, collaboration, and collegiality through a partnership of colleges and universities dedicated to faculty development” (Faculty Resource Network Web site).

Ramapo College has been part of the Faculty Resource Network consortium since 1987. Since that time, “90 faculty members have participated in 69 programs, seminars, and workshops, for a total of 170 faculty participations” (Faculty Resource Network report).

MENTORING AND ORIENTATION

At Ramapo College, mentoring is defined as a pairing of a new faculty member with an experienced, tenured faculty member. The purpose is to help new faculty members become functioning members of the Ramapo College faculty. At present there is not a campus-wide mentoring program for new faculty. In spring 2008, the Faculty Assembly Executive Council developed an Executive Council Faculty Mentoring Task Force. The task force presented its recommendations in April 2008.

In recognition of the institutional belief that the culture of each school is significantly different to preclude a college-wide structure, we find an array of individualized programs. Each school has identified what mentoring means to them. Some are formal and others are less formal. All have a premise that the pairing of the mentor and the new faculty member needs to be voluntary.

The School of Social Science and Human Services and the School of Theoretical and Applied Science have informal mentoring programs. In each of these schools the deans meet with new faculty prior to the beginning of the new faculty member’s employment. They review course development and unit policies. Deans strongly suggest that the new faculty members take part in the wide variety of programs developed by the Faculty Resource Center. Most of the convening groups in these schools have informal processes whereby experienced faculty or the convener provides guidance as needed.

In the School of Contemporary Arts, the Communications Arts convening group has a semi-formal mentoring program. This program was developed when almost everyone in the convening group was new. The convener became the mentor to several new faculty members meeting individually or in small groups. As these faculty members have become experienced, they have taken on individual mentoring as new faculty members arrive. The convener continues to meet individually and in small groups with new faculty.

During the fall 2008 semester, under the guidance of the new dean, the School of American and International Studies has developed a more formal program. The school has a number of new tenure-track faculty and temporary faculty each year as well as a significant number of visiting scholars. A number of mentors who have been at Ramapo for at least five years were identified at the beginning of the year. These mentors were assigned to new faculty according to the field of teaching. Mentors and new faculty attend the school’s orientation sessions. Although initially the mentors will take the initiative to reach out to the new faculty member, it is up to the new faculty to request assistance.

The Anisfield School of Business has the most formal mentoring program in the college. The initial mentoring system was begun about five years ago. In 2005 a mentoring task force was developed. Each year the task force meets with new faculty members to identify their needs. Mentoring is available for junior, tenure-track, and temporary faculty members from the time they enter Ramapo through tenure. Mentoring and receiving mentoring is voluntary. Underlying the mentoring program is an orientation system. The group orientation consisting of new faculty, task force members, and mentors is held late in the summer.

Attitudes toward the present mentoring and orientation programs have not been quantitatively researched. Based on observations at Faculty Assembly and union meetings, there are considerable negative feelings about the limited orientation programs for all forms of faculty, especially for adjuncts. The Provost’s Office is presently developing an orientation program for new faculty based upon the recommendations of the Executive Council Faculty Mentoring Task Force (see Executive Council Faculty Mentoring Task Force recommendations available in the Resource Room).
FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

EXTERNAL GRANTS

Information and help gaining external grants is available to faculty members from the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs. Since 2005, seven faculty members have secured grants to support their scholarship from external agencies totaling $459,657 (grants table available in the Resource Room).

FOUNDATION GRANTS

Each fall and spring semester, the Ramapo College Foundation awards approximately twenty grants for faculty development and undergraduate research opportunities. The foundation also funds three faculty fellowships, with a commitment to fund up to five. The purpose of the fellowships is to support the college's commitment to increase the number of full-time faculty on campus. One of the largest and oldest endowments specifically for faculty excellence is the Thomases Award. The Bischoff Award, another endowed award for teaching excellence, is awarded to a faculty member each academic year. Among its goals, the foundation aims to “achieve a new level of grant activity and sponsored research with faculty each year by offering workshops and sending faculty to training opportunities” (Foundation Annual Report). This academic year, due to the unpredictable state of the investment process, the Ramapo College Foundation has been unable to accept new applications for allocations for faculty and staff members’ projects.

SEPARATELY BUDGETED RESEARCH

The Provost’s Office provides funds to support pure and applied faculty research with the aims of attracting grants and matching funds from external sources, making full use of faculty and student research capabilities, developing the college research capability as a community resource, and furthering the mission of the college (Board of Trustees Policy 319). Faculty members are able to apply for summer stipends ($5,000), funding for supplies, technical assistance, travel, and other expenses associated with a research project. These funds are referred to as “Separately Budgeted Research,” or SBR. Between the 2002–03 and the 2006–07 academic years, seventy-seven SBR grants were awarded. In the 2008–09 academic year SBR funding totaled approximately $100,000 (SBR reports, available in the Resource Room).

TEACHING, LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY ROUNDTABLE GRANTS

The Teaching, Learning, and Technology Roundtable (TLTR) is a campus-wide group with representatives from administration, faculty, professional, and technology support staff. This group seeks “to motivate and enable” campus constituents “to improve teaching and learning with technology.” The roundtable awards “Technology in Teaching and Learning” grants to engage faculty to integrate technologies throughout the disciplines. The TLTR committee reviews applications for roundtable grants. Since 2004, the roundtable program has sponsored 24 faculty projects with grant amounts ranging from $400 to $4,700 (TLTR Grant Report available in the Resource Room).

STIPENDS FOR ONLINE COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Beginning in the 2007–08 academic year, the Provost’s Office has made funds available to develop online courses. Interested faculty can apply to receive $1,000 stipends. The first time the course is taught online the faculty member is paid an additional credit for the course, in accordance with the current agreement with the faculty union. In support of this initiative, the Instructional Design Center and the Faculty Resource Center have provided training and resources to interested faculty. This initiative has been very successful in promoting the development of online courses. Since the inception of this program, forty-two courses have been adapted for online delivery and have been successfully offered to our students during summer (2008 and 2009) and winter (2008) sessions.
FUNDING FOR FACULTY AND STUDENT RESEARCH

Starting in the 2007–08 academic year, the provost made new funds available to promote collaborative research by faculty members and students. Applications for these funds are submitted to the dean, who reviews all applications and then approves or disapproves each request. The total amount of funds available to each school has been $10,000 per year.

FACULTY TRAVEL FUNDS

Travel funds for faculty members are made available through block grants provided by the Provost’s Office to each unit. These funds are intended for travel to conferences in which faculty members will be presenting their work. The specific amount awarded to each unit is based on the number of faculty members in each school. Applications for these funds are submitted to the dean, who reviews all applications and then approves or disapproves each request.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM (Integrity)

Policies regarding academic freedom are outlined in Article V of the current union agreement and in the Board of Trustees Policy #317. Faculty members are informed of these policies in writing as they appear in the current agreement and in more detail in Chapter 5.0 of the Faculty Handbook, in the section related to Professional Responsibility. According to the Employee Relations and Ethics Officer of the college, there have been no complaints or actions related to academic freedom violations.

In a faculty survey (March 2009), faculty members were asked to indicate whether they had received information about the college policy on academic freedom during their employment at the college. Fifty-seven of 99 respondents (57.6%) reported having received information about academic freedom; thirty-five (35.4%) reported not having received this information; seven respondents (7.1%) did not answer this question. Of the fifty-seven respondents who said they received information about academic freedom policies at the college, sixteen (28.1%) reported having received this information from the Faculty Handbook or by reading the Board of Trustees policy on the Web. Ten others (17.5%) reported being informed during the orientation period. Six (10.5%) said they were informed in a unit or convening group meeting; five (8.8%) said they were informed through an official memo or e-mail. Others said they learned about the policy informally through colleagues (3 respondents, or 5.3%); the local union (2 respondents, or 3.5%), or other informal means (6 respondents, or 10.5%).

FACULTY ROLE IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND GOVERNANCE (Integrity)

Ramapo College is organized into schools rather than departments. Each school is composed of faculty members from several related disciplines and each school projects its own academic identity and thematic approach in the programs it sponsors. At Ramapo, disciplinary convening groups, rather than departments, carry out the academic programs. “The convening group is the primary academic and curricular unit at Ramapo, functioning in lieu of the traditional department. A convening group is comprised of faculty teaching in the particular major, minor, or program, and reports to the dean of its primary school. Some convening groups are disciplinary while others are multi- or interdisciplinary. Faculty members may be from one school or from several (but a faculty member’s primary convening group is within his/her school). The convener, who must be a member of the convening group, is chosen by the members of the convening group from among the full-time faculty and is approved by the dean. The convener must be from the school which offers the major, minor or program” (Convener job description, available on the visiting team Web site).

The convening group structure at the college supports its interest in promoting interdisciplinarity and collegiality. The courses and requirements for each program are governed by a convening group, which is led by a convener and composed of faculty members who teach in the discipline area.

The faculty is highly engaged in developing, implementing, supporting, and evaluating all academic programs. This involvement, however, has not been without controversy. While faculty members are very committed to delivering top-quality programs, recent and recurring changes in administrative personnel have resulted in conflict regarding a number of issues: communication, shared governance, support for the liberal arts, and the timeliness of academic
discussions (see Faculty Assembly In-Service Report, May 2009 on the visiting team Web site). In response to these challenges, the president and the provost have organized meetings with both the faculty leadership and the faculty to discuss these matters and to improve communication and collaboration. These meetings began at the end of the last academic year and continue today.

The Faculty Assembly supports the role of the faculty in curricular and academic activities. The Academic and Curricular Guidelines Manual outlines the procedures for developing and proposing new programs. Once faculty proposes programs, they are reviewed at a variety of levels before leaving Ramapo College for state-level review. Programs must be reviewed and approved by the relevant convening groups, deans, unit councils, the all-college Academic Review Committee, the Faculty Assembly, the provost, the president, and the Board of Trustees (see Academic and Curricular Guidelines Manual, available in the Resource Room).

The Academic Review Committee (ARC) was established in 2002 as a standing committee of the Faculty Assembly to review curricular changes, General Education, and academic policy. Prior to 2002, the college had three different faculty committees for these functions. ARC consists of one faculty representative from each of the five schools and the library and an ex-officio administrative representative. The committee reviews all new course proposals, new program proposals, significant course changes, and significant program changes. The inclusion of any course in a General Education category also is subject to the approval of the committee. Since fall 2004, the committee has reviewed 400 course requests, six new programs, and four significant program changes.

At the program level, all academic programs undergo a variety of evaluative measures. These evaluations include a five-year self-study, a three-year planning document, and an annual program assessment. Academic programs also face an internal periodic review or an outside accreditation review every five years. Both types of reviews involve full self-studies, which are developed by faculty. Such self-studies cover all aspects of the academic programs, including curriculum, enrollments, resources, and assessment. (See Review Procedures for Academic Programs in the Appendix.) Three-year planning documents are required of each convening group. These planning documents address budgetary needs, proposed changes in the major, and other anticipated resource needs. The deans and provost review the plans.

Grade distributions for each academic program are reviewed as well. Data are provided by the registrar and reviewed by conveners and/or convening groups. Lastly, annual and ongoing program assessment activities are also in place. These activities include the consideration and review of sequencing of courses in the program (see individual program assessment plans available in the Resource Room).

At the course level, new courses undergo review by convening groups, deans, and ARC before being sent on to the provost for final approval. Approval is needed at each step (Academic and Curricular Guidelines Manual).

Faculty members assess the success of individual courses continuously by reviewing student performance on graded assignments, papers, and exams. Some faculty members solicit informal student feedback during the semester. Field supervisors' feedback is used to assess and modify fieldwork courses.

Student evaluations of the instructor and the course are ideally completed for every course, every semester. Guidelines require that the professor leave the room as the students are completing their evaluations. Faculty members are not permitted to see the anonymous evaluations until final grades have been submitted (Ramapo College Student Evaluation of Instructor and Course form available in the Appendix).

The college also encourages faculty to continuously review and make recommendations to improve the educational programs through faculty development initiatives. For example, the Faculty Resource Center sponsors programs on assessment and course design, such as the Teaching Circles (see Faculty Resource Center Annual Reports). The Instructional Design Center sponsors programs designed to promote the effective use of technology in the classroom (Instructional Design Center Annual Reports available in the Resource Room).

Members of the Ramapo community are bound by and comply with ethical standards and behavior as set forth in statutes, regulations, codes, and guidelines established by federal, state and local entities. Information about these
standards is distributed to faculty annually and is on the Employee Relations Ethics Web page. It is the role of the college’s Employee Relations and Ethics Liaison Officer to ensure that these standards are upheld.

MINI PROFILE

FACULTY RESOURCE CENTER

OVERVIEW

The idea to establish a Faculty Resource Center crystallized in 2001. The center’s mission is to promote teaching excellence; to foster faculty development, vitality, and enrichment; and to offer programs and other opportunities that support faculty as educators, scholars, and engaged community leaders and members. The Faculty Resource Center Advisory Board reviews, evaluates, and advises the center’s director regarding the formation, implementation, and effectiveness of policies and programs. Its membership consists of both pre-tenure and tenured representatives from each of Ramapo’s five schools plus the library and Instructional Design Center.

RESULTS

The center, located in E-216, offers a variety of faculty development opportunities that include workshops, teaching circles, writing circles, scholarship circles, and faculty learning communities. In addition to these faculty development initiatives, the center offers a variety of services (classroom observations or recordings, early course evaluations, individual consultations, and assistance in establishing peer mentoring relationships) aimed at supporting faculty and promoting teaching excellence. The center supports an institutional subscription to The Teaching Professor Newsletter, maintains a modest but growing library of books on various topics related to teaching and learning, and provides links to electronic materials on its Web site. The director of the center also disseminates short essays and announcements that relate to teaching and learning via broadcast e-mails.

RESOURCES INVESTED TO DATE

The resources allocated for the center are three units of reassigned time and an annual budget ($20,000 in Academic Year 2006-07, reduced to $18,000 for Academic Year 2007-08 and $13,000 for Academic Year 2008-09). The center contains a large seminar table seating about twelve people, four computer stations, a scanner, and a computer projector and screen.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES

• Continue providing services effectively with reductions in resources.

• Attract and engage all faculty in development and reflection activities.

NEXT STEPS

The center will continue to carry out its mission to support and promote teaching excellence and explore innovative strategies for engaging a broader audience.

MAJOR PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

The center currently relies on faculty opinion surveys for assessment of effectiveness as well as for the purpose of planning and program development. In the fall of Academic Year 2009-2010, workshop evaluation forms will be used to more directly assess the effectiveness of topical seminars.
CONCLUSIONS

Faculty members at Ramapo College are highly productive and engaged in scholarship, curriculum development, teaching with excellence, and providing valuable service to the college and community. Through the commitment of Ramapo’s administration, our faculty body has grown and begun to close gender disproportions in this group. While recruitment efforts have focused on continuing to achieve excellence and increasing diversity, the college continues to be challenged by difficulties in attracting faculty who are ethnically diverse. Nonetheless, our current faculty members bring significant expertise in international and intercultural issues.

Ramapo faculty members generally experience the college environment as supportive. Our convening group structure promotes collegiality and interdisciplinarity. Moreover, faculty evaluation and personnel procedures take a developmental approach that emphasizes faculty growth. That only one complaint has moved through a formal grievance process over the past five years, during which time all tenure applicants have been granted tenure, prove the effectiveness of these procedures.

Teaching excellence is promoted by a large array of faculty development initiatives and financial support opportunities. Despite the fiscal constraints faced by the college, support for faculty development has expanded over the past several years.

Ramapo College is challenged to develop more consistent and effective ways to mentor new faculty in a manner that promotes the development of a shared mission among all faculty members. It is expected that financial constraints will require the college to develop creative ways to support faculty development and to promote teaching excellence through new and existing programs. Finally, the college will continue to be challenged to increase the ethnic diversity of the faculty and to continue to address the communication and shared governance issues that have emerged over the last year.

Despite the challenges that Ramapo College will face, the faculty demonstrates a strong commitment to the college, promoting its mission in an atmosphere of integrity and collegiality.

FINDINGS OF THE SELF-STUDY

ACHIEVEMENTS

- The findings indicate that the degree of engagement of our faculty members in curriculum development, revision, and review is impressive.
- Faculty hiring, development, and retention practices are consistent with the college’s mission and strategic goals. The administration has demonstrated a strong commitment to increasing the number of faculty in support of expanding academic programs. Ramapo has strived to continue to increase diversity on our campus and to continue to recruit faculty who bring both intercultural and international expertise to the college.
- Faculty evaluation processes associated with reappointment and tenure are supportive in their approach, aimed at promoting the growth and development of faculty members.
- Under the auspices of the Faculty Resource Center and other funding sources across the college, development opportunities and support for faculty have grown and have been effective at promoting teaching excellence.
- Faculty members have received strong support for acquiring new technologies that support teaching and scholarship.
CHALLENGES

• Continuing to support faculty development initiatives and to increase the number of faculty lines given the college’s fiscal constraints

• Increasing the ethnic diversity of the faculty

• As founding faculty members retire, formalizing orientation procedures that help new faculty members assimilate while developing a shared vision among all faculty members

• Improving communication and interaction among veteran and new faculty members across school lines

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Improve the effectiveness of institutional planning to ensure that the needs of academic programs are prioritized.

• Codify orientation procedures that help new faculty members assimilate and help develop a shared vision among all faculty members.

• Improve the structure of faculty governance and the structure of interchange between the faculty and administration to improve communication and transparency in academic decision-making.

• Develop more formal structures to help create a sense of “community” in a faculty that is continuing to grow.
CHAPTER 6

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND ASSESSMENT
STANDARDS 11, 12, AND 14
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ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND ASSESSMENT
STANDARDS 11, 12 AND 14

GOAL 1: ENHANCING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
(Ramapo College Strategic Plan 2007-2012, p. 8)

Ramapo College will provide nationally recognized academic programs that support the mission of the College and provide high-quality student learning opportunities. Further, the administrative structure within academic affairs will be designed to support excellence in student learning, teaching, scholarship, and service.

STANDARD 11: EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

The Institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

THE CONTEXT

Most of the educational offerings at Ramapo College are organized around major and minor programs, the General Education program, and graduate programs. Those that are not are offered through co-curricular, certificate, and other special programs. Degree-seeking undergraduate students can choose from more than 30 majors, ranging from Theater to Chemistry to International Studies, and nearly as many minors (see complete list of major and minor programs available on the visiting team Web site). Some majors entail specified concentrations. Students pursuing the Business Administration major, for example, may concentrate in Finance, Management, or Marketing. Similarly, Sociology majors may concentrate in Criminology. Other majors are combined with professional programs. A Biology major, for example, could also pursue certification as a physician's assistant through our partnership with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

Ramapo also offers courses through its General Education program that are not associated with a particular major. These courses include College English, Social Issues, and Readings in Humanities. Finally, the college offers courses through its graduate programs in Educational Technology, Liberal Studies, and Nursing. Each educational program at the college is administered through one of the five schools—American and International Studies, Anisfield School of Business, Contemporary Arts, Social Science and Human Services, and Theoretical and Applied Science. Each major and minor, and each of the graduate programs, is housed entirely in a single school. It is possible, though, for faculty in one school to teach courses in another school. The educational offerings made available through these various programs are aligned with the college's mission, which emphasizes a commitment to a strong curriculum based on the liberal arts, focusing in particular on international education, intercultural understanding, interdisciplinary learning, and experiential learning. These commitments were emphasized further in the current strategic plan, which has as a specific goal the enhancement of academic excellence.

ACADEMIC PLANNING

The four pillars of the college’s mission—interdisciplinary curriculum, international education, intercultural understanding, and experiential learning—are the starting point for academic planning. In spring 2006 Acting Provost Ecker formed the International Education Committee (later referred to as the International Education Task Force) and in summer 2006 Provost Barnett formed task forces for the remaining three pillars. Each task force
defined one of the four pillars, developed a vision statement for it, set college and student learning goals, and made recommendations for integrating it into the curriculum (see task force reports available in the Resource Room). In summer 2007 the provost formed the Learning Goals and Outcomes Task Force and charged it with determining “what every Ramapo graduate should be able to know/do.” This task force used the four Pillar Task Force reports plus the Academic Review Committee’s General Education Report and synthesized their recommendations into a single document (available in the Appendix). All of these task forces presented their reports to the Faculty Assembly, incorporated feedback, and released final versions.

At the May 2008 Faculty In-Service, the provost presented a summary of work to-date titled “Assessment of Student Learning: What have we completed? What are we currently doing? What needs to be done?” (See Power Point slide show on the visiting team Web site). This was the impetus for establishing the assessment goals for the 2008-09 academic year, with particular emphasis on working on General Education assessment, an effort to be spearheaded by the new vice-provost for curriculum and assessment.

ASSessment AND BenChMarkING

The college looks to a number of indicators to determine if it is fulfilling its mission. Assessment occurs at the institutional level as well as in divisions, schools, programs, and units. Environmental scans and analyses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats produce information regarding student demographics; internal and external opportunities and threats; and internal strengths and weaknesses. The college assesses student needs, engagement, and experiences through national benchmarked surveys, such as the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) survey, the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE), the Association for College and University Housing Officers International Educational Benchmarking Incorporated (ACUHO-I/EBI) Resident Study, and internal assessments such as the Graduating Senior/Recent Alumni Survey.

In addition to managing many of these surveys and data, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning produces reports that include quantifiable data used to assess the college’s progress toward its mission and goals as well as comply with state and federal reporting regulations. The Institutional Profile, published annually, includes sections on admissions, enrollment, degrees awarded and student learning outcomes, faculty and instruction, student services, and administrative operations. It presents data in table format and compares current data with the previous year, as well as five-year trends. The Office of Institutional Research also prepares the Excellence and Accountability Report (now known as the State Institutional Profile). This report is sent to the state of New Jersey so that comparisons can be made among the nine state senior public colleges.

The Institutional Profile, in conjunction with the Accountability Sourcebook (available in the Resource Room), published annually by the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities, describe Ramapo’s mission within the New Jersey public higher education context and highlight Ramapo-specific initiatives and improvements. In addition, each year the Office of Institutional Research and Planning compiles the Middle States Annual Report, which provides data to the college’s accrediting body to demonstrate how Ramapo is meeting national benchmarks. Comparisons to national benchmarks and benchmarks of other organizations that the college belongs to, such as the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, aid the college in refining goals and allocating resources that further Ramapo’s mission and vision.

The college has made a clear commitment to ensure that individual courses and programs are tied to learning goals. These goals are established at multiple levels of the curriculum. Individual courses have learning goals, some major programs set learning goals at each level of course offerings, and academic units establish their own learning goals as well. At all levels, learning goals are linked to both knowledge and skills. In the Academic Review Committee’s Goals and Objectives for General Education at Ramapo College report (April 2007), for example, thirteen goals are listed and organized into three major categories. These goals, along with the goals and outcomes identified by the four Pillar Task Forces, were brought together in the all-college Learning Goals and Outcomes Task Force Report (available in the Resource Room). In the first category, “Intellectual Skills,” the goals are critical analysis; oral, written and visual communication; information literacy; and technological literacy. The second category, “Social, Global, and Cultural Knowledge,” lists as goals intercultural analysis; global awareness; historical awareness and
civic engagement; and analysis of aesthetic production/work. In the final category, “Method of Inquiry,” the goals are interdisciplinary analysis; experiential learning; scientific reasoning; mathematical reasoning; and ethical and moral reasoning.

Ramapo students’ awareness of learning goals and objectives can vary from level to level. For instance, the Academic Review Committee Manual stipulates that each syllabus includes learning goals for the course, and the committee reviews each new course to ensure that such goals are present. Thus, students taking a section of Introduction to American Studies learn from the course syllabus that they are expected to learn how to identify American Studies as a field of study; to describe and use interdisciplinary methods of analysis; and to locate, evaluate, and analyze primary sources relevant to the field of American Studies. The learning goals beyond the course level are less well known. Those that exist at the program and unit levels generally are present in internal documents and, at one school (Theoretical and Applied Science), on its Web site. For example, the learning goals for the General Education program appear in a document posted on the college Web site, but do not appear with the General Education listing in the online catalog. The Academic Plan’s goals, meanwhile, appear on the provost’s Web site.

MAINTAINING ACADEMIC RIGOR

Content and rigor in educational offerings are conceived primarily at the course and program levels. At the course level, each faculty member is responsible for maintaining a sense of the standards and practices of his or her field, and for developing courses with content and rigor to meet those standards. As new courses are developed, faculty members in the relevant convening group review the courses to ensure they comply with appropriate standards. Some convening groups, such as the history convening group in the School of American and International Studies, establish criteria for courses at each level of the curriculum, requiring, for example, a greater amount of writing in a 200-level course than in a 100-level offering. After convening group approval, unit curriculum committee approval, and approval by the dean, the new course is vetted by the Academic Review Committee, which again evaluates the course in terms of content and rigor. At the program level, major programs have several means to ensure appropriate content and rigor. First, assessment plans are developed to evaluate student learning and ensure that programs of study transmit the necessary skills and knowledge. Second, periodic self-studies are conducted, usually at five-year intervals, with a program evaluation by an outside expert. Finally, accredited programs undergo periodic re-accreditation review.

One objective in the college’s educational offerings is to integrate the upper-level General Education goals into major programs and other learning experiences. It is understood that the General Education program has a more over-arching set of goals and objectives than those conceived by major programs, which are more focused studies. At the same time, the first category of General Education goals from the Academic Review Committee report “Intellectual Skills” lists items that are shared by majors across the college. The other two categories, “Social, Global and Cultural Knowledge” and “Methods of Inquiry,” contain certain goals that may not be shared by all majors (mathematical reasoning, for instance, or historical literacy and civic engagement). The majority of courses in the General Education program also satisfy major requirements, so the goals of the program are tied to those of the majors.

Program requirements are under constant assessment by faculty members who teach in those programs. Existing policies and procedures establish, evaluate, and revise the requirements. Especially in the last three years, as the college has implemented the Curriculum Enhancement Plan, the faculty has been attentive to questions concerning major and minor program requirements. In order to revise program requirements, faculty must list the proposed changes and the rationale for them, which are then submitted for review by the convening group, the dean, and the Academic Review Committee. In some cases, the communication with the committee is for informational purposes only. In other cases, such as when the program revision involves the creation of new courses or when the program changes its name, the committee must approve the proposed revisions. If the revisions are extensive enough to require Academic Review Committee approval, the Provost’s Office must grant approval as well. Program revisions most typically occur as a result of assessment activities or in the context of five-year self-studies and re-accreditation reviews.
New educational offerings at the college generally can be initiated in two ways: faculty can conceive, develop and seek approval for proposed offerings such as majors or minors; or administrative offices can conceive new programs and then enlist faculty to develop them and provide the necessary resources. Significant new offerings, such as new majors, minors, or graduate programs, must be approved by the Academic Review Committee and brought before the Faculty Assembly for a vote. More modest offerings, such as summer programs for high school students or certificate programs, are subject to varying levels of review. The Academic Review Committee, for example, would need to review a new summer program for high school students that grants college credits. Similarly, a new certificate program would need Academic Review Committee approval but would not be brought before the entire faculty for a vote.

ACADEMIC INNOVATION

HONORS PROGRAM

The College Honors Program, redesigned in 2008, provides a special set of educational offerings designed both to enhance student learning and to create “a community of faculty and students dedicated to intellectual, creative and moral engagement” (College Honors Program Mission Statement). Established in 1989, with the first students completing the program in 1993, the College Honors Program underwent substantial review and revision in the spring of 2008. An Honors Task Force appointed by Provost Barnett drafted proposed changes in May 2008, which the new program director presented to the Faculty Assembly four months later. ARC recommended approving the program changes as well as the first two courses of the new curriculum, and in January 2009 the Faculty Assembly approved those recommendations. During the 2008-09 academic year, provisions for implementing the new program were put into place and it formally debuted in fall 2009.

The goals and objectives of the College Honors Program are clear and explicitly linked to the college’s mission statement and strategic plan. The program is designed to establish a learning community for students and faculty; to provide distinctive academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programming; and to “prepare students for a life of accomplishment through an understanding of intercultural and international issues considered critically in an interdisciplinary curriculum” (College Honors Task Force Report, May 2008, available on the visiting team Web site). These goals are linked to the following nine objectives: student-faculty collaboration; intellectual engagement; creative engagement; moral engagement; critical thinking; experiential learning; service to community; interdisciplinary competency; and international competency.

Students interested in joining the Honors Program must submit an application that includes an admission essay. Their engagement and motivation are assessed in a subsequent interview. The cohort admitted for fall 2009 consists of 28 students (from a total of 42 interviewed), including two continuing students and five transfer students. Once admitted, they undertake a course of study that has three essential requirements: a curriculum of selected courses; a College Honors Research or Experience project; and continuing contribution to the community.

The curriculum, with one course per year for those entering the program as first-year students, or one per semester for continuing or transfer students, consists of four requirements. Those entering as first-year students (a majority of those in the program) must enroll in a specified Honors First-Year Seminar. Students must also take an Honors International Issues course at the 200-level, and an Honors Ethics course at the 300-level. The courses they take for these two requirements may also count toward the college’s General Education requirements. The final course is a 400-level Honors Senior Seminar that emphasizes “interdisciplinary analysis and approaches to address contemporary social issues.” (College Honors Task Force Report, May 2008)

In addition to the special curriculum, students must complete a two-semester sequence of research or work and writing that will result in a substantial and culminating College Honors Research or College Honors Experience project. Finally, students must demonstrate a commitment to contribute to the college or to the broader community. To help oversee his or her overall development in the program, each student will now have a faculty mentor.

In addition to its specific requirements, the College Honors Program provides an array of opportunities for students
to discuss their work and develop their thinking. The newly created Honors Suite on the first floor of the A-Wing is an important setting for these opportunities, as it houses a lounge containing a computer lab as well as study and co-curricular student space, an office staffed by student volunteers from the Student Executive Board, and conference space for faculty meetings. So, too, is the annual College Honors Symposium—held for the first time in the spring of 2009—in which students present their capstone research or experience projects to family, friends, and members of the Ramapo College community. The program will also sponsor various co-curricular and extra-curricular activities consistent with its mission and its role in creating a learning community at the college. In fall 2009, for example, the program is scheduled to host a colloquium on the liberal arts in higher education. The College Honors Program is administered by a faculty director, a College Honors Advisory Committee (comprised of an academic dean and faculty from each of the college’s five academic units), and the Student Executive Board.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

In addition to the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, Master of Science in Nursing and the Master of Science in Educational Technology (the Masters in Business Administration has been suspended since fall 2004), Ramapo College is looking to expand its graduate offerings, pursuing approval for a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership and Master of Arts in Sustainability Studies (program proposals available in the Resource Room). The desire to expand graduate offerings is motivated by several goals: to capitalize on some of the college’s strong undergraduate programs, create programs for students that eliminate the need for housing, develop new revenue sources, provide programs that are both innovative and reflect the unique attributes of Ramapo College, and to further the college’s commitment to meet public needs, like the need for educational leadership.

This last goal is outlined in the Educational Leadership Graduate Program Proposal: “Current research overwhelmingly supports the claim that educational leadership is an essential ingredient in any school reform effort, as well as improving student achievement. In fact, much of this research demonstrates that school leadership is second only to teacher instruction among such school related factors” (Leithwood, Louis and Wahlstrom, 2004). According to the influential report, How Leadership Influences Student Learning, “talented educational leaders are the essential catalyst to any effective and meaningful school reform. Therefore, schools, specifically those that are deemed underperforming, are very unlikely to improve without talented leadership” (Educational Leadership Graduate Program Proposal, 2008, p. 2).

Ramapo College has always approached the training of teachers by demanding that students develop area competency—specifically, a major—in addition to taking the requisite courses in teacher education. This approach to teacher education was unique in New Jersey until recently, when state regulations were changed to mirror this model. The development of a curriculum in educational leadership at the graduate level was motivated in part by responding to the “state and national shortage of high quality administrators who value instructional excellence and create a culture that promotes student achievement” (Educational Leadership Graduate Program Proposal, 2008, p. 2). The educational leadership curriculum also reflects the college’s desire to remain at the cutting edge of teacher training and educational reform.

The Master of Arts in Sustainability Studies is an interdisciplinary program that approaches the issue of sustainability in an organic, creative way: “The concept of sustainability applies comprehensively to human inhabitation of the earth and refers to the economic and social aspects of achieving a hospitable livelihood within the earth’s ecological limits. Sustainability transcends the boundaries of three related sets of objectives to incorporate a triple bottom line: economic prosperity, social and cultural needs, and ecological resilience and restoration” (Sustainability Studies Graduate Program Proposal, 2008, p. 2).

The new program would fill a need in the region. There are existing graduate curricula in business and environmental management programs that address sustainability along relatively narrow lines. Yet no single program focuses on sustainability practice in the comprehensive way that Ramapo has proposed, with an emphasis on political, economic, social, cultural, and scientific analysis.

Both of these proposed offerings reflect the college’s commitment to develop graduate programs that build upon undergraduate strengths and that are in sync with the college’s mission. These programs will also provide students
with specific skills sets that would be useful in both the educational and corporate sectors. There remains, however, a concern among faculty regarding the impact of these new professional programs on the liberal arts, particularly regarding resource allocation and the impact on undergraduate education. (See Liberal and Professional Studies Report, September 2009, available in the Resource Room).

**EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS AND TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Transfer students currently make up 41.1% of undergraduate student enrollment (2008 Institutional Profile). All transfer students receive an evaluation within two weeks of admission that outlines which course credits will be accepted. Most transfer students (58%) come from New Jersey. Prospective transfers attending a New Jersey community college can view www.njtransfer.org to find course-by-course equivalencies. The Center for Academic Advisement and First-Year Experience (CAAFYE) and the Office of Admissions are currently updating Ramapo’s information on this Web site, which also outlines the grades needed for transferring course credits and the total amount accepted from two-year institutions (65 credits, although that will soon drop to 64) and four-year institutions (80 credits). Academic advisors are also available at student orientations to explain policies and procedures.

While a substantial number of transfer credits are accepted from other institutions, not all credits represent exact course equivalencies. Some courses may transfer in as elective courses, which could force students to retake classes entirely or enroll in supplemental courses. This may hinder a transfer student’s plan to graduate in four years. On the other hand, New Jersey mandates that all associate degrees from a two-year New Jersey college will be fully transferable to a four-year institution.

NJ STARS is a scholarship program that covers the cost of up to five semesters of tuition and approved fees at New Jersey’s 19 community colleges. It is available to New Jersey residents who graduate in the top 20% of their high school class. Students must first apply for all other federal and state financial aid available to them, and NJ STARS will cover the remaining cost of tuition and fees. If a student is not eligible for financial aid, NJ STARS will cover the entire cost. Students who choose to take advantage of this program will spend their first two years at a community college and then transfer to a four-year institution. Ramapo College accepts five to seven NJ STARS students per year.

State transfer policies help to ensure a seamless transition for students moving from a two-year to a four-year institution, and give students reasonable assurance they can complete their degrees in four years. But those policies pose challenges for the college in a number of areas, described below.

**COURSE OFFERINGS**

The college is at a disadvantage when it plans future course offerings because it does not know which courses transfer students will require. Possible solutions include enrollment restrictions in certain programs and limits on switching majors, although these options may be burdensome for students.

**STUDENT PREPAREDNESS**

Incoming transfer students who have earned an associate’s degree must be able to complete their bachelor’s degree within two years. In many programs, this may require students to take 300-level courses for which they are not prepared. Other programs, such as Teacher Education, cannot be completed in two years. The college is communicating with its major feeder schools to ensure their two-year degree programs offer the essential courses needed for students to succeed once they transfer.

**ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**

Historically, many low-income students have had no choice but to begin their higher education at a community college and then transfer to a four-year college. Due to economic conditions, many students of varying socioeconomic backgrounds are now pursuing the community college path first. This trend poses a challenge for Ramapo as the college strives to meet projected enrollment numbers.
Ramapo works diligently to ensure that state transfer policies are adhered to and that all schools within the institution are planning their curriculum accordingly. The college is working with the community colleges to strengthen curricula partnerships and is hopeful that the state will assist by standardizing the curriculum among community colleges. Ultimately, we are fully aware of the state mandates regarding transfer students and are working internally and with external parties to help ensure the overall success of our transfer students and the college as a whole.

As part of this self-study report, Ramapo conducted analyses of the difference in academic performance between transfer and non-transfer students. A sample of 1,014 students from forty-four 300-level courses was taken in the spring 2007 and fall 2007 semesters. The selected courses are among the common core courses that transfer and non-transfer students take. Students from all majors offered by the college were included in the sample study. The performances of transfer and non-transfer students were then analyzed based on grades received in the course; term grade point average (a student’s current semester performance); and cumulative GPA (a student’s performance since his or her first registration at the college).

The analyses showed there was a significant difference between transfer and non-transfer student performance in all three indicators. In general, the non-transfer students performed better than the transfer students. Specifically, transfer students received lower grades in their courses. Transfer students also had lower GPAs, both term and cumulative. (Analysis of Transfer vs. Non-Transfer Students’ Performance, 2009, available in the Resource Room). These results indicate that transfer students may require enhanced services to ease their transition to the college. Targeted services such as course transfer evaluation, information sessions, and reviews of articulation agreements are needed. The Center for Academic Advisement and the First-Year Experience is currently reviewing such enhanced services.

SUPPORTING ACADEMICS

THE POTTER LIBRARY AND INFORMATION LITERACY

The library provides students, faculty and staff with a wide array of services. Many of the following items, including all databases, are available off-campus as well.

• The open access catalog includes links to thousands of online U.S. government documents, as well as e-books selected on a title-by-title basis.

• The reference collection is always current, and the circulating book collection has been expanded through special funding over the past nine years.

• The library maintains a collection of Course Reserves materials to support faculty members’ instructional requirements for specific courses. Course Reserves materials may include books, photocopies, journal articles, video recordings, DVDs, and compact discs. In 2001, traditional Course Reserves (photocopies) were enhanced by electronic versions (PDF files) of scanned photocopies.

• Residents of New Jersey, as well as those from Rockland County, N.Y. (on the New Jersey border), may use the library and may borrow a limited number of books as long as they have applied for a community borrower’s card. In addition, Ramapo alumni, Friends of the Library, and other reciprocal borrowers from the New Jersey Academic Library Network and Virtual Academic Library Environment also have borrowing privileges.

• The library subscribes to more than 80 proprietary databases and provides access to an additional 20. Many of these services provide full-text articles. Many colleges have eliminated databases in these financially difficult times, and Potter Library lost access to more than 15 databases when the New Jersey Knowledge Initiative was not funded. Despite these challenges, every effort has been made to add the databases most requested by faculty.
• In 2008, the nursing program moved in its entirety to Ramapo’s campus (from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey). This consolidation required the addition of specific health, medical, and nursing databases. Among the new databases acquired in fall 2008 were Oxford Language Dictionaries, MathSciNet, Proquest Central, and CQ Almanac. In spring 2009, the library added SciFinder Scholar. A major recent purchase was Project MUSE, a database requested by the faculty of the School of American and International Studies.

• A complement to database coverage is the Journal Finder feature, which identifies the library’s coverage of periodicals by title (see: http://ramapo.1cate.com). This feature was also added to the databases, enabling the researcher to jump from one database to another to access the full text of each article when available.

• Library faculty added four online tutorials in the summer of 2008 that teach research basics (see http://library.ramapo.edu/libtutor.htm). Each incorporates quiz questions that allow students to determine immediately, and privately, if they have mastered the material. These tutorials could eventually take the place of the information literacy sessions for introductory-level courses. Fortunately, the tutorials were mounted in time for the rush of online courses offered during the 2008 summer session. In addition, library faculty are making efforts to create more advanced tutorials, both for general research assistance and pertaining to undergraduate program majors.

• Over the years, the library’s Web site has undergone both aesthetic and organizational changes. The current Web site went live in 2005. That year the Web site generated slightly under 150,000 visits and about 1 million hits. Prior to 2005, the Web site only averaged slightly over 4,700 visits per month. Since then use of the site has gradually increased. In 2009 the site generated more than 180,000 visits and more than 2 million hits. The library’s Web site is again being re-designed and re-structured to better serve the community. To prepare for this major change, library faculty studied both usage statistics and student and faculty responses on surveys and at roundtable discussions. This qualitative and quantitative analysis revealed the need for improved navigation and organization. A beta version of the new Web site will be ready for review by the Ramapo community in March 2010 and will go live in the summer of 2010.

• The library has long published online subject guides that provide links to online resources for further study. The format is being revamped and more inclusive pathfinders will soon be available. A pathfinder is planned for each of the undergraduate program majors.

• Online guides are prepared for the information literacy session for each class. These guides contain links to material selected for the specific course or assignment, and they remain available for the students’ use throughout the semester. In academic year 2008-2009, several librarians experimented with wikis instead of static pages to allow students to add their own material and share information. In an effort to maintain ownership of the online guides and to provide uniformity, the library recently subscribed to LibGuides. In addition to the benefits afforded by wikis, LibGuides provide a dynamic format that promotes student use through the use of interactive features, e.g., comments and rankings. LibGuides also incorporate interactive content, such as videos, and, very importantly, they capture usage statistics.

• Interlibrary loan (ILL) request forms for books or articles are available online (see http://library.ramapo.edu/ill.html). When using the Journal Finder feature, a direct link to an ILL request form is provided if the required periodical is not available either in print or online through a database.

• Reciprocal borrowing from sister New Jersey institutions, including Rutgers University, has long been available for faculty. It was recently made available for students through our consortium membership in VALE, the New Jersey Virtual Academic Library Environment.

In January 2009, the library faculty introduced a new information literacy program to the faculty, replacing a plan that did not sufficiently engage faculty participation. The purpose of the new program was to weave information literacy into the students’ four-year course of study. Library faculty identified the specific classes in which the information literacy competencies, as delineated by the Association of College and Research Libraries, could be introduced. A curriculum map displayed the desired outcomes for First Year Seminar, College English, Readings in Humanities, and the courses in particular majors. Library faculty developed the information literacy mission
statement, goals, and objectives that reflect this major undertaking. The teaching faculty was invited to provide feedback and collaborate in the vital task of infusing information literacy into the students’ college experience (see: http://library.ramapo.edu/gatewayinfolit.html).

The library’s information literacy mission statement directs the library faculty to “encourage the development of an information literate college community...by collaborating with colleagues across the campus to integrate information literacy into academic programs.” The Library Advisory Group, which is composed of all the librarians, one faculty member from each academic unit, and student representatives, was created in fall 2008 to address this need for cross-campus collaboration. Discussions by Library Advisory Group members led to the new Information Literacy Plan, “Strategies for a Progressive Approach,” which was unveiled at the Faculty Assembly In-Service on January 15, 2009.

This more flexible plan invites the convening groups to determine where students will acquire four specific information literacy competencies within the course of study in their majors (see: http://library.ramapo.edu/inservice.html). The goal of “The Plan” is for students to learn the following:

- To understand the assignment and determine how much information is needed
- To find and evaluate the information needed
- To incorporate the appropriate information
- To avoid plagiarism and cite sources correctly.

This progressive approach was well received, and meetings are scheduled for library faculty to discuss it further at convening group meetings. Library faculty members are refining rubrics for the infusion of the four competencies in 100/200, 300/400, and capstone level courses.

Another experimental approach introduced recently was the use of clickers (remote personal response systems) to gauge student knowledge on various information literacy competencies. The librarians developed a core group of questions to be used for fall 2009 “beginner researcher” level classes, with a focus on College English. The results will demonstrate which areas the librarians should pinpoint for future instruction. Students and teaching faculty members alike enjoyed the use of clickers, and the library faculty members are now able to collect assessment data that will prove useful.

**CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS**

Co-curricular programming at Ramapo College is significant and often provided in partnership with faculty. There is a long tradition at the college of faculty and staff working closely together to provide students with rich learning experiences both in and out of the classroom. The recent reorganization of the Division of Student Affairs, which now reports to the provost, emphasizes the importance of this partnership and allows for greater synergy. The experiential learning component of each course provides further opportunities for collaboration. Through co-curricular programs such as cooperative education, internships, alternative spring breaks, attendance at professional conferences, attendance at lectures, discussions and performances, and involvement in clubs and organizations, students have opportunities to learn new skills, lead an organization, make contributions to the community, contribute to social change, and acquire new understandings and perspectives of the world.

There are currently 75 student clubs and organizations at the college. The clubs represent a wide range of interests, including academic, political, cultural, social justice, religious, recreational, and special interest. The 22 fraternities and sororities also have a strong presence on campus and contribute to campus life through their service projects and social events. It is common for students to participate in more than one club or organization, and collaboration between groups is strongly encouraged through targeted retreats and special funding. Faculty and staff contribute greatly to co-curricular programs by attending events, serving as advisors, initiating programs and activities, and serving as mentors. In recent years there has been an increased effort to both link such programming to the
strategic plan and emphasize the impact that the co-curriculum has on student learning. When submitting budget proposals, clubs must indicate how these programs align with the related goals of the strategic plan and indicate the desired outcomes of the event or program. Furthermore, their mid-year and year-end reports are expected to reflect the success or failure in achieving these outcomes.

More than 12% of the student activities budget (which comes from student fees) is allocated specifically for faculty-initiated programs, trips, and conferences that benefit students. In addition, faculty members advise a majority of the clubs and organizations, which also receive funding for programs and lectures. These programs have provided students with opportunities to participate in faculty research, present papers at or attend professional conferences, visit local museums, and attend theatrical performances (see mini profile on the Platinum Series later in this chapter).

In addition to student-initiated and faculty-initiated programs, the Office of Student Development, as well as many other units across campus, offers major programs and events intended to educate, entertain, and engage students. Major lectures, concerts and performances, Octoberfest, ancestry week and month celebrations, and Greek Week provide further opportunities for student engagement. The Office of Student Development conducts regular assessments to gauge student interest and determine if the intended outcomes of programs are being met. An online survey conducted in spring 2009 revealed that approximately two-thirds of students found the events to be good or excellent, 24% found them to be satisfactory, and only 5% found them to be unsatisfactory. Individual events are also assessed to see if the learning objectives established by the office are being met. Survey results are communicated through club/organization officers meetings.

The Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies also contributes to the co-curricula life of the college. The center was created in 1980 and became a part of Ramapo College in 2002. It seeks to educate the northern New Jersey community about the tragedy of Hitler’s war against the Jews and other genocides. Today, the center continues to fulfill this mission through educational programs for people of all ages. Programming focuses on the history and lessons of the Holocaust, genocide in Armenia and Darfur, and other similar tragedies.

The center sponsors a series of annual activities that serve both the campus and broader communities. These activities include public lectures featuring leading scholars and human rights activists, Yom HaShoah and Kristallnacht commemoration events, workshops for teachers in grades K-12, a speaker’s bureau, scholarly research, outreach, the Video Testimony Project, and course offerings both at Ramapo College and for American students abroad.

Currently, the center is focused on developing a lecture series on the Armenian Genocide, sensitivity-training workshops for law enforcement, and curriculum modules on the Holocaust and genocide that correlate to the New Jersey State Core Curriculum Standards in Social Studies and Language Arts for grades K-12.
MINI PROFILE

PLATINUM SERIES

To combine the strengths of the college’s curriculum and co-curriculum activities, the Office of Student Development created the Platinum Series program in fall 2004. The Platinum Series was designed to “complement academia by providing intellectually challenging and enriching programs, as well as opportunities to experience the arts and other forms of creative expression” (Platinum Series Mission Statement). The program provides financial and administrative support for faculty to carry out a wide range of co-curricular activities. Each semester faculty members are invited to submit grant applications detailing their proposed activities—a museum trip, a visit to a historic site, an on-campus film or lecture series—and the required budget. The application guidelines for the fall 2009 semester indicate that priority would be given to projects that “provide out-of-class opportunities for students to interact with faculty,” “have a campus-wide impact and are available to all students,” “complement the academic curriculum and enhance the quality of academia on campus,” “clearly identify and outline a learning objective for the campus community,” and “involve faculty or students from more than one school.” (June 2009 Platinum Series Grants memorandum)

Grants are available for larger projects that extend through the fiscal/academic year, such as a lecture series; typically single-day activities such as a museum or theater visit; and more immediate projects that arise from time to time, such as a class-art exhibit. Since the program began, dozens of events that faculty members initiated and led have been added to the college’s co-curricular programming, such as: a trip to the Studio Museum of Harlem and El del Barrio; a “Story Hour” visiting writer series; a trip to the African Art Museum of the Society of African Missions; and a visiting lecturer on contemporary Mayan Culture.

In the 2008-2009 academic year, forty-six such events were sponsored by the Platinum Series, with an average attendance of 38 students per activity. Faculty who receive grants must agree to carry out a post-event review that includes distributing and collecting student questionnaires. It is this review process that helps ensure the learning objectives of each project are being met. The program has proven to be a great success and has been the basis for some of the most exciting and consistent co-curricular programming in recent years at the college.

STANDARD 12: GENERAL EDUCATION

The institution’s curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

THE CONTEXT

Students graduating from Ramapo College are intellectually grounded in a General Education program that embraces the ideals of a liberal arts education. Founded on the college’s pillars of interdisciplinary curriculum, international education, intercultural understanding, and experiential learning, the General Education program seeks to provide the necessary foundation to equip lifelong learners for the challenges of understanding and responding to complex contemporary issues. In order to provide an academic experience that emphasizes excellence and integrity, the program guides students through a curriculum that develops college-level proficiency in a variety of areas:

- Intellectual Skills: Oral and written communication, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy
• Social, Global, and Cultural Knowledge: Intercultural analysis, global awareness, historical literacy, civic engagement, and analysis of aesthetics

• Methods of Inquiry: Interdisciplinary analysis, experiential learning, scientific reasoning, mathematical reasoning, and ethical and moral reasoning.

These areas are embedded in a curriculum consisting of requirements (40 credits) that are carefully sequenced through two years of course work at the 100 and 200 levels (see General Education information in the College Catalog). These requirements provide basic and supplementary knowledge that prepare students for the major areas of study which are housed in the college’s thematic and interdisciplinary learning units, such as the School of American and International Studies. Each school is expected to contribute courses and faculty to fulfill general education program goals and requirements.

RECENT HISTORY

Ramapo College has made a continuous attempt to improve and expand upon its General Education program offerings. For example, as recently as 2006 the program was revised and updated with the college’s new Curriculum Enhancement Plan. This plan combined the best features of the previous General Education program with innovative pedagogical approaches. The Curriculum Enhancement Plan was the college’s institutional attempt to satisfy its General Education needs and vision and to advance our service to students:

“The better the curriculum, the greater the value of the degree, both in terms of what you gain from the content of the curriculum and, externally, in terms of how the degree is regarded within the larger community.” (Curriculum Enhancement Plan available in the Resource Room)

The new curriculum was designed to:

• Provide more consistently rigorous sets of courses in general education and majors

• Reinforce the four pillars of our mission (international, interdisciplinary, intercultural and experiential education)

• Create teaching and learning environments appropriate for a first-rate residential liberal arts college

• Enhance connections between the liberal arts and professional programs

• Continue to attract outstanding faculty and students to the institution.

REQUIREMENTS

Ramapo College requires students to complete a minimum of 10 General Education courses (40 credits) in the areas of science, social science, humanities, intercultural studies, and international issues. The General Education program is designed to provide students with academic skills and a framework of analysis to assist them in fulfilling the college’s mission. It provides for academic skills development in written and verbal communication; mathematical reasoning; introductory work in science, social science, and the humanities; appreciation of cultural diversity and international issues.

Students are prepared to think in historical terms, with an understanding of how societal divisions have been based on race, gender, class, and culture. While the General Education program begins with a Western orientation, it expands into a multicultural and global one that promotes a greater sensitivity to cultural diversity at both the local and global levels. In exploring cultural diversity, this perspective is designed to provide an understanding of the differences in human behavior and expression (see course descriptions on the Center for Academic Advisement and the First-Year Experience Web site).

The General Education curriculum is also designed to examine the relationship of the individual to the development of modern social and political institutions. A large number of General Education courses that meet the intercultural, international, and arts and humanities distribution requirements focus on personal and social capacities for
learning, cooperation, conflict resolution, individual and social transformation, and the rise of modern social and political institutions.

The basic tenet of the General Education program is to foster the development of critical thinking skills so that Ramapo students grasp the complex nature of social, political, and psychological issues in the 21st century. Each course emphasizes that the ability to think critically is essential to become an effective citizen in our increasingly global society. All of these courses serve as foundations for the skills and knowledge needed to support the college’s liberal arts mission and its four pillars. The following is a listing and description of the ten General Education requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTD 101</td>
<td>First-Year Seminar</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 180</td>
<td>College English</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOSC 101</td>
<td>Social Issues</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 Level History Course</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 Level Math Reasoning Course</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 Level Science Course</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIID 201</td>
<td>Readings in Humanities</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural North America Course</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Issues Course</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics in the Arts, Humanities or Social Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INTD 101 FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR, (100 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS**

This course is designed for first-year students. The First-Year Seminar (FYS) provides a comprehensive introduction to college-level learning. FYS courses are developed around an academic theme or topic tied to the expertise of each course instructor, providing students with the opportunity to select a seminar that best suits their interests. FYS encourages new students to participate in a community of learners, to strengthen their critical thinking skills, and to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

**SOSC 101 SOCIAL ISSUES, (100 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS**

Most students are given a choice of taking either SOSC 101 Social Issues or BADM 115 Perspectives of Business and Society as part of their General Education core requirements. Social Issues is a fundamental course providing an understanding of societal divisions based on culture, class, race, and gender. Perspectives is a course that explores modern American business.

**ENGL 180 COLLEGE ENGLISH, (100 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS**

The objective of this course is to strengthen students’ critical reading and writing. The course requires students to complete a research paper and develop information literacy. Students participate in revising, peer critiquing, and faculty-student conferences. This course supports student communication skills.

**HISTORY CATEGORY, (100 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS**

The courses in this category are designed to develop an appreciation of change over time and the often complex forces that have shaped the past. Students gain an understanding not just of content, but of historical process and method as well. Students choose one of the following courses to meet this requirement:

- HIST 101 Introduction to U.S. History I
- HIST 102 Introduction to U.S. History II
- HIST 105 Western Studies I
- HIST 106 Western Studies II
- HIST 109 World Civilization I
- HIST 110 World Civilization II
MATHEMATICAL REASONING CATEGORY, (100 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS

The courses in this category develop a student’s mathematical reasoning skills, including the formulation and solution of problems, critical thinking, and abstract reasoning.

SCIENCE WITH EXPERIENTIAL COMPONENT CATEGORY, (100 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS

This category contains 100-level science courses with a significant experiential component, such as a lab project or field work. Students in these courses will create and analyze data. A few majors outside the School of Theoretical and Applied Science specify a particular science course, but most students are free to choose.

AIID 201 READINGS IN HUMANITIES, (200 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS

This course is an introduction to major texts by authors who have produced distinctive statements about the human experience. The common core of readings includes selections from the Bible, Greek literature and philosophy, Shakespearian literature, and modern works. The course is designed to enhance students’ appreciation of the ways historical and philosophical narratives, fiction, poetry, and drama have helped enrich our understanding of human experience through extensive reading and reflective writing.

INTERCULTURAL NORTH AMERICA CATEGORY, (200 – 300 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS

This category is designed to provide students with an understanding of different cultures and the relationships among cultures and peoples within North America (i.e., the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean). Students reflect upon and analyze texts and products that illustrate the symbolic nature of culture and the exchange of meaning. Courses in this category examine cultural and artistic productions, everyday life, material and other manifestations of culture, as well as how these are linked to heritages and peoples beyond North America.

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES CATEGORY, (200 – 300 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS

The objective of this course category is to provide a context through which students learn to interpret and critically analyze recent world events, focusing on the coordination of economic, cultural, social, and political activities. Courses in this category examine the increasing interconnectedness of nations and peoples throughout the 20th and 21st centuries.

TOPICS: ARTS, HUMANITIES CATEGORY OR SOCIAL SCIENCES (200 – 300 LEVEL) 4 CREDITS

All students must take one course in one of these two categories. Arts/Humanities students must take a Topics: Social Science course and Social Science majors must take a Topics: Arts and Humanities course. All other students can choose between the categories. The topics courses address subject matter in an historical context and feature readings and/or other “texts” including film and visual arts, where appropriate.

WRITING INTENSIVE REQUIREMENT

Four writing-intensive courses are required: ENGL 180 College English, AIID 201 Readings in Humanities and two other courses. These two courses will consist of any 200–300 level writing intensive course and a disciplinary or interdisciplinary capstone course.

EXPERIENTIAL COMPONENT

Independent from the expectations covered in class, each course offered at the college requires students to perform five hours of experiential learning through the semester in order to enhance the student’s understanding of the material. Faculty have used a variety of strategies to meet this requirement, including field trips, special lectures, outside projects, performances, and reading groups.
GENERAL EDUCATION AND MAJOR AREAS OF STUDY

As outlined above, Ramapo instituted the Curriculum Enhancement Plan (CEP) for the purpose of producing a more rigorous set of courses in the General Education program, and to enhance connections with the college’s professional programs. Another goal of the Curriculum Enhancement Plan was to develop a curriculum plan that would continue to attract outstanding faculty and students to the college.

A major feature of the Curriculum Enhancement Plan was changing the number of credits for courses and reducing the number of courses required for graduation. Credits went from three to four per course in the new system, although pre-Curriculum Enhancement Plan lab courses, art studio courses, and some lecture courses were 4 credits already. In addition, classes now meet for a longer period of time and are more comprehensive in nature. The standard teaching load has now been reduced to three courses but in-class time is only 3.6 credits, so faculty members must contract a flex unit with their dean on the development of a specific scholarly or programmatic project in order to reach the 12-credit teaching load per semester required by the AFT contract (see Unit Plan/CEP Memoranda of Agreement).

Each major area of study is designed to have a coherent and well-integrated curriculum supporting the program’s goals and objectives within a highly structured liberal arts framework. The General Education program seeks to prepare students with the skills and knowledge necessary to fulfill the requirements for each program. It is incumbent upon the faculty of each program to develop assessment tools that track the manner in which General Education courses are meeting program goals and objectives. Students are oriented to the program’s goals and requirements through the College Catalog, the Advisement Center, and faculty advisors in their major areas of study.

ADMINISTRATION, ASSESSMENT AND OVERSIGHT

Although individual schools and programs are responsible for assessing their contributions to General Education and the manner in which General Education satisfies program goals, the program is also assessed through the Office of the Provost. Specifically, the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment is responsible for monitoring the progress of the program and assessing program effectiveness. Additionally, faculty resources and development for general education courses are offered through assistance and facilitation by the Faculty Resource Center and Office of the Provost. Given the lack of constancy with these positions and the decentralized structure of the college, the need for more centralized oversight in General Education is evident. A preliminary attempt at such assessment is reflected in Figure 1 (and is also described in a later section on Standard 14).

In spring 2008, pilot assessment was done in a variety of General Education courses. Figure 1 indicates the courses piloted and the goals for which one or more objectives were assessed (summary prepared by the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Global Affairs, summer 2008, available in the Resource Room). As indicated in the report, assessment instruments varied and, in some cases, the resulting data indicated more about the assessment methodology than student learning, which is to be expected from a pilot.

However, continuing to establish effective assessment strategies and program administration will be a necessary activity over the next few years. To this end, the position of associate provost for global education and curriculum was reconstituted as the vice provost of curriculum and assessment, effective summer 2008, and a new vice provost was hired. That vice provost vacated the position in June 2009. An interim vice provost was appointed from the faculty in September 2009.
FIGURE 1
STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Goals</th>
<th>History II</th>
<th>Readings in Humanities</th>
<th>Social Issues</th>
<th>Science*</th>
<th>Elementary Probability and Statistics</th>
<th>First-Year Seminar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Literacy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Depth Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the Natural World</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Analysis</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural/International Perspective</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*sections of Introduction to Biology, Introduction to Geology, Introduction to Environmental Science, World of Chemistry

Source: General Education Pilot Assessment (Spring 2008)

STANDARD 14: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation or other appropriate points, the institution’s students have knowledge, skills and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

In the last ten years Ramapo College has made great strides in creating a culture of assessment, particularly the assessment of student learning. Assessment of student learning has been institutionalized by various means: the creation of the position of vice provost for curriculum and assessment; the creation of the Assessment Office, the Faculty Resource Center, and the Academic Review Committee; regular participation in Greater Expectations; and the regular five-year program review process. Every major program has established student learning goals and is engaged in assessment. More than half the programs (60%) are at the advanced stage of assessment, having completed the cycle and loop back at least once (see Figure 4). Every program has created both direct and indirect modes of assessment, and most programs (more than 90%) have created centralized data collection and incorporated program changes due to assessment (see Figure 4). Learning goals, aligned with the college’s mission, are established and assessed at the course level (see Figures 2 and 3), program level, and unit level.

Assessment of General Education has occurred at the course level and is occurring at the program level, in part with the implementation of the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) test in Fall 2008. Assessment will be continuous under the leadership of the vice provost for curriculum and assessment. (See General Education at Ramapo College, 2006-2009, available in the Appendix.) Three of the college’s professional programs have successfully
undergone accreditation (Teacher Education, Social Work and Nursing) and the college’s business school is well on its way to AACSB accreditation (team visit, fall 2010). The president and the provost have been deeply involved and committed to the assessment process at the level of the institution as well as student learning, providing both leadership and resources. All units of the college are now engaged in both planning and outcomes assessment, which are tied to the allocation and distribution of resources (further discussion in Chapter 3).

THE CONTEXT

Since its last Middle States re-accreditation, Ramapo College has made considerable progress in the assessment of student learning by instituting more systematic and comprehensive practices in every academic unit of the college. This effort began in the spring of 2000 with the establishment of a Faculty Assessment Task Force. Each of the schools within the college, as well as the library, Institutional Research, and Academic Affairs, was represented on the panel. The task force was chaired by the directors of the Nursing and Social Work programs, both of whom had extensive experience with outcomes assessment due to their accreditation from national accrediting bodies (Nursing and Social Work self-studies available in the Resource Room).

It was deemed important from the outset that assessment of student learning be more than a mechanical process, and that it should be imbedded within the academic culture of the college. Primary focus was placed on the majors, with each member of the task force serving as a liaison to several major programs. Numerous meetings were held with the convening groups of each major for the purpose of structuring an assessment process that could best evaluate student learning in that program. No one method of assessment was prescribed as a “best practice” and each major program was given autonomy in its choice of methods. This was a slow and arduous process that was valuable not only for the improved assessment processes that resulted, but also for the greater sense of ownership achieved.

The process was in its infancy when the college began a complete curricular reform in 2001-02, with revisions to the majors, the school cores and the General Education program. This transition gave faculty an opportunity to take a fresh look at their majors, with an eye toward incorporating new assessment procedures. By June 2001, the task force received assessment reports for 78% of the majors, 60% of which had completed some analyses on outcomes data. By February of 2002, 100% of the disciplinary convening groups had included discussion of their assessment plans as part of the five-year plan for their programs.

In addition to the work of the task force, the college established a Faculty Resource Center in 2003. The center continues to sponsor programs to enhance teaching effectiveness, including workshops on early assessment of the classroom environment, e-portfolios, rubrics as tools for assessment and grading, and the fostering of deep learning through undergraduate research. In addition, periodic faculty in-service days have been devoted to assessment of student learning. In 2004, the Academic Review Committee (ARC) established uniform guidelines for all course syllabi and required the inclusion of a statement of learning objectives within the documents (Academic and Curricular Guidelines Manual and sample course syllabi available in the Resource Room).

The Greater Expectations Task Force was established in 2005. As part of the planning process for a comprehensive curricular reform, the college sent a team to the Greater Expectations Institute, a major initiative of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. The team was charged with the goal of developing a plan to assist faculty in redesigning individual courses, as well as major and freestanding minor programs and the General Education program. The intensive seminar at the institute assisted the Ramapo team in developing strategies to align institutional purposes, structures and practices, as well as to advance and assess students’ learning outcomes. The Ramapo Greater Expectations attendees returned with recommendations to more fully integrate the college mission pillars into the curriculum and also produced a series of activities that centered on course design, including interactive and intentional learning, enhancing student engagement, and learning-centered education.

In 2006, a second team attended the Greater Expectation Institute program with two primary objectives: to evaluate the integration of General Education and higher-level academic programs and to create models of assessment to improve teaching and learning. The first step in this process was accomplished over the following year, when team members worked with convening groups to produce mission statements and learning outcomes for all majors and
freestanding minors. Additionally, institutional learning goals and outcomes were identified by the newly constituted Greater Expectations Task Force. These goals and outcomes were applied in identifying learning outcomes for college’s General Education program.

The work of the Greater Expectations Institute teams and the Greater Expectations Task Force was vital to the Curriculum Enhancement Plan, which the college instituted in the fall of 2006. The transition to the new plan was assessed in 2008 by the vice-provost for Curriculum and Global Studies (Ecker Curriculum Enhancement Plan Report available in the Resource Room). The concluding report provided both qualitative and quantitative assessment data in various areas including syllabi, course sequencing, learning goals and objectives, as well as information relevant to the college’s academic goals and mission (Curriculum Enhancement Plan Report available in the Resource Room).

A primary purpose of the Curriculum Enhancement Plan was to produce a more rigorous set of courses in the General Education program and to enhance connections with the college’s professional programs. A further goal was the development of a curriculum plan that would continue to attract outstanding faculty and students to the institution. From its founding, Ramapo College has taken pride in being an excellent teaching institution. The four-course-per-semester teaching load, however, placed limitations on the amount of time that faculty could devote to more traditional forms of scholarship. A four-credit course system replaced the previous three-credit standard, thus reducing to 32 the total number of required courses. Courses now meet for a longer period of time and are more comprehensive and rigorous in nature.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS AT RAMAPO

Every major, minor, and other academic program at the college undergoes a five-year review, which includes a full self-study and an external evaluator. A report on assessment activities and subsequent plans for revisions to individual major programs is required in each self-study. To encourage faculty to take assessment seriously and to help faculty understand how to assess effectively, the review procedures for academic programs include the mandate to assess student learning. The convening group also examines the issue of connected learning, or the relationship between the structure of its curriculum and the missions of its school and the college. Every self-study describes the assessment procedures and reviews the learning outcomes of its program. Under the heading of “Goals and Objectives,” there are sets of questions pertaining to program/course outcomes, student outcomes, and curriculum/pedagogical outcomes. (See Review Procedures for Academic Programs in the Appendix.)

In addition, the convener of each major submits an annual report on its assessment activities to the school dean. In some schools, this report first goes to a Unit Assessment Committee. These reports are reviewed to ensure that program and course objectives are consistent with the college’s mission and strategic plan, as well as the school’s mission. The following discussion of the School of Social Science and Human Services (SSHS) will serve as one model of how this process unfolds.

The School of Social Science and Human Services has a Unit Assessment Committee that is designed to assist individual programs in developing their outcomes assessment procedures and to oversee the progress of each program. The committee also centralizes data collection for the school. Program conveners inform the Unit Assessment Committee of their plan and how it is linked to the college’s strategic plan, as well as the college and school missions. Program reports include discussion of the mechanisms used to assess student learning. Each program is free to develop its own particular assessment protocol and a wide range of instruments is used throughout the college (see Figure 4). Assessment methodologies include pre/post tests, content exams, portfolios, field evaluations, alumni surveys and the like. The reports note the data that have been obtained to assess achievement of learning goals and what, if any, program changes have been made due to assessment.

The Unit Assessment Committee reviews the program reports and, in consultation with the faculty of each major program, makes a determination of the stage of development for each program’s assessment procedures (see Figure 4). Those development classifications range from Initial (the program has established an assessment plan but has not yet gathered data in a systematic manner) to Middle (the program has an established assessment
plan and gathered data but has not yet acted on its conclusions or is in the early stages of “closing the loop” to Advanced (the program has a well-articulated assessment plan with a track record of instituting curricular changes in response to conclusions). The reports are sent to the respective deans for review and then forwarded to the Provost’s Office. Each dean summarizes his or her school’s assessment activities in the annual report. With small variations, this is the process in all schools. In cases where program reports are sent directly to the dean, he or she is to assume responsibility for evaluating the progress and status of each program.

PROGRESS TO DATE

In the School of Social Science and Human Services, the Unit Assessment Committee seeks to ensure that individual program objectives are as tightly linked to college and school missions as possible. The mission of SSHS is closely linked to the college mission. The school’s goals are twofold: 1) provide students with an understanding of human diversity, including the prevailing societal patterns that impede cultural reconciliation and insight, such as divisions based on race, gender, disability, social class, national origin and differing cultural backgrounds; and 2) to produce historically and socially informed graduates who are prepared to become actively engaged in civic institutions with a commitment to building a sustainable society in their respective communities.

The Social Science and Human Services core curriculum and specific courses of study are designed to provide students with intercultural understanding, interdisciplinary focus, and experiential learning. This educational process begins with two School Core courses, Social Issues and History of Social Thought, which are designed to provide grounding in these areas. Each of these courses has an interdisciplinary focus and provides a multicultural approach to the subject matter. These core courses, like courses in the various SSHS programs, have specific objectives that reflect these concerns. In addition, there are categorical core requirements, in the areas of Consciousness/Society and Sustainability, which reinforce the college’s mission. Each core course must have objectives that meet one or more of the following goals: civic engagement; mining diversity; historical grounding; sustainability; and understanding race, gender, and power.

Experiential Learning or Independent Study is required and provided to every student in the school. Each discipline in the school is expected to have program and individual course objectives that reflect some of these aspects. As an example, the core course Social Issues instituted pre-and post-testing beginning with the 2007-08 academic year. Data indicated that students demonstrated satisfactory understanding of issues related to race and class but maintained misconceptions of issues related to gender and gender orientation. As a result, the course has been revised to include greater attention to these issues (Social Issues Report available in the Resource Room).

The Unit Assessment Committee also investigates the curricular changes that have been made as a result of assessment procedures in the major program. The SSHS results have varied with each program, depending on its stage of development. The externally accredited programs like Social Work and Teacher Education have well-developed assessment plans and clearly articulate the changes made in response to assessment in their accreditation documents. For example, through evaluation of their portfolio assessment process, the Teacher Education Program identified a need for greater attention to the areas of multicultural focus and special needs populations. Social Work noted that it had responded to outcomes assessment findings by including more content on the application of evidence-based practice in student “signature” assignments, as well as in field instructor workshops.

In their required five-year reviews and assessment reports, SSHS programs that are not externally accredited also indicate significant changes made as a result of assessment procedures. After reviewing its assessment instruments, the Psychology faculty determined it needed to introduce more biological content at an earlier point in the major, as well as provide better structure and more content on learning and perception. The Environmental Studies faculty also made significant curricular changes due to assessment: it added a requirement, Geographical Information Systems, to provide a methodological course with enhanced quantitative and technical skill development; added a requirement for study abroad or field study to ensure that students have cross-cultural and global experiences and the opportunity to conduct field observation; developed a World Sustainability course to ensure that students have a comprehensive introduction to sustainability within a global framework; and added a field lab to the Basic Ecology course to remediate insufficient field skills.
The Sociology program is in the process of instituting a number of changes as a result of its outcomes assessment process. These changes include: increased focus on teaching formal sociological writing; greater consistency in teaching basic theoretical arguments and their application to empirical phenomena; improvement in the articulation between the required fieldwork course and future career and graduate school goals; and improved preparation of students for employment and graduate school applications. Other majors, such as Africana Studies and Law and Society, are completing their initial stage of development, beginning to analyze outcomes assessment data and have yet to report curriculum changes (Sociology Report available in the Resource Room).

In the School of American and International Studies (AIS), assessment reports are sent directly to the school dean. AIS majors are closely linked to the school and college missions. For example, the American Studies major has program goals closely linked with interdisciplinary learning, critical thinking, experiential learning, intercultural and international education, and understanding of historical change. The AIS assessment plan has clearly articulated measurement tools for each program goal, with students tested at the 100 and 300 levels. While AIS is only in the second year of gathering data at the unit level, assessment and curriculum modifications have occurred at the program level for several years. For example, the AIS Literature major developed a matrix that identifies specific skills students should attain at the 100 and 400 levels and assesses outcomes through a review of randomly selected work at both levels (AIS Literature Report available in the Resource Room). The Liberal Studies major has three concentrations and tracks students’ achievement of learning goals in specific courses through a variety of methods, ranging from entry and exit surveys to textual analysis. The Spanish Language program has one of the most well-developed assessment procedures in AIS. The program uses American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines and Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999) as the foundation for its assessment plan. Specified levels of student achievement are measured over a three-year period.

**MINI PROFILE**

**HISTORY**

The History program has a well-developed assessment process, having conducted assessment from the 100 level to the 400 level of course work using rubrics, the random analysis of papers and pre- and post-testing to gather data. The History program is in the third year of collecting data and is making changes based on these results (History Report available in the Resource Room). For example, one finding had to due with the fact that students in the required 200 level Historiography class “did not always critically analyze the relationship between primary sources and historiography”. The History group decided to put greater emphasis in this course on emphasizing how “historiographical shifts are often tied to changes in how historians select and analyze primary sources” (2009), thus closing the loop. In addition, the creation of this 200 level course in Historiography emerged as a result of the first round of assessment in the major, (History Program Self-Study, 2005, available in the Resource Room), demonstrating again that assessment is a continuous process.

In the School of Theoretical and Applied Science (TAS), two faculty members have taken the responsibility for facilitating assessment work. These faculty members have attended Greater Expectations summer seminars on assessment, assisted convening groups in developing their assessment plans, and spearheaded efforts to collect and critique program assessment plans. All programs in TAS have well-articulated missions and goals related to the school and college.
MINI PROFILE

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

The Environmental Science program implements a multi-disciplinary approach in preparing students to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century. The curriculum is heavily experiential in nature, with strong laboratory and fieldwork components in most courses. The goals and learning objectives of the major are organized into two groups: content-knowledge and skills (both technical and communication). All courses use the same set of rubrics for written assignments and oral presentations, adjusted for course level, and longitudinal tracking is employed across the curriculum. A 400-level field-research course and the capstone seminar serve as two major junctures for cumulative assessment. The faculty conduct ongoing curricular review, and since 2007 have instituted a new capstone seminar and a course in Environmental Science and Society. The longitudinal tracking process and capstone seminar identified weakness in students' communication skills. To address this weakness, in 2009 several lower-level courses designated class time to developing these skills.

Most TAS programs are in the early stages of gathering assessment data and some curricular changes have been implemented as a result of outcomes assessment. As one example, in 2007 the Biology program instituted changes based on assessment data. After determining that students were not performing well on plant biology questions in the SAT biology area test administered to a group of biology graduates, the program added more plant biology material to the Fundamentals of Biology course. Additionally, assessment data showed that students in the Evolution course were not consistently using the proper format for citations in their term papers. To remediate this, a special module on proper formatting of references, as well as many examples of reference formatting, has been added to the course. The Biology program reports that term papers in the Evolution course have greatly improved (Biology Report available in the Resource Room).

The TAS Computer Science program also used assessments to make several substantial changes. Analysis of data led to: greater emphasis on teaching Windows vs. Unix-based operating systems and programming; the introduction of .NET Environment for use in the major; a new course in financial modeling; and a broader incorporation of software design tools known as IDEs, or Integrated Design Environments, and source control tools in the software design course (Computer Science Report available in the Resource Room). In the mathematics program, student performance in General Education mathematics courses has been assessed and used to redesign and implement developmental courses. Student performance in the general education and the freshman and sophomore level Mathematics major courses is directly tied to the staffing and hours of the tutoring provided by the Center for Academic Success.

The TAS Nursing Program has a comprehensive assessment plan and has implemented a number of curricular changes as a result of outcomes review. In the BS program, the Nursing faculty found that juniors entering the Nursing sequence were weak in the math needed to administer medication. Based on results from the Tests of Essential Academic Skills given to these students, the Nursing faculty added an instructional module to their skills instruction and additional content to the second semester Pharmacology course. In 2006, based on low scores for the standardized content exam for the Pharmacology course, the course was re-designed and assigned to a different faculty member. Scores on the same exam in fall 2008 have risen to above the national benchmark. As part of a 2006 review of self-evaluations, master’s degree graduates told the Nursing faculty that the program needed to better reflect the National League for Nursing Educator competencies. The 2007 evaluation tool and program outcomes were subsequently re-designed to reflect these professional standards. Self-evaluation results of 2007 were better aligned with professional practice (Nursing Report available in the Resource Room).

The School of Contemporary Arts (CA) strongly evidences the four pillars of the college's liberal arts mission. Inherently interdisciplinary in its structure and goals, each of the school’s four major programs, Communication Arts, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts, has clear program goals and assessment strategies. Program goals and outcomes are structured by each major program to promote productive assessment and support the school’s primary mission: to combine scholarly, creative, and practical studies to prepare students with the skills and knowledge to make
vital contributions to their disciplines, the arts, and contemporary global society. The school accomplishes this through interdisciplinary classroom studies, experiential studio work, scholarly projects, and diverse performance and production experiences. Assessment strategies have been customized to serve the wide range of learning environments, yielding information beneficial to individual program evaluation.

Linking closely with the college goal of providing an intercultural and experience-based education, Contemporary Arts students are challenged to explore, develop and apply new means of expression while engaging with both contemporary and established forms from multiple cultures and perspectives. The school provides extensive service and leadership opportunities for students through a combination of internships, field placements, community service, study abroad, and cooperative education. These opportunities supply culminating educational experiences that yield valuable external assessment, further individual student interests and career plans, and integrate and reinforce program goals.

Assessment strategies are designed, administered, and reviewed by the individual major programs. The strategies are supported by the dean of Contemporary Arts, who has headed Ramapo’s Greater Expectations Task Force since 2005. As a leader in providing faculty with assessment information, the dean encourages effective assessment practices in Contemporary Arts’ major programs and across the academic community. While the majority of the school’s programs are in the initial stage of assessment development, a progressive trend is evident. Convening groups in each of the major areas have implemented stronger assessment strategies, including capstone courses, portfolio requirements, pre- and post-testing, senior exhibitions, peer and outside reviewed performances, and internship evaluations.

The Visual Arts major requires a wide range of skills, acquired through art history, theory, and studio course work, all of which are taught with interdisciplinary, multicultural, and international perspectives. The Visual Arts program exemplifies the School of Contemporary Arts in its use of diverse assessment methodologies, ranging from content exams and evaluation of academic research presentations to extensive portfolio requirements and public exhibits (Visual Arts Report available in the Resource Room).

Communication Arts has developed a detailed set of program goals and outcomes and employs a three-year assessment cycle, with a specific plan for assessment each year. During the spring 2009 semester, Communication Arts is undergoing assessment of its 400-level capstone courses.

In fall of 2009, the Music program will initiate a four-year portfolio requirement. To better prepare students for the rapidly evolving global digital music marketplace, the program has strengthened the music core, requiring three additional courses: Music in Culture; Music, Technology and Media; and Musicianship II. To better assess all music majors, the Music program is instituting pre- and post-testing each semester in the newly redesigned Musicianship sequence. Music majors are required to make use of digital media, including shared spaces. Student portfolios include online posting of performances and compositions and academic writing that is evaluated by peers, program instructors, and outside professionals. Live performances, ranging from individual programs to large choral concerts, are assessed using a number of tools, including guest evaluators, juried competition, audience surveys, and both video and audio recording. All music students are required to complete at least one internship or co-op. These culminating experiences provide professional assessment for the individual student, as well as for use in evaluating program efficacy.
MINI PROFILE

MUSIC INTERNSHIPS
The Music internship program provides students with valuable opportunities to synthesize academic knowledge with experiential learning in a professional context. Music students have been placed at corporations such as Universal Music Group, Sony/BMG, Atlantic Records, Rolling Stone magazine and CNBC, as well as in a wide range of smaller and entrepreneurial environments. The internship experience provides a broad range of direct and indirect assessment methods, including problem-solving at the case-study level, collaborative projects, journaling, self-evaluation, and external review by professionals and peers. The Music program systematically uses the evaluations provided by supervisors to better prepare students for the internship experience, particularly in the areas of interpersonal dynamics, communication, and professional responsibility. Data obtained from regular communication with supervisors, together with information from participating students, is used to determine which internship placements are most productive, responsive, and conducive to student learning. In the creative industries, the nurturing of people skills and networking are vital and many music students use the internship experience to secure professional positions.

The Theater program has undertaken several modes of assessment since the fall of 2007, amending many courses to fit more obviously with program goals. A new focus on writing skills and critical thinking has compelled Theater to add an additional required capstone course, Issues in Contemporary Theater, which complements the more practical course, Advanced Projects. The Theater program uses rubrics for assignments in every required course in order to clearly assess student achievement of program goals. Each of the Theater concentrations has been revised to more clearly fulfill the learning goals of the program, as well as the school and college missions. The Theater program has also begun a formalized external peer review of student productions and has created an alumni group that serves to keep track of the progress of graduates and provide current students and alumni with networking opportunities for career development. Video and audio resources are used throughout Contemporary Arts, providing both current and archival information for program evaluation.

In the Anisfield School of Business (ASB), the assessment process is well articulated and functioning at an advanced level. The core curriculum of the business program is managed by the Teaching, Assessment and Program Committee (TAP) in coordination with the convening groups representing each business discipline.

MINI PROFILE

THE ANISFIELD SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ASSESSMENT MODEL
The Anisfield School of Business (ASB) exemplifies assessment practices that are well designed, consistently executed, and functioning at a high level across major disciplines and course offerings. Central to their assessment plan is the Teaching, Assessment, and Program Committee (TAP), which works with the convening groups to ensure that ASB’s seven learning goals are rigorously applied in each business discipline. All seven learning goals were first assessed in 2007-08 and again in 2008-09. Subsequently, each learning goal will be assessed every other year. Objectivity and customization are strengths of the ASB program; the TAP committee coordinates with instructors to select effective instruments to assess the learning goals in each course. As a key strength, the assessment data are reviewed by the entire faculty at bi-annual assessment retreats where they objectively evaluate the assessment methodology and the data. The faculty then make recommendations specifically focused on improved achievement of the learning goals rather than targeting individual instructors’ pedagogical practices.

ASB’S SEVEN LEARNING GOALS

1. ORAL COMMUNICATION: Our students will deliver well-prepared oral presentations, using appropriate current technology.

2. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: Our students will compose well-written business documents, using appropriate current technology.
3. ETHICS: Our students will consider the moral implications of business actions and processes, and propose ethically sound solutions.

4. FOUNDATION: Our students will comprehend principles and practices in key business disciplines.

5. INTEGRATION: Our students will conduct interdisciplinary analysis of business cases or economic issues.

6. PERSPECTIVES: Our students will recognize international and multi-cultural viewpoints.

7. REASONING: Our students will be critical thinkers and decision-makers able to use qualitative and quantitative methods.

The Assessment Subcommittee of the TAP committee is charged with managing the evaluation process of ASB’s learning goals. Two overriding principles govern the assessment process: 1) evaluation of the assessment instrument or protocol will not involve the instructor of the course, and 2) recommendations are meant to improve the attainment of stated learning goals and not to evaluate the pedagogical effectiveness of individual instructors.

The TAP committee, in consultation with faculty other than the course instructor, chooses the specific instrument, protocol, or other means to assess the learning goal. The chair of the TAP assessment subcommittee then contacts and coordinates the engagement of external reviewers, typically, other ASB faculty, of the instruments. After the assessment instrument is administered, the convener facilitates its transmittal to external reviewers; at this juncture, the ASB office staff may also participate in relevant activities, such as photocopying exam answers, to expedite the review process.

The chair then provides the external reviewers with the appropriate rubric that will be applied to the assessment instrument and holds an inter-rater reliability session to ensure consistency in evaluation. Once the reviewers have completed their work, the graded rubrics are forwarded to the TAP member who is responsible for compiling and producing a summary report of the raw data. The TAP committee then reviews the summary report and presents the results to the faculty along with recommendations to close any gaps. The full ASB faculty discusses the results at in-service assessment retreats and develops proposals to incorporate the recommendations. To date, assessment data have led to greater curricular emphasis on oral communication skills; the formation of a committee to develop a Business Writing Across the Curriculum program to adequately address the written communication learning objective within the core curriculum of ASB; an infusion of an ethical decision-making model in more business courses; greater attention to global analysis in the introductory Perspectives course; and greater attention to multidisciplinary analysis in the advanced marketing courses.

The Anisfield School of Business has outlined its detailed structure assessment process in its ASB Assurance of Learning Process document (available in the Resource Room).

CONCLUDING DATA

The assessment of student learning at Ramapo College has made significant and demonstrable progress since the last Middle States accreditation. In addition to the narrative provided, graphic representation of data collected is demonstrated in the charts provided on the following pages.
All Ramapo College course syllabi are required to meet standards established by the Academic Review Committee, including the statement of learning objectives. In 2009, a random sampling of 350 course syllabi showed that 98.6% included course objectives.

FIGURE 2
PERCENTAGE OF COURSES WITH LEARNING OBJECTIVES – 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Courses in Sample</th>
<th>350</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Syllabi with Course Objectives</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large sample of 510 courses yielded the following information regarding the relationship of course objectives to the mission statements of the college, the schools, and program goals.

FIGURE 3
COURSE OBJECTIVES LINKED TO MISSIONS AND GOALS – 2009

<p>| SYLLABUS INCLUDES AT LEAST ONE COURSE OBJECTIVE RELATED TO THE CATEGORY |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Mission</th>
<th>School Mission</th>
<th>Program Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The college has identified four primary areas for promoting continued growth in assessment practice across the academic community:

- Provide ongoing support to faculty and programs for the development of strong assessment methodology.
- Assist programs in shift from initial to middle and advanced stages of assessment.
- Monitor assessment progress at all levels.
- Increase centralization and accessibility of assessment data.
### Figure 4

#### ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY BY SCHOOL AND COURSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School/Program Majors &amp; Grad Programs</th>
<th>Assessment Plan</th>
<th>Link to the College Mission/SP</th>
<th>Pre/Post Tests</th>
<th>Content Exams</th>
<th>Portfolios</th>
<th>Performances Internship Evaluations/Exhibitions</th>
<th>Key/Capstone Course/Assignment</th>
<th>Exit, Alumni, Employer Surveys</th>
<th>Centralized Data Collection</th>
<th>Program Changes due to Assessment</th>
<th>Stage of Development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AIS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>American Studies</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Advanced</td>
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<td>Initial</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Middle</td>
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<td>Liberal Studies</td>
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FINDINGS OF THE SELF-STUDY

ACHIEVEMENTS

• Implementation of Curriculum Enhancement Plan
• Development of new graduate programs and a new honors program
• Implementation of new General Education program
• Development of more integrated co-curricular programming in the Office of Student Development
• College-wide implementation of assessment activities
• Successful program accreditations
• Creation of the new position of vice provost for curriculum and assessment

CHALLENGES

• Integration of assessment activities college-wide
• Ongoing administration and assessment of the General Education program
• The process for development and review of new program proposals, including those that are non-degree bearing, to ensure alignment with mission.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Complete a comprehensive plan for the assessment of General Education.
• Fully implement recently purchased assessment software (WEAVEonline).
• Make permanent the Office of Assessment to house an assessment library and to provide tools and resources for both faculty and staff.
• Develop a plan and process for creating new graduate programs that address issues such as impact on undergraduate education, integration of liberal arts and professional studies, and alignment with mission.
• Create a Web site for General Education that lists goals, requirements, and other relevant information that students can access.
• Create a Web site for assessment so that all academic assessment activities can be posted and shared.
CHAPTER 7

RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
STANDARD 13
CHAPTER 7

RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

STANDARD 13

GOAL 3: ENRICHING COLLEGE LIFE AND COMMUNITY PRESENCE

(Ramapo College Strategic Plan, p. 10)

Academic life must be complemented by a vibrant campus life that provides students, faculty, staff, alumni, their families, members of the surrounding communities, and prospective students the opportunity to realize their full potential. Stronger relations within the College community, among the College and local, regional and statewide communities, and between the College and alumni will be actively pursued.

STANDARD 13: RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The institution’s programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

THE CONTEXT

Ramapo College has a number of programs and services that fall within the framework of “related educational activities” and, while independent of one another, illustrate an abiding commitment to providing student-centered academic support and quality educational experiences that extend beyond the walls of a traditional classroom. Through services for under-prepared students, partnerships with outside entities, certificate programs, distance learning, study abroad opportunities, experiential learning programs and activities, service learning, and volunteer and community service activities, the college demonstrates its commitment to creating learning opportunities and learning communities that meet the needs of a diverse student body, support the four pillars of the mission, and prepare students for living and working in a global society.

BASIC SKILLS

Ramapo is committed to ensuring that under-prepared students acquire the basic skills deemed necessary for them to have a successful college career. To achieve this outcome the college employs a variety of methods that are consistent with the goals of the strategic plan.

PLACEMENT

Currently, there are several methods for identifying students who are not fully prepared to study at the college level. The college identifies incoming students scoring below 550 in the verbal section and/or below 560 in the math section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and those students achieving an Academic Content Test (ACT) Composite score below 26 as under-prepared. Incoming students identified as under-prepared are required to take the ACCUPLACER, a series of multiple-choice tests administered by the college’s Testing Center that determines reading, writing, and math skill levels. Transfer students lacking General Education requirements in mathematics and English are also required to take the ACCUPLACER. Additionally, faculty can identify poorly performing students enrolled in their classes as under-prepared, and students can identify themselves as under-prepared.
BASIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES

Ramapo provides a variety of programs that deliver basic skills to under-prepared students. The college offers several basic skills and developmental courses, including:

- READ 011: Basic Reading
- READ 020: Developmental Reading
- WRIT 011: Basic Writing
- WRIT 021: Developmental Writing
- MATH 013: Basic Math
- MATH 022: Transitional Math (in class) or Pre-College Math Program (online)

These basic and developmental courses are open to all students but primarily serve incoming students identified as under-prepared who are placed into these courses based on their ACCUPLACER scores.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FUND

The Center for Academic Success, the college’s basic skills delivery arm, collaborates with the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program to provide the following basic skills courses to under-prepared students:

- Pre-Freshman Summer Studies Program
- College Reading and Study Skills

The six-week Pre-Freshman Summer Studies Program offers basic skills and developmental courses to incoming Educational Opportunity Fund students, based on their ACCUPLACER scores.

TUTORING

In addition to developmental courses, the college delivers basic skills to under-prepared students through extensive tutoring services. The Educational Opportunity Fund program, Athletics, and the Office of Specialized Services offer additional tutorial services for students affiliated with their offices. The Educational Opportunity Fund Program has developed several tutorial services, including:

- Supplemental Instructional Support Program
- General Tutorials

The Center for Academic Success (CAS) provides tutoring and support services for students needing assistance in a number of disciplines, including writing, reading, and mathematics. The Center for Academic Success works closely with the Educational Opportunity Fund Program and the Office of Specialized Services in the development of the college’s tutoring services. The Center for Academic Success provides several core initiatives that meet Ramapo College’s strategic goals related to basic skills, including:

- The Writing Center
- Tutoring
- Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)

ASSESSMENT

The college uses various methods to assess the effectiveness of the placement of under-prepared students as well as the effectiveness of basic and developmental courses. The Testing Coordinator examines score trends and regularly consults about placement issues with the mathematics and writing convening groups, the dean of the
School of American and International Studies, the dean of the School of Theoretical and Applied Science, and the director of the Center for Academic Success and Writing Across the Curriculum.

The testing coordinator also compiles data on methods used by other New Jersey colleges and other schools in the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges to place students and attends regional and national conferences of test coordinators to discuss placement instruments. The Center for Academic Success uses student satisfaction forms, self-assessment by tutors, and faculty reports to evaluate its effectiveness. In addition, the Center for Academic Success staff members conduct studies of the effectiveness of their tutorials.

Evidence suggests a positive impact of basic and developmental courses and of tutoring. For example, students who complete developmental courses perform well in College English. When compared to non-developmental students, their grades in College English are comparable. Educational Opportunity Fund tutorials also seem to be effective. In fall 2002, the tutors assigned to Educational Opportunity Fund students in Principles of Chemistry, Fundamentals of Biology, Anatomy and Physiology, Math with Applications, Pre-Calculus, and Microeconomics had a positive outcome. Thirty-five students participated in tutoring, and only 3 out of 35 (8%) withdrew from the aforementioned courses.

The Center for Academic Success self-evaluations and reports of its tutoring services suggest a measurable positive impact on student grades. In Fall 2005, the 125 students who came to the Writing Center for two or more sessions received grades of B- or higher, whereas the forty-three students who visited only once received a C+ or lower or withdrew from the course. A 2007 Writing Center report reveals that 74.7% of the students it served received a B- or higher in the course for which they sought tutoring. (Center for Academic Success data available in the Resource Room).

While the achievements of the Center for Academic Success and Educational Opportunity Fund Program are considerable, the college needs to address the larger issue of the management and assessment of writing throughout the entire curriculum. With the dissolution of the Division of Basic Studies in 2002, an assessment has to be made regarding how far this new arrangement (e.g., CAS) goes in monitoring and ensuring that writing is emphasized throughout the curriculum and that Ramapo College students are getting the appropriate instruction in reading and writing, given their needs.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

The Center for Innovative and Professional Learning (CIPL) was established in 2007 to support postgraduate professional education, workforce development, and alternative learning. The center also engages in internal and external educational partnerships to advance community outreach and it provides innovative continuous learning opportunities for community members. In collaboration with the college's academic schools, the Center for Innovative and Professional Learning develops, offers, and directs opportunities such as the following: a series of summer pre-college programs for high-achieving high school students; three new certificate programs in Business Essentials, Middle School Certification, and Online Web Development, and a continuing education Nursing Essentials workshop series for nursing professionals to meet mandatory educational requirements (contact hours) for re-licensure and to enhance their professional development.

The Center for Innovative and Professional Learning also offered two Personal Financial Management workshop series and partnered with Kaplan testing centers to offer the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses Review, with the New Jersey First Aid Council to offer a course for emergency medical technicians, and with The Princeton Review to offer SAT preparation courses. Furthermore, the center offered human resources professionals two workshops on Transgender Issues in the Workplace.

Ramapo develops such credit and noncredit program proposals using a collaborative process that involves the school dean, the conveners, and the faculty or unit where the subject matter resides; the Provost's Office; and the Center for Innovative and Professional Learning. Consistent with the process across the institution for
developing new programs, the college conducts a needs analysis covering trends in the educational and workforce marketplaces, the impact of competing programs, and budgetary concerns.

All proposed programs go through the college’s established course/program approval process. At the school level, proposals go first to the relevant convening group, then to the Unit Curriculum Committee and Unit Council. At the all-college level, proposals go to the Academic Review Committee for its review and approval (for credit programs) or information (for noncredit programs).

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

At Ramapo College, experiential learning is a purposeful process of engaged, active learning—guided by faculty and staff—in which the student constructs knowledge, skills, or values by means of direct experiences in authentic, real-world contexts. It goes beyond the conventional “comfort zone” of college course activities such as reading texts, doing homework, writing papers, performing studio or lab work, and so on. Reflection on these experiences is integral to the success of the endeavor.

Experiential learning includes many or all of the following:

- Hands-on or minds-on engagement
- Facilitated, guided practice
- Multidimensional growth/development
- Reflection
- Application of theory/classroom knowledge
- Student learning goals, assessments, and documentation
- Service to a larger community

The college supports experiential learning by providing numerous opportunities for students to have meaningful learning experiences outside the classroom. The Social Work, Nursing, and Teacher Education programs integrate such opportunities as part of student coursework. Trained faculty and staff together with field professionals supervise these experiential placements. Additionally, the Communications, Political Science, and other programs facilitate internships for students with public and private employers.

The Curriculum Enhancement Plan, adopted in 2006, included an “experiential component” in each four-credit course that consisted of five hours of unmonitored experience (worth 0.4 credits) related to the subject matter of the course outside the classroom.

The Cahill Center for Experiential Learning and Career Services (Cahill Center) provides many programs and activities within the following categories in which students may participate in order to fulfill these requirements:

- Service Learning: Academically based, semester-long community service and civic engagement of students while they are studying theory and course content in their classes
- Cooperative Education: Academically relevant, semester-long, credit-bearing work experience applying classroom learning to internship positions related to students’ academic major or career goals
- International Cooperative Education: Academically relevant, semester-long, credit-bearing work experience abroad
- Alternative Spring Break: One-week domestic or international experiences that provide students with the opportunity of engaging in positive social action and education
Assessment for Cahill Center programs is done in intensive group orientation and reflection sessions with pre- and post-evaluations of the sessions. Students complete evaluations of their site placements; these evaluations also involve faculty and Cahill Center staff input. Employers complete evaluations of students’ job performance. Each semester the Cahill Center Advisory Board convenes as a focus group comprised of employers, faculty, staff, and students to assess employment trends and the academic preparedness of students.

MINI PROFILE

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK

The Alternative Spring Break Program provides opportunities for participants to engage in hands-on service that addresses critical but unmet social needs, provides training to carry out needed tasks, and meets the educational objectives of the college. Under the auspices of Ramapo College’s Cahill Center for Experiential Learning and Career Services, several international programs have been developed in Oaxaca, Mexico, and Cajola, Guatemala. In addition, there are domestic programs in Texas, North Carolina, and Louisiana:

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, during spring break in 2006, a group of students traveled to Gulfport, Mississippi, to help local residents rebuild their homes while using their artistic talent to reflect upon the alternative break experience and to tell the stories of those affected by the hurricane. They recorded these untold stories of hurricane survivors in the Katrina Chronicles, a “zine” the students published containing stories and artwork. While in Gulfport, the students slept in tents set up by The Morrell Foundation and Community Collaborations International, organizations that help people affected by natural disaster, armed conflict, or poverty, through a wide variety of programs and volunteer coordination. In 2007 and 2008, two more Ramapo College alternative break groups worked in New Orleans’ Ninth Ward, gutting and rehabilitating the homes there.

The Teacher Education Program assesses experiential learning programmatically in various ways, including:

- Written evaluations of student teachers by cooperating (field) and supervising (Ramapo College) personnel at the conclusion of each student’s semester-long student teaching experience in New Jersey schools.
- Reflective online portfolios submitted by each student completing the Teacher Education Program. Portfolio submissions are linked to the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers (NJPST). Teacher Education faculty members rate a random sample of portfolios at the end of each academic year.
- Summative assessments of standards-based professional dispositions by cooperating (field) and supervising (Ramapo College) personnel at the conclusion of each student’s student teaching semester.
- Exit interviews of each student completing the Teacher Education Program to document program strengths and weaknesses.
- Successful completion by each student of the Student Teaching Seminar, conducted in tandem with the student teaching field experience.
- All assessments of student learning align with the mission of Ramapo College, the NJPST, and the requirements of the Teacher Education Accreditation Council.

ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL SITES

MEADOWLANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTER

Environmental education has taken center stage in our society for good reason. Given that Ramapo College already had an active Environmental Science and Environmental Studies program and various connections to the world of
K–12 education, it was not surprising that in June 2003 the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) solicited a proposal from Ramapo College for the operation of the Meadowlands Environment Center (MEC).

Under the college’s management, and in keeping with the goals of Ramapo’s strategic plan, the environment center has developed and implemented programs designed to engage students, teachers, and the community in meaningful dialogue about the environment. Those programs and projects include the following:

- Environmental programs for K–12 students, for students and adults with disabilities, for Scouts and clubs, for families, and for older adults.
- Professional development regarding the environment for K–12 teachers.

In August 2003, through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Ramapo College and the Meadowlands Commission, the college assumed responsibility for operating the educational component of the Meadowlands Environment Center. The center was so impressed with the educational programs directed by Ramapo that the center invited the college to negotiate a new agreement. As a result, on March 28, 2007, the center approved a new memorandum of understanding, allocating more than $8 million to extend the operation of the environment center through 2012.

In addition to the environment center, Ramapo operates the Meadowlands Commission Center for Environmental and Scientific Education and the William D. McDowell Observatory, which are among the most visible aspects of the commission’s work. More than 40,000 people take advantage of the environment center’s educational and cultural programs each year. These offerings include educational programs for grades K–12 during the school year, summer camps, and other activities for children that focus on science and the environment. The center also offers diverse programs for adults and seniors, including lectures, workshops, film screenings, and dance nights.

Although the environment center does not undertake any college-level programs, it is engaged in several initiatives that relate to the work of the college:

- Undergraduate cooperative learning experiences
- A one-year post-baccalaureate fellowship in environmental education
- Participation in educational activities by all pre-service education students
- Support for faculty research and creative projects
- Field experience opportunities and alternate learning environments for Ramapo College students in existing degree program courses.

Outside funding has been crucial to the success of the environment center. Ramapo College has been awarded two National Science Foundation (NSF) grants that are based in the center. Thanks to a three-year $852,276 NSF grant, Ramapo College and the center’s Disabilities Education Office educators are implementing Adult MarshAccess in order to develop a national model for accessibility and assistive technology that adapts science programs for people with disabilities. Funding from a $480,000 NSF grant (Project SEE—Senior Environmental Experiences) resulted in the presentation of environmental programs to older adults in senior centers, assisted-living facilities, nursing homes, and hospital wellness programs throughout central and northern New Jersey.
MINI PROFILE

MARSH ACCESS PROJECT

The Marsh Access project at the Meadowlands Environment Center engages the largely underserved populations of young and older adults with disabilities as well as older adults with age-related limitations in outdoor experiential Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) activities centered on the New Jersey Meadowlands marsh ecosystem, under the theme “The Meadowlands Beyond the Sports Complex.” The environment center is located in a marsh ecosystem within urban northern New Jersey. Given the dense population of the area, approximately 1,200 to 1,900 members of the target population will participate in MarshAccess through a self-guided or professionally guided experience.

Building on experiences with the target audience and lessons learned through Project SEE, the project will develop four STEM content-enriched, theme-based modules:

- Chemical Reactions
- Marsh Food Web
- Human Impact on the Meadowlands
- Natural and Human History of the Meadowlands.

Each module consists of an outdoor field experience conducted on the accessible MarshAccess trail or garden and led by an environmental educator, coupled with an extended excursion incorporating technology and hands-on lab activities to document the experience.

CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIPS AND AFFILIATED PROVIDERS

The college offers the Generic Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program in partnerships with Englewood Hospital and Medical Center (EHMC) and The Valley Hospital, both recognized as magnet hospitals by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Englewood Hospital and Medical Center partnered with the BSN Program in 1996. In this program, all nursing and clinical courses are taught at EHMC by the Clinical Associate Faculty. Although members of the Clinical Associate Faculty are employees of EHMC, the college grants them faculty status.

The Valley Hospital partnered with Ramapo College in 2004 to allow the college to increase its capacity within its BSN Program. In this partnership, Ramapo College Nursing Program faculty teach nursing courses on the college campus, while master’s-prepared nurses employed by The Valley Hospital are granted Clinical Associate Faculty status by Ramapo College and teach clinical courses on site.

All General Education and prerequisite courses in the first two years of the curriculum are taught on the Ramapo College campus. However, additional clinical sites are utilized to meet the course objectives in pediatric, obstetrical, and psychiatric nursing.

The nursing curriculum of the BSN Program reflects the use of the American Nurses’ Association’s Standards of Clinical Nursing Practice (1991). Moreover, the 2008 Self-Study Report used the American Association of Colleges of Nursing’s Essentials of Baccalaureate Nursing Practice (2007).

Integrity is evident in the practices and relationships of the nursing education unit. The Nursing Programs Student Handbook, Ramapo College Student Handbook, and Ramapo College Catalog include specific policies related to students as well as the following information about the college and its Nursing Programs: mission, organization, philosophy, goals, policies, length of program, tuition and fee schedule, financial aid, graduation, licensing requirements, academic policies, and information about student life and academic calendars.
In addition, printed materials contain references to the Nursing Programs’ accreditation status and the affiliated hospitals’ accreditation status granted by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations and Magnet status granted by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

Ramapo College entered the sphere of distance education gradually, with a number of Computer Science instructors offering courses with major online segments by the end of the 1990s. In 2001, the college’s then Center for Computing and Information Services (CCIS) purchased a limited license for its first course management system, WebCT (version 3.8). Also in 2001, the then Technology and Education Center (TEC) of the Center for Computing and Information Systems began experimenting with how to incorporate its features into teaching and learning. The number of courses incorporating online elements using WebCT grew.

Meanwhile, with a course management system to support distance education, a few instructors who had been extensively using the Web began to teach courses fully online, and by the time the next version of WebCT came out there were approximately 100 course sections using this course management system, though nearly all these instructors taught face-to-face, using only supplementary Web elements.

With the introduction of WebCT version 6 in 2005, the college began taking a new direction in pursuing distance learning. The impetus partly came from the incorporation of the extensively online University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) nursing program that increased the number of online sections to over 200. Faculty dissatisfaction with WebCT version 6, support issues, and the license costs loomed as more viable open source alternatives emerged. In addition, hybrid courses began including open-source, Web 2.0 elements such as blogs and wikis.

After researching open source alternatives, in fall 2008 the college began to pilot a version of the open source system Moodle. In addition to incorporating blogs and wikis, as well as interfacing well with other Web 2.0 applications, Moodle was considerably less costly than WebCT. The choice became clear, and the decision was made to transition fully to Moodle by fall 2009. An initial training plan was developed in conjunction with Moodle Rooms that was eventually adapted for in-house delivery by the college’s Instructional Design Center.

Recognizing the additional burden on faculty in preparing their courses for the online format, the 2007–2011 AFT Contract stipulated the payment of an additional credit to instructors teaching online courses for the first time. The college introduced a further motivation in spring 2008 when the provost announced a $1,000 incentive for twelve instructors to modify their face-to-face courses for online delivery the following summer. Selections were made, a marketing campaign was conducted, and the Instructional Design Center conducted appropriate online training, during which the limitations of WebCT became clear.

The net result is that the college is creating a solid infrastructure that will allow both the delivery of more online courses and enhancement of face-to-face teaching through using a more technically and financially viable course management system that is easier to use and more flexible.

The following are two items of note in distance learning:

- National Public Radio (NPR) contacted a Ramapo College faculty member who was testing wikis in his course; his students’ content was viewed worldwide and he was interviewed about his course.
- A fall 2009 First Year Seminar section is dedicated specifically to deconstructing online social networking—how it differs from, enhances, and maybe even hampers academics in college life. One assignment asks students to write on the same topic for Twitter, Facebook, a blog, a wiki, and a two-page academic paper.
STUDY ABROAD

Ramapo College has from its early days identified “international education” as a central part of its mission. Supported by global partnerships established in Europe, Africa, Asia, South America, the Caribbean, and Native American tribal communities, international education is one of Ramapo’s “four pillars.”

Over twenty years ago, the college received a New Jersey Governor’s Challenge Grant to foster international programs. A period of growth ensued in which faculty initiative, area expertise, and vision resulted in a number of short-term study abroad programs in various parts of the world, including Costa Rica, Jamaica, Kenya, South Africa, England, Ireland, Italy, and the Czech Republic. An exception to this pattern, as we shall see in detail below, was the Ramapo Semester in India at the Fireflies Intercultural Center near Bangalore.

In 2005, the administration commissioned an internal report (Bowman Report on the Structure of International Education available in the Resource Room) to analyze the administrative structure of international education. In 2005/06, President Mercer issued a moratorium on study abroad programs and commissioned an external report (Larson Report on the visiting team Web site and in the Resource Room) to study how to achieve a greater infusion of international education (curricular integration), including study abroad, into the college’s curriculum. The vision was to find ways in which students would be able to participate in an increasing variety of educational experiences abroad. These experiences would include, but not be limited to, short-term faculty-led programs that would combine the best practices associated with experiential learning and academic rigor. Both reports stressed the need for faculty involvement and direction as well as administrative leadership, responsibility, and authority.

The external report, in particular, recommended that the college avail itself of the ample opportunities to join in cooperative ventures or bodies that would expand opportunities for students wishing to participate in programs throughout the world. The college took a significant step toward providing access to a wide variety of semester-long and short-term study abroad opportunities again by becoming a member of the New Jersey State Consortium for International Studies. One of the oldest of its kind in the country and comprising nine public institutions, it was formed in 1966 by New Jersey colleges and offers programs in thirty-five countries that are both academically challenging and affordable.

In 2006, the provost reconstituted the International Education Committee, which had existed in various forms since the college received the New Jersey Governor’s Challenge Grant. Consisting of representatives from all the college’s academic units as well as the director of International Education and the then-associate provost for curriculum and global affairs, the committee’s charge (in keeping with the consultants’ reports) was to draft a mission, goals, outcomes, and policies to implement the college’s pillar of Global Education.

Agreeing with the consultants’ recommendations, the committee established as its guiding principle that all future international programming at the college, including study abroad, would have to be anchored and integrated into the curriculum. This became evident in all the committee’s work: the mission statement, international education goals/objectives and outcomes, compiled into the Manual for Education Abroad Programs. This manual, pending approval for faculty compensation, covers policies and procedures for the development and management of study abroad programs, as recommended by the Larsen Report.

The committee, having accomplished its work quickly, provided impetus for several new short-term faculty programs to be either revived or newly created. The first of these, although not an international experience, was the intercultural American West program, which was reinstated in summer 2007. The program takes students on a tour of ecological and Native American sites in the Pacific Northwest, Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. In 2007 and 2008, respectively, programs to Prague on culture and history as it relates to political, economic, and cultural development, and a program to London as a global city offered enriching educational opportunities for students. Unfortunately, they did not attract the required number of participants to make them viable and had to be canceled. In summer 2008, a Ramapo College faculty-led program to Venice attracted a sufficient number of students and was a great success. In summer 2009, both the American West and Venice trips were conducted.
The hiring in summer 2008 of the first executive director of the Roukema Center for International Education (established under a modest federal grant) aided the revitalization efforts. Several new short-term, faculty-led programs in Argentina and Spain are joining the previously mentioned ones in London and Venice. To make them academically and financially more attractive, for the same inclusive cost students will be able to register for two 4-credit courses. Administratively, the executive director, with the assistance of the International Education Committee, has updated the manual for faculty-led programs and those sections regarding compensation and working conditions will go before the faculty bargaining unit for approval.

At the same time, the college re-established its agreements with Volgograd State Pedagogical University in Russia and the Shanghai State Pedagogical University in China, which have engendered a wide platform of bilateral exchanges that have included visiting scholars; Internet-facilitated, team-taught courses; and curriculum development. In September 2008, the college entered into a new partnership with St. Petersburg State University, again with the intention of pursuing bilateral exchanges and also pursuing the possibility of a joint masters program.

As can be seen in Figures 1 and 2, the variety and viability of Ramapo’s study abroad offerings is improving in line with its commitment to international education. Increasing quality, availability, and access align with the college’s overarching strategic goal of enhancing academic excellence. Low student participation remains a problem, however, and the shift to encouraging longer (and hence more expensive) programs has left current participation levels below the pre-moratorium period.
### FIGURE 1

**Student Participation in 2-4 Week Study Abroad Programs, Academic Years 2003-04 to 2007-08 [1]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2-4 Week Programs</th>
<th>AY 03-04 Participants</th>
<th>AY 04-05 Participants</th>
<th>AY 05-06 [6] Participants</th>
<th>AY 06-07 [7] Participants</th>
<th>AY 07-08 No.</th>
<th>Percent Change 03/04 to 07/08</th>
<th>Percent Change 06/07 to 07/08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American SW</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American West</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica [2]</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England [3]</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prague</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec City</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain (with NJSCIS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington D.C. [4]</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Programs [5]</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>195</strong></td>
<td><strong>152</strong></td>
<td><strong>106</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>N/A</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. These data are not system-generated; they are self-reported by the unit. Some numbers include students from both Ramapo College and other campuses.

2. The Costa Rica programs (Intense Spanish Language and Eco-Systems) were previously sponsored by Ramapo. As of AY06-07, programs in Costa Rica are sponsored by the N.J. State Consortium for International Students (NJSCIS).

3. The England Regents program ended in AY05-06. Programs in England are now sponsored by the NJSCIS.

4. The Washington, D.C., program was a credit-bearing semester sponsored by Ramapo.

5. Represents Ramapo student participation in non-Ramapo sponsored programs.

6. Beginning in Spring 2006, Ramapo students participated in programs sponsored by the NJSCIS. During AY 05-06, only 4 programs were sponsored entirely through Ramapo (American SW, American West, India & Australia).

7. After Winter 2006, only one program (the India Semester) was offered entirely through Ramapo. Programs continue with the NJSCIS.

*Source: 2008 Institutional Profile*
### FIGURE 2

**Student Participation in Full Semester Study Abroad Programs**  
**Academic Year 2003-04 to Academic Year 2007-08**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Semester Programs</th>
<th>F 03 - Spr 04 Participants</th>
<th>F 04 - Spr 05 Participants</th>
<th>F 05 - Spr 06 Participants</th>
<th>F 06 - Spr 07 Participants</th>
<th>F 07 - Spr 08 Participants</th>
<th>Percent Change 03/04 to 07/08</th>
<th>Percent Change 06/07 to 07/08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester at Sea</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|   | 26 | 29 | 31 | 43 | 46 | 76.9% | 7% |

*Source: 2008 Institutional Profile*

### FINDINGS OF THE SELF-STUDY

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Creation of the Center for Academic Success
- Establishment of the Center for Innovative and Professional Learning
- Environmental and other outreach programs at the New Jersey Meadowlands
- Integration of the former Joint BSN Program with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey
- Development of distance learning
- Revitalization of international education
CHALLENGES

• Assessing the work of the Center for Academic Success and clarifying its role in addressing the broader issue of improving writing in the curriculum
• Evaluating and monitoring the long-term integration of the “experiential component” introduced under the Curriculum Enhancement Plan
• Maintaining Meadowlands Environment Center funding in a climate of scarce resources
• Assuring the quality, sustainability, and accessibility of distance learning
• Assessing the academic quality, integrity and rigor of study abroad programs as the college increases its involvement with study abroad vendors
• Increasing participation in international education to justify allocation of resources

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Develop a college-wide plan to assess and address the issue of writing across the curriculum.
• Consider having each academic major adopt its own integrative, experiential component for its program.
• Continue to pursue grant funding for the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission programs.
• Develop a process to assess online courses and their impact on major programs; create policies that address the balance between distance-learning courses and in-classroom offerings.
• Develop a plan for increasing faculty and student participation to embed the international component in the curriculum and develop more study abroad opportunities.
• Develop policies for assessing the academic content, rigor, and quality of vendor-sponsored study abroad programs.
CONCLUSIONS
CONCLUSIONS

This self-study has allowed the college to examine where we have been and where we are going during a time of significant change, challenge, and opportunity. With all facets of the college involved in the self-study, the outcome is a comprehensive and accurate reflection of Ramapo College—our achievements and challenges over the last decade as well as recommendations that provide a road map for the future. The community takes great pride in being an institution that is grounded in the liberal arts and focused on student learning. An accessible administration, close-knit faculty and staff, and engaged student body make Ramapo a special community in which to teach and learn.

Ramapo College has accomplished a great deal in the last decade, with many successes amid diminishing state support. The college revised its mission and strategic plan and instituted formal processes to ensure that all budgeting, planning, and assessment are linked. These activities led to changes in organizational structure and procedural changes regarding the allocation of resources (human, financial, and space), the creation of reserve funds for strategic initiatives, and an increase in full-time faculty lines.

The college also increased enrollment, raised academic standards, improved retention and graduation rates, and revised the curriculum to provide a more rigorous academic experience for students and allow faculty to devote more time to research and service. Enhanced student services and opportunities for out-of-class learning, the transition to a residential campus, attention to the needs of special and at-risk populations, and the advent of public transportation to and from the campus are just a few examples of how the quality of student life and student engagement has been enhanced.

Growth and change in the college’s infrastructure has been significant. The addition of carefully planned and designed academic, recreational, and residential facilities, renovation of existing facilities, and continued attention to maintenance and grounds have transformed the campus, without diminishing the natural beauty of the grounds and existing architecture.

In the last ten years the college has made great strides in creating a culture of assessment. Assessment of student learning has been institutionalized through the creation of the position of vice provost for curriculum and assessment, the Assessment Office, and the Faculty Resource Center, through regular participation in Greater Expectations, and through five-year reviews of each academic program. The college has done an excellent job of measuring and improving effectiveness through benchmarking and the use of assessment tools that include national surveys such as NSSE and ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Study, institutional surveys such as the Graduating Senior Survey, and numerous internal surveys, focus groups, and measures within academic programs and individual courses. Institutional effectiveness is also supported, measured and improved through the work of governing bodies and committees (Board of Trustees, Faculty Assembly, President’s Cabinet, Position Review Committee, Academic Review Committee, Space Committee, Budget Contingency Committee, etc.), annual reports, budget analyses, and employee evaluations.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

MISSION, LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

1.1 Continue discussions of curricula founded on a commitment to the liberal arts and assess all programs in light of this vision.

1.2 Develop a process for reviewing new program proposals to emphasize alignment with mission.

1.3 Given the considerable responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, provide greater and more formal training for new members.
1.4 Assess faculty governance structure and revise as needed to meet the needs of a larger faculty with more new members.

**PLANNING AND RESOURCES**

2.1 Already planned assessment of the new planning process should be ongoing to continually correct flaws and implement innovations.

2.2 Budget projections should be carefully monitored as it is likely that the state allocation will not increase significantly in the next few years and future planning will need to be carefully focused.

2.3 Communications about planning and budgeting must continue to improve so all in the community can feel informed and involved.

2.4 To ensure that high-priority new, renewal, and replacement capital projects come to fruition, continue to explore both traditional (e.g., New Jersey Educational Facilities Authority fixed-rate bonds) and creative (e.g., engagement of an energy service company or ESCO; public/private partnership as provided under recently enacted legislation) means of financing.

2.5 Campus morale should be a priority during difficult times. Ramapo’s administration and faculty leadership will have to determine what communications will be needed and what processes should be in place to limit the possibility that the complex times will result in a deterioration of morale.

**INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

3.1 Develop a method for intra-unit and divisional communication and develop ways to link divisional action plans vertically and horizontally.

3.2 Consolidate all the information, processes, procedures, and outcomes of resource committees under the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and include them on the Institutional Effectiveness Web site for purposes of transparency.

3.3 Improve the communication and transparency of assessment processes across the campus community.

**STUDENTS**

4.1 Assess the effectiveness of out-of-state, international, and diversity recruitment efforts designed to achieve the college’s goals related to diversity and adjust as needed.

4.2 Assess the effectiveness of recent reorganizations and adjust as needed.

4.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of the current academic advisement structure and make improvements as needed.

4.4 Less reliance on the TRIO grant for funding programs and services for students with disabilities.

4.5 Assess the needs and outcomes of transfer students in order to refine/improve services related to advisement, registration, and overall student services.

**FACULTY**

5.1 Improve effectiveness of institutional planning to ensure that the needs of academic programs are prioritized.

5.2 Codify orientation procedures that support the assimilation of new faculty members and the development of a shared vision among all faculty members.
5.3 Improve the structure of faculty governance and the structure of interchange between faculty and administration to address the issue of improving communication and transparency in academic decision-making.

5.4 Develop more formal structures to help create a sense of “community” in a faculty that is continuing to grow.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND ASSESSMENT

6.1 Complete a comprehensive plan for the assessment of general education.

6.2 Fully implement recently purchased assessment software (WEAVEonline).

6.3 Make permanent the Office of Assessment to house an assessment library and to provide tools and resources for both faculty and staff.

6.4 Develop a plan and process for the creation of new graduate programs that address issues such as impact on undergraduate education, integration of liberal arts and professional studies, and alignment with mission.

6.5 Create a Web site for General Education that lists goals, requirements, and other relevant information that students can access.

6.6 Create a Web site for assessment so that all academic assessment activities can be posted and shared.

RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

7.1 Develop a college-wide plan to assess and address the issue of writing across the curriculum.

7.2 Consider having each academic major adopt its own integrative, experiential component for its program.

7.3 Continue to pursue grant funding for the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission programs.

7.4 Develop a process to assess online courses and their impact on major programs; create policies that address the balance between distance-learning courses and in-classroom offerings.

7.5 Develop a plan for increasing faculty and student participation to embed the international component in the curriculum and develop more study abroad opportunities.

7.6 Develop policies for assessing the academic content, rigor, and quality of vendor-sponsored study abroad programs.
FINAL THOUGHTS FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

The aforementioned recommendations stem from a study of how Ramapo College meets the fourteen "Characteristics of Excellence" required for Middle States accreditation and re-accreditation. Through the self-study process and the writing of the final report, the Steering Committee Co-Chairs observed some overarching realities that warrant further comment.

First, the college is relatively young, and thus there is a natural reliance on founders and long-time employees to provide institutional memory and history. Although there is an abundance of data available and numerous important studies conducted and reports produced, it was sometimes difficult for study groups to determine what existed and where it might be located. The college needs a more organized system for retaining, cataloging and posting important documents and data. The assessment office, established for this self-study and intended to continue beyond it, and the Institutional Effectiveness Web site and its links to data, administrative processes and outcomes, and annual reports, are moving the college in the right direction. These efforts must continue and must be supported with sufficient resources.

Second, the college’s greatest resources are its students, faculty, and staff. There is an unwavering commitment to student learning and abiding pride in the institution among members of the community. The college has enjoyed tremendous growth and success over the past ten years, amid significant changes and challenges. While change is constant and often provides opportunity, it also creates stress. Campus morale should remain a priority, particularly during difficult times. The administration, faculty, staff, and student leadership should continue to discuss what communications will be needed and what processes should be in place to limit the possibility that the complex times we live in will result in a deterioration of morale.

Finally, the decline in state funding has had its greatest impact on students. Students cannot continue to bear the burden through increased tuition and fees. Public higher education is becoming beyond the means of middle-class families (in addition, of course, to lower income groups) and this is an issue that has to be addressed with the larger audience of legislators, the governor, and the public in general.
APPENDIX A

SELF-STUDY PARTICIPANTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dr. Beth Barnett, Provost
Ms. Miki Cammarata, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
Dr. Dorothy Echols Tobe, Chief Planning Officer
Dr. Jennefer Mazza, Associate Professor of Political Science

STEERING COMMITTEE

CHAIRS

Ms. Miki Cammarata, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
Dr. Jennefer Mazza, Associate Professor of Political Science

MEMBERS

Ms. Bonnie Blake, Professor, Design and Interactive Media
Ms. Judith Jeney, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Budget and Personnel/
   Employee Relations and Ethics Officer
Dr. Karl Johnson, Associate Professor of History
Mr. Stephen Klein, Professor of Information Systems
Mrs. Ramona Kopacz, Learning Disabilities Specialist/Acting Director of Specialized Services
Mr. Jason Krisza, Student Government Senate President
Ms. Linda Madernini, Internal Auditor
Mr. Peter McBride, Ramapo College Board of Trustees
Mr. Thomas Ng, Student Government President
Dr. Lysandra Perez-Strumolo, Associate Professor of Psychology
Mr. Peter Rice, Director of Admissions
Dr. Stephen Rice, Professor of American Studies
Dr. Michael Riff, Director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies
Mr. Richard Roberts, Associate Vice President for Administration and Finance
Dr. Samuel Rosenberg, Dean of Social Science and Human Services
Ms. Debra Stark, Assistant Director of Career Development and Placement
Dr. Jody Williams, Assistant Professor of Nursing
Dr. Alexander Urbiel, Assistant Dean of Teacher Education
Ms. Babette Varano, Director of Institutional Research and Planning

STUDY GROUP 1: MISSION, GOVERNANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION
(STANDARDS 1, 4, AND 5)

CHAIRS

Ms. Linda Madernini, President’s Office
Dr. Alex Urbiel, Teacher Education
MEMBERS

Ms. Irene Kuchta, Library, American Federation of Teachers
Ms. Mary Ann Long, Specialized Services, Diversity Action Committee
Mr. Brian McDaniel, Facilities, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers
Dr. Carter Meyer, American and International Studies, Faculty Assembly
Ms. Ellen Newman, Anisfield School of Business, Communication Workers of America
Mr. Christopher Romano, Enrollment Management
Dr. Edward Saiff, Theoretical and Applied Science, Faculty Assembly
Dr. Natalia Santamaria, American and International Studies
Ms. Donna Singer, Director of Business Continuity, Professional Staff Association
Mr. Timothy St. Thomas, Student Government Association (graduated May 2009)

STUDY GROUP 2: PLANNING AND RESOURCES (STANDARDS 2 AND 3)

CHAIRS

Ms. Judith Jeney, Provost Office
Mr. Richard Roberts, Administration and Finance

MEMBERS

Ms. Kathleen Austin, Institutional Advancement
Dr. Joseph Cataliotti, Social Science and Human Services
Dr. Patrick Chang, Student Affairs
Ms. Nancy Mackin, Student Affairs (retired June 2009)
Mr. Thomas Ng, Student, American and International Studies
Dr. Alexandre Olbrecht, Anisfield School of Business
Mr. Stephen Roma, Human Resources
Ms. Elizabeth Siecke, Library
Mr. George Tabback, Information Technology Services
Ms. Beth Walkley, Budget Office
Dr. Xiurong Zhang, Institutional Research and Planning

STUDY GROUP 3: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (STANDARD 7)

CHAIRS

Ms. Babette Varano, Institutional Research and Planning
Ms. Debra Stark, Cahill Center for Experiential Learning and Career Services

MEMBERS

Dr. Kathleen Burke, Theoretical and Applied Science/Nursing
Ms. Maria Krupin, Budget Office
Ms. Linda Diaz, Residence Life
Ms. Lorraine Edwards, Affirmative Action and Workplace Compliance
Ms. Anna Farneski, Marketing and Communications
Ms. Laura Hahn, Student, Contemporary Arts
Mr. Christopher Romano, President’s Office (Enrollment Management, effective July 2009)
Dr. Jillian Weiss, Social Science and Human Services
STUDY GROUP 4: STUDENT ADMISSIONS, RETENTION, AND SUPPORT SERVICES (STANDARDS 8 AND 9)

CHAIRS

Ms. Bonnie Blake, Contemporary Arts
Mrs. Ramona Kopacz, Specialized Services
Mr. Peter Rice, Admissions

MEMBERS

Mr. Jonathan Belle, Financial Aid
Ms. Sakia Dandridge, Student, Theoretical and Applied Science
Ms. Venus Hewing, Counseling Services
Ms. Carla Kozen, Academic Advisement and First Year Experience
Ms. Judith May, Registrar
Ms. Carolina Perez, Educational Opportunity Fund
Mr. Damian J. Pinton, Athletics
Ms. Alberta Quick, Student Development
Ms. Lisa Saita-Gonsisko, Residence Life
Dr. Jeremy Teigen, American and International Studies

STUDY GROUP 5: FACULTY (STANDARD 10)

CHAIRS

Dr. Lysandra Perez-Strumolo, Social Science and Human Services
Dr. Jody Williams, Theoretical and Applied Science

MEMBERS

Ms. Susan Scher, Social Science and Human Services
Dr. Rikki Abzug, Anisfield School of Business
Dr. Donna Crawley, Social Science and Human Services
Ms. Janet Faber, Employee Relations
Ms. Beth Foster, Registrar
Mr. Brian Hughes, Contemporary Arts
Dr. Susan Hangen, American and International Studies
Ms. Andrea Molina, Student, Theoretical and Applied Science
Dr. Clyde Johnson, Theoretical and Applied Science

STUDY GROUP 6: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND ASSESSMENT (STANDARDS 11, 12, AND 14)

CHAIRS

Dr. Karl Johnson, Social Science and Human Services
Dr. Stephen Rice, American and International Studies
Dr. Samuel Rosenberg, Social Science and Human Services
MEMBERS

Dr. Maxim Goldberg-Rugalev, Theoretical and Applied Science
Mr. James Hoch, American and International Studies
Mr. Roger Jans, Graduate Student, Liberal Studies
Mr. Daniel Jean, Academic Advisement and First Year Experience
Mr. Mitchell Kahn, Social Science and Human Services
Ms. Robin Keller, Information Technology Services
Mr. Jason Krisza, Student, Anisfield School of Business
Ms. Susan Kurzmann, Library
Dr. Lisa Lutter, Contemporary Arts
Dr. Thierry Rakotobe-Joel, Anisfield School of Business
Ms. Mandolin Restivo, Student Development

STUDY GROUP 7: RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
(STANDARD 13)

CHAIRS

Mr. Stephen Klein, Anisfield School of Business
Dr. Michael Riff, Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies

MEMBERS

Dr. David Lewis Colman, Social Science and Human Services
Ms. Rosa Diaz Mulryan, Center for Innovative and Professional Learning
Mr. Stephen Ferraro, Student, Social Science and Human Services
Dr. Margaret Greene, Theoretical and Applied Science
Dr. Cherrie Kassem, Social Science and Human Services
Dr. Valerie Massimo, Instructional Design Center
Ms. Kathryn Plessing, International Student Services (left the college January 2009)
Ms. Phyllis Roberts, Cahill Center for Experiential Learning and Career Services (retired December 2008)
Dr. Albert Romano, Center for Academic Success
APPENDIX B

RAMAPO COLLEGE SELF-STUDY TIMELINE

FALL 2007

• Steering Committee Co-Chairs selected
• Self Study Institute (November 4-6)
• Executive Committee (Barnett, Echols Tobe, Mazza, Cammarata) meet to discuss self-study design and determine Steering Committee composition
• Steering Committee selected

SPRING/EARLY SUMMER 2008

• February: Official launch of Middle States Accreditation Self-Study (website, podcasts, email messages, State of the College address, etc.)
• February – June: Steering Committee meets to develop the Self-Study Design
• March/April: Steering Committee Co-Chairs visit major constituency/governing group meetings – Faculty Assembly, Professional Staff Association, Minority Faculty and Staff Association, Diversity Action Committee, Communication Workers of America, American Federation of Teachers, and the Student Government Association – to discuss the Self-Study process
• July-August: Co-Chairs finalize Self-Study Design and submit to Steering Committee for approval

SUMMER 2008

• Co-Chairs send proposed Self-Study Design to Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) liaison, Dr. Robert Schneider

FALL 2008

• MSCHE liaison visit and approval of Self-Study Design (September 12)
• Study Groups meet regularly and conduct Self-Study (September – December)
• Steering Committee meets monthly to advise process and continue preparations

WINTER 2008/2009

• MSCHE selects the Evaluation Team Chair and Ramapo approves
• Ramapo and Team Chair select dates for Chair’s preliminary visit (Fall 2009)
• Date for Evaluation Team visit determined
SPRING 2009

• Study Groups continue work and submit reports by March 15, 2009

SUMMER 2009

• MSCHE selects Evaluation Team members and Ramapo approves
• Steering Committee develops the Self-Study Draft

FALL 2009

• Campus community reviews and comments on the Self-Study Draft
• Team Chair (Dr. Christopher Dahl) reviews Self-Study Draft
• October 8, 2009 – Dr. Dahl, Team Chair, visit
• Compile feedback and prepare final Self-Study

WINTER/SPRING 2010

• Send final Self-Study to Evaluation Team at least six weeks prior to scheduled visit

SPRING 2010

• March 21-24 - Evaluation Team visit and report
• Institutional response

SUMMER 2010

• Committee on Evaluation Reports meets to review report and institutional response
• Commission action
The following is a guide for the major resources and documents referenced in the Ramapo College Self-Study. There are four primary locations for evidence cited in the Self-Study – direct links to the college’s Web site, resources contained on a special Web site for the Visiting Team, documents that are appended, and documents that will be available in the Resource Room. The guide is organized by chapter and introduced by a list of major institutional resources that provide a framework for understanding Ramapo College.

### VISITING TEAM RESOURCE GUIDE

*Note: Resources are listed alphabetically by Chapter*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Document/Resource</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Other Chapters Document/Resource is Relevant to/Referenced in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Catalog</td>
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<td>Graduating Senior/Recent Alumni Survey results (2 most recent)</td>
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<td>Mail</td>
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<td>National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results (2 most recent)</td>
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<td>Ramapo College Organizational Chart</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/docs/October-1-09-org-chart-101909.pdf">http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/docs/October-1-09-org-chart-101909.pdf</a></td>
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<td>Ramapo College Self-Study Steering Committee</td>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>Visiting Team Web site</td>
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<td>Ramapo College Self-Study Timeline</td>
<td>Appendix</td>
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### Chapter 1: Mission, Leadership and Governance

#### Middle States Standards 1, 4, and 5

<p>| <strong>Academic Affairs Web site</strong> | <a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/academics/">http://www.ramapo.edu/academics/</a> | Chapters 5, 6, 7 |
| <strong>Academic Review Committee Web site</strong> | <a href="http://www2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/fa/arc/">http://www2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/fa/arc/</a> | Chapters 2, 5, 6, 7 |
| <strong>Academic Review Committee By-Laws</strong> | Resource Room | |
| <strong>Board of Trustees Web site</strong> | <a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/board/index.html">http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/board/index.html</a> | Chapter 2 |
| <strong>Campus Communications Web site</strong> | <a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/communications/">http://www.ramapo.edu/communications/</a> | Chapters 2, 3 |
| <strong>Chandler Commission Report</strong> | Visiting Team Web site | Chapter 3 |
| <strong>Chief Planning Officer Web site</strong> | <a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/cpo/index.html">http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/cpo/index.html</a> | Chapters 2, 3 |
| <strong>Curriculum Enhancement Plan (CEP)</strong> | <a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_05_06/academicPrograms/cep/faq.html">http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_05_06/academicPrograms/cep/faq.html</a> | Chapters 2, 5, 6 |
| <strong>Enhancing Institutional Excellence Strategic Plan (2002-2012)</strong> | Resource Room | Chapters 2, 3 |
| <strong>Excellence and Accountability Report</strong> | Visiting Team Web site | |
| <strong>Faculty Assembly Web site</strong> | <a href="http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/fa/index.aspx">http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/fa/index.aspx</a> | Chapters 2, 3, 5 |
| <strong>Faculty Assembly By-Laws</strong> | Resource Room | |
| <strong>Human Resources and Employee Relations (Handbooks, union contract information, assessment processes, benefits, etc.)</strong> | <a href="http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/hr/">http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/hr/</a> | Chapters 2, 3, 5 |
| <strong>Institutional Advancement Web site</strong> | <a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/instadvancement">http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/instadvancement</a> | Chapters 2, 4, 5 |
| <strong>Institutional Effectiveness Web site</strong> | <a href="http://ww2.ramapo.edu/effectiveness/">http://ww2.ramapo.edu/effectiveness/</a> | Chapters 2, 3 |
| <strong>Outside Activity Questionnaire</strong> | <a href="http://ww2.ramapo.edu/libfiles/ER/Ethics/Outside%20Activity%20Questionnaire.doc">http://ww2.ramapo.edu/libfiles/ER/Ethics/Outside%20Activity%20Questionnaire.doc</a> | |
| <strong>Position Review Committee policies, procedures and membership</strong> | <a href="http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/hr/policies2.aspx?id=7502">http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/hr/policies2.aspx?id=7502</a> | Resource Room |
| <strong>President’s Office Web site</strong> | <a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/presidenthome/index.html">http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/presidenthome/index.html</a> | Chapters 2, 3 |
| <strong>President’s Cabinet Web site</strong> | <a href="http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/presidethome/cabinet.html">http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/presidethome/cabinet.html</a> | Chapters 2, 3 |</p>
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<thead>
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<th>Principles on Budget Development</th>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Chapters 2, 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ramapo College Periodic Review Report</td>
<td>Resource Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Committee procedures and membership</td>
<td><a href="http://ww2.ramapo.edu/effectiveness/resources.aspx">http://ww2.ramapo.edu/effectiveness/resources.aspx</a> Appendix</td>
<td>Chapters 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Commission of Investigation Report, 2007</td>
<td>Resource Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Affairs Web site</td>
<td><a href="http://ww2.ramapo.edu/administration/provostoffice/studentaffairs.aspx">http://ww2.ramapo.edu/administration/provostoffice/studentaffairs.aspx</a></td>
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### Chapter 2: Planning and Resources

**Middle States Standards 2 and 3**

| Academic Plan | [http://ww2.ramapo.edu/libfiles/Provost/Faculty_Resources/Academic-Plan-2008-2011.pdf](http://ww2.ramapo.edu/libfiles/Provost/Faculty_Resources/Academic-Plan-2008-2011.pdf) Visiting Team Web site | Chapters 5, 6 |
| Academic Review Committee Web site | [http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/fa/arc/](http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/fa/arc/) | Chapters 1, 5, 6, 7 |
| Academic Structure Exploratory Committee Report | Resource Room | |
| *Audited Financial Statements and Management Letter (FY09, FY08) | Mail Resource Room | |
| Chief Planning Officer Web site | [http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/cpo/index.html](http://www.ramapo.edu/administration/cpo/index.html) | Chapters 1, 3 |
| Contingency Review Committee Documents | Appendix (V.II) | Chapter 3 |
| Curriculum Enhancement Plan (CEP) | [http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_05_06/academicPrograms/cep/faq.html](http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_05_06/academicPrograms/cep/faq.html) | Chapters 1, 5, 6 |
| *Financial Statements submitted to IPEDS (last three years) | Mail Visiting Team Web site | |
| Foundation Audits and Annual Reports (FY09, FY08) | Resource Room | |
| Human Resources and Employee Relations (Handbooks, union contract information, assessment processes, benefits, etc.) | [http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/hr/](http://ww2.ramapo.edu/facultystaff/hr/) | Chapters 1, 3, 5 |
| Institutional Effectiveness Web site | [http://ww2.ramapo.edu/effectiveness/](http://ww2.ramapo.edu/effectiveness/) | Chapters 1, 3 |
| Priority Capitol Projects Report | Resource Room | |
| Ratio Analysis Data, 2005-2008 | Resource Room | Chapter 3 |
| Sample Unit Plans | Appendix (V.II) Visiting Team Web site | Chapters 1, 3 |
| State Commission of Investigation Report, 2007 | Resource Room | Chapter 1 |
| Technology Plan | Visiting Team Web site | |
| Voluntary Support to Education Report (alumni giving) | Resource Room | |
### Chapter 3: Institutional Effectiveness
**Middle States Standard 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Room</th>
<th>Chapter 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACUHO/EBI Resident Study results (most recent two)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus Climate Survey results (2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chandler Commission Report</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Ratios</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional Effectiveness Web site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Review Committee Process and Principles</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Principles of Budget Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Unit Plans</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Space Allocation Criteria</td>
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<tr>
<th>Resource Room</th>
<th>Chapters 4, 5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acid Rain Study</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Admissions Web site</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Affirmative Action and Workplace Compliance Web site</td>
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<td>Athletics and Intramurals Web site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athletics Power Point Presentation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioral Intervention Team Web site</td>
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<td>Bursar Web site</td>
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<td>Cahill Center Web site</td>
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<td>Campus Climate Survey Summary (2005)</td>
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<td>Campus Store Web site</td>
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### Chapter 4: Students
**Middle States Standards 8, 9, and 6**

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## Chapter 5: Faculty
### Middle States Standards 10 and 6

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<td>Resource Room</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
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**Chapter 6: Academic Programs and Assessment**

**Middle States Standards 11, 12, and 14**

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<td>Resource Room</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<td>Chapters 1, 5</td>
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<td>State Accountability Sourcebook</td>
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### Chapter 7: Related Educational Activities

**Middle States Standard 13**

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* MSCHE Requirement (mail)