RAMAPO COLLEGE

Brand Guidelines

UPDATED
04/2022

RAMAPO
COLLEGE

CONTENTS

ABOUT THESE GUIDELINES

Our Ramapo College of New Jersey brand exists primarily in the perceptions people have about us:

Who we are, what we do, and why it matters.

Every time we communicate — whether we're posting on social media, sending promotional material by mail, or talking with prospective students directly — people form opinions about the College based on their interactions with us.

Brands are living, breathing things in that way — and they're increasingly hard to control.

The more consistent and confident we are when telling the Ramapo story, the better our audiences will understand and trust what we have to say. That's why it's so important for all of us to be on the same page about our brand identity — the tangible, real-world system of design and messaging we use every day to tell the world about ourselves.

––––

These guidelines are designed to ensure that all College communications, big or small, are authentic, cohesive reflections of the Ramapo College of New Jersey brand.

All brand-specific questions should be referred to the Office of Marketing and Communications at marketing@ramapo.edu or 201-684-7602.

BRAND Strategy

BRAND PLATFORM

Based on comprehensive discovery and research, our Brand Platform reveals the key insights that establish our positioning and guide our brand strategy.

BRAND PROMISE

Our Brand Promise presents our strongest and most ownable position in the market. This is not a tagline, but rather, a simple, distilled phrase that forms a foundational point for our strategy.

UNAPOLOGETICALLY Bold

PERSONALITY

Our Personality helps us to establish and maintain a consistent tone throughout our communications.

→ **Vibrancy & Ambition**

→ **Everyone has a voice**

→ **Service and civic engagement**

→ **Roll-up-your-sleeves mentality**

→ **Mentorship**

BRAND PILLARS

Our Brand Pillars further define our competitive advantage through our biggest strengths: what we believe in, what connects people to us, and what we do differently or better than other institutions.

Relationships

We see, hear, and respect each student, mentoring and empowering them to speak up for themselves and voice their opinions.

Personal Growth

We empower students to explore the person they are so they can make strides to becoming the person they want to be.

Liberal Arts

We develop critical thinkers, effective communicators, and innovative problem solvers who are better prepared to meet the demands of an evolving job market and a complex world.

Hands-on Experiences

We provide students with integrated and experiential learning opportunities to prepare for tomorrow by actively working to create their futures today.

FOUNDATION

Our Foundation is based on important, yet non-differentiating, pride points.

Beautiful, picturesque campus / **Genuine student-faculty relationships** / **Convenient location** / **Public and affordable**

NARRATIVE

An expression of key elements contained within the Brand Platform and the foundation for the creative to come, serving as inspiration and guidance.

SAMPLE

We were established in 1969 to provide a relevant education for the times. Not content with the status quo, we sought to redefine the higher education experience. Youthful exuberance, some might say, and they'd be right. More than a half-century later, our energy and optimism are stronger than ever. That's because there's boldness in our blood.

At Ramapo College of New Jersey, we're ever evolving, always creating novel ways to make the college experience more of a unifying, community effort, one in which students aren't just given a voice, but are encouraged to raise their own; aren't just educated about our world, but are inspired to plant a flag, to lay claim to their place in it; and one in which students don't just boldly act in a particular moment, but are empowered to make bold thinking a mindset and bold action a lifestyle. Because college is more than a time and a place to learn the knowledge and the skills to secure a job and to launch a successful career — although that's paramount. It's also about developing in students the core belief that their education doesn't end at graduation — that learning is a lifelong process of personal discovery that translates into a lifetime of professional success.
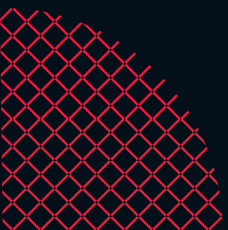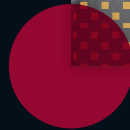
BRAND
Language

VOICE AND TONE

Each story we tell should have both a clear purpose and an authentic tone that feels distinctively like Ramapo. A helpful first step for any communicator is to commit the personality words to memory, as a reference. Then, use the following writing tips as a stylistic gauge.

WRITING TIPS

1. Be clear and concise

The most effective messages are uncomplicated. Rather than getting hung up on academic language or marketing jargon, write clearly and in a straight-forward tone.

2. Know your audience

The Ramapo College of New Jersey brand will be communicated to lots of different audiences, with different needs. Before you start writing, know who it is you're aiming to connect with.

3. Make it all about "You"

Use the second-person "you" or "your" to engage and motivate the reader. While everything you write will feel like it's about us, in reality, it's about them.

4. Say one thing well

Every tweet, pamphlet, headline, or blurb should have one distinct message. Get to the point and refrain from sending mixed messages, so that your audience knows how to act on the information you're giving them.

5. Focus on the new

We have a great story behind us; but our willingness to look forward and explore new ways of doing things is our strength. Express our curious and optimistic spirit by talking about the great things our faculty, students, and alumni are doing to break new ground.

6. Provide a benefit

What's in it for the reader? If you can't answer this question, it's time to pause and reconsider the piece.

7. Back it up

Our storytelling should feature relevant points of pride, statistics, testimonials, and emotion — but use them to support our messaging, not as a substitute for it.

8. Give the reader something to do

Always provide a single, clear call to action.

9. Be human

Our students, faculty, and alumni are the best examples of the work we're doing. Highlight their stories, their wins, and the challenges they face as part of the fabric of the Ramapo College of New Jersey story.

10. Be bold, not brash

We have a lot to be proud of — and it's okay to tout our successes. The key is to make sure our messaging is bold and confident, rather than brash or cocky.

ON-BRAND WORD BANK

Photos and graphics are not the only way to convey the Ramapo College brand. The words we choose and the manner in which we write also show our brand in action. Using the aforementioned writing tips, including these words as needed will verbally identify the Ramapo College brand.

Writing Tip

When writing on-brand, incorporate some of these words as appropriate for the topic about which you are writing. Do not overwhelm the copy with all or most of these words; rather, use them strategically for impact.

Curriculum

Innovative
Forward-thinking
Modern
Explorative
Dynamic
Outside-the-box
Hands-on

Community

Collaborative
Connected
Tight-knit
Energetic
Optimistic
Spirited
Bold
Unafraid of change

Faculty

Mentoring
Encouraging
Accessible
Experienced

Campus

Picturesque
Safe
Welcoming
Home base
"Easy access to NYC"

ON/OFF BRAND TEXT EXERCISE

Choose one of the three options that **best reflects** the updated brand visual and verbal language.

EXERCISE 1

Option 1

At Ramapo, we offer a traditional approach to the liberal arts that encourages discussion and reflection, giving our students the skills to think deeply, communicate effectively, and see things differently.

❌ This example fails to get across the boldness in our personality. We could fix this by explaining our approach to the liberal arts as 'modern' or 'innovative' (rather than 'traditional'), and using more expansive words to describe our curriculum – like exploration, open-mindedness, and open discussion (rather than reflection or deep thinking, which are inward-focused).

Option 2

At Ramapo, we offer a rigorous liberal arts education that encourages open discussion, collaboration, and scholarly inquiry; giving our students the confidence to see and do things differently.

❌ Much better but it's not the best.
Pros: We mention 'open discussion' and 'collaboration', which are both great terms to use — and 'see and do things differently' is very on-brand.
Cons: We describe our approach to the liberal arts as 'rigorous', which may be partly true, but it still fails to get across our modern and different approach. And, we use the term 'scholarly inquiry', which is much too stuffy and traditional for our brand.

Option 3

At Ramapo, we offer a modern approach to the liberal arts that encourages open discussion and exploration, giving our students the confidence to explore their interests, speak their minds, and see things in bold new ways.

✅ **BEST EXAMPLE**
We hit on our 'modern approach' to the liberal arts, we use expansive terms like 'open discussion', 'exploration' and 'explore their interests', and we also get at the boldness of our Ramapo community – our students are unafraid to 'speak their minds' and 'see things in bold new ways.'

EXERCISE 2

Option 1

RCNJ graduate Brandee Chapman spent a month hiking and camping through six different states as part of Ramapo's Pacific Northwest program; fueling her interest in environmental conservation. Now, she is State Trails Coordinator for the Department of Environmental Conservation. #wearercnj

❌ This example is great — but it's not distinctive. It gets across the major details (what Brandee did at Ramapo and how it shaped her current career) — but there is no on-brand language in here.

Option 2

RCNJ graduate Brandee Chapman was bold enough to spend a month hiking and camping through six different states as part of Ramapo's Pacific Northwest program; a new experience that sparked her passion for environmental conservation. Now, she runs a one-woman show as State Trails Coordinator for the Department of Environmental Conservation in New Jersey. #RCNJ

✅ **BEST EXAMPLE**
We've made subtle tweaks to the language to get our boldness across – 'Brandee Chapman was bold enough to...', 'a new experience that sparked her passion', and 'she runs a onewoman show'. We've also included a hashtag which, albeit simple, is ownable for Ramapo and aligned with the new brand.

Option 3

RCNJ graduate Brandee Chapman spent a month hiking, camping, and learning about local reservations, fisheries and historical sites as part of Ramapo's Pacific Northwest program; sparking a connection with and love for the environment. Now, she is doing what she loves as State Trails Coordinator for the Department of Environmental Conservation. #RamapoCollege

❌ This example is a little more detailed than the first one, but it's too touchy-feely for Ramapo's bold brand. We use terms like 'a connection with and love for the environment' and 'doing what she loves' (neither are bad things to say; but there's no bold language in here to convey Ramapo's brave/explorative outlook.) We do use on-brand language in the hashtag 'live and learn boldly' – but, a hashtag is of little use if it isn't recognizable as Ramapo College. We should try to include the word 'Ramapo' or 'RCNJ' in there to make it ownable.

💡 **Social Media Tip**
When using hashtags, use camel case, which means capitalizing the first letter of each word so hashtags are more readable.
Examples: #RamapoCollege, not #ramapocollege and #WeAreRCNJ, not #wearercnj.
For more information about social media best practices, visit ramapo.edu/social-media.

SAMPLE HEADLINE BANK

Brand headlines can be used in various tactics for Ramapo College of New Jersey at the brand level. Each headline ties back to Ramapo's brand essence and brand pillars. They can serve as calls to action or copy on advertisements (billboards, digital ads, light pole banners, etc.), and are intended to demonstrate how the Ramapo brand messaging can be brought to life in various ways.

See
your potential /
your career /
yourself
in bold
new ways.

Learn /
Think /
Live
Boldly.

Education,
undaunted.

Education,
unlimited.

Education,
unparalleled.

Learn
collaboratively.

Think
curiously.

Speak
confidently.

Be bolder
than the
status quo.

Bold
doesn't
look back.

Bold [research
initiative here].

e.g. Bold Fights Childhood
Cancer. / Bold Explores
Greener Transport
Alternatives. / Bold Increases
Access to Education.

Be bold enough
to ask the big
questions.

[Subject area here],
emboldened.

e.g. Education, emboldened.
/ Engineering, emboldened.
/ Performing arts,
emboldened.

HEADLINE GENERATION EXERCISE

Brainstorm a few ideas for each of the headline constructs below.

Bold (research initiative here).

EXAMPLES

Bold Fights Childhood Cancer.

Bold Explores Greener Transport Alternatives.

Bold Increases Access to Education.

See _____ in bold new ways.

EXAMPLES

See your potential in bold new ways.

See your career in bold new ways.

See yourself in bold new ways.

What other words could be used here?

Be bolder than the status quo.

EXAMPLE

Be bolder than 9-to-5. *(for an article discussing an entrepreneurial student)*

How else could we use this?

What are some examples of 'status quo' things, and how does Ramapo do things differently?

VISUAL Language

COLOR PALETTE

Beyond our logo, color is the most recognizable aspect of our visual brand identity.

Primary Palette
Using our primary palette appropriately is one of the easiest ways to make sure our materials reflect a cohesive Ramapo College brand.

Secondary Palette
Our secondary palette serves to **accent** our primary colors and should be used sparingly.

Designer Tip
We recommend using the CMYK breakdown for print projects. Note that colors may need to be adjusted depending on the printer's color output.
The PANTONE color should only be used as a spot color for special prints.

PRIMARY PALETTE

MAROON

Maroon 50% Opacity Multiply Effect on Maroon*

HEX: #72111F

Clothing ONLY
PANTONE: 505 C

PANTONE: 202 C
CMYK: 1 / 98 / 58 / 44
RGB: 134 / 38 / 51
HEX: #862633

COOL BLACK

75% Tint*
HEX: #545658

PANTONE: 426 C
CMYK: 81 / 87 / 55 / 83
RGB: 37 / 40 / 42
HEX: #25282A

SECONDARY PALETTE

RED

Red 25% Opacity on Maroon*
HEX: #A42228**

PANTONE: 199 C
CMYK: 0 / 100 / 79 / 0
RGB: 196 / 30 / 39**
HEX: #C41E1E**

WARM GRAY

50% Tint*
HEX: #EAE9E5

20% Tint*
HEX: #F7F7F5**

PANTONE: Warm Gray 1 C
CMYK: 10 / 10 / 11 / 0
RGB: 215 / 210 / 203
HEX: #D7D2CB

GOLD

Only to be used for graphic elements or for text on a dark background

50% Tint*
HEX: #DAC094

PANTONE: 7407 C
CMYK: 8 / 29 / 71 / 9
RGB: 203 / 160 / 82
HEX: #CBA052

DARK GOLD

Only to be used as 18+pt text or bold text on a white background

Special Occasions ONLY
PANTONE: 10128 C
Metallic Gold

PANTONE: 4026 C
CMYK: 7 / 37 / 79 / 17
RGB: 188 / 140 / 61
HEX: #BC8C3D

*Different tints/shades may be used then the versions that are displayed. **Color differs from the PANTONE swatch breakdown for website purposes.*

COLOR USAGE

It is important that we consider all people when designing for our community which means that we have to design for those whom may have disabilities such as color blindness. Meeting ADA (American Disability Act) standards is important to our outreach efforts. Here are examples of unacceptable/acceptable ways to use the colors from the color palette. Please contact the office of Marketing and Communications if you have questions about usage.
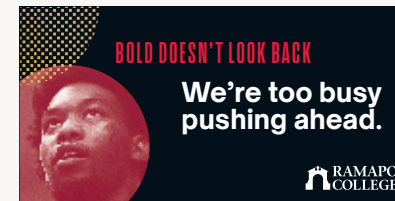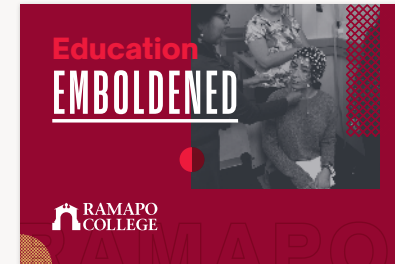
💡 Designer Tip

If you need assistance to make sure your designs meet accessibility standards, please reference the following websites:

- Contrast Checker:
  coolors.co/contrast-checker
- Colorblind simulator:
  hclwizard.org:3000/
  cvdemulator/

ACCEPTABLE
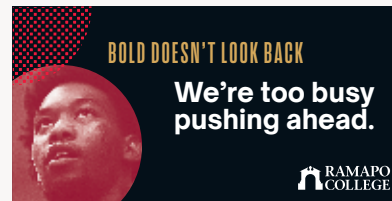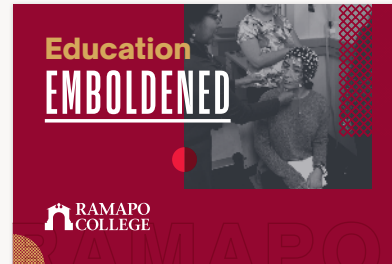
UNACCEPTABLE

❌ There is not enough contrast between the red text and the maroon background, which does not meet accessibility standards for colorblindness. It is acceptable to have graphic elements in red on maroon, but not text. Gold text on a maroon background works better. but note that the gold text must be 18+ pt or bold.

❌ There is not enough contrast between the gold colored text and white background to meet ADA standards. This instance you may want to use the darker gold, red, or maroon color.

❌ Red text on the cool black background does not meet ADA standards.

❌ The Arch symbol in our logo should meet accessibility standards. Although it is accepatble to use the logo with the maroon arch, in the instance on this dark background, it does not meet ADA standards. Please use the all white version of the logo on a dark colored background.

TYPOGRAPHY

Just as we choose different words to convey different messages, the typeface we use can have a profound effect on our communications. Consistently using the official fonts selected for Ramapo strengthens and reinforces the brand.

HEADERS

ACTION CONDENSED BOLD

CHARACTERS

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOo
PpQqRrSsTtUu VvWwXxYyZz
0123456789

STYLES

Grade 1*
Grade 1 Italic
Grade 2
Grade 2 Italic

Grade 3
Grade 3 Italic

SYSTEM ALTERNATIVE
IMPACT

GOOGLE ALTERNATIVE
OSWALD

HEADERS, SUBHEADS, BODY COPY

Open Sauce One

CHARACTERS

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOo
PpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz
0123456789

STYLES

Light
Light Italic
Regular
Italic
Medium*
Medium Italic

SemiBold
SemiBold Italic
Bold*
Bold Italic
Extra Bold*
ExtraBold Italic

Black
Black Italic

SYSTEM ALTERNATIVE
Arial

GOOGLE ALTERNATIVE
Sarabun

Most preferred style for use.

HIERARCHY EXAMPLE

This example is meant only to provide a starting point and is not prescriptive.

Open Sauce Extrabold
18 pt. type / 21 pt. leading

Action Condensed Grade 1
48 pt. type / 46 pt. leading
+ 75 tracking

Open Sauce Extrabold
14 pt. type / 17 pt. leading

Open Sauce Medium
8 pt. type / 11 pt. leading

Action Condensed Grade 1
14 pt. type / 17 pt. leading
+ 75 tracking

Open Sauce Extrabold
18 pt. type / 21 pt. leading

Open Sauce Black
100 pt. type / 2 pt. stroke

Why follow tradition—

WHEN YOU CAN MAKE HISTORY?

Da is rehenih ilique simus eos et quas dolorio ruptatur aborem quis volum quist dolor aliquis vendit.

Eligenia volor rehenim agnatemque isint.Ducid moluptatibus el iuscid eume disciet dolores tinciis uta accae. Nam endendis a verio dolum suntur as magnim escipsum sitibusam nem. Ut dolorit apel ipis qui berum amet eaquist.

Nam sedist, eume pos estor reperferum qui beaqui beritatia voluptum se magnati orianti onsecus.

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR
Sit amet volor ut. →

TYPOGRAPHY TIPS

Follow these best practices when working with Ramapo's typefaces.

LEADING

Line spacing, called leading, should be set tight, but not too tight. For body copy, try leading that's two or three points higher than the type size.

Leading that's too tight leaves too little pause between the lines.

❌ **TOO TIGHT** 12 pt. type / 12 pt. leading

Leading that's too loose

leaves too much pause

between the lines.

❌ **TOO LOOSE** 12 pt. type / 20 pt. leading

When leading is correct, the reader won't even notice.

✅ **JUST RIGHT** 12 pt. type / 15 pt. leading

TRACKING

The space between letters is referred to as tracking. As a rule, set tracking slightly looser for captions, and slightly tighter for headlines.

Tracking that is too tight leaves too little space between letters.

❌ **TOO TIGHT** 12 pt. type / -60 tracking

Tracking that is too loose leaves too much space between letters.

❌ **TOO LOOSE** 12 pt. type / +60 tracking

When tracking is correct, the reader won't even notice.

✅ **JUST RIGHT** 12 pt. type / default tracking

GRAPHIC ELEMENTS

A. Circle Accent / Circle accents are set in any color and multiplied over photos and pattern holding-shapes.

B. Underline / Underline **Action Condensed** in headlines to add emphasis and visual interest. Thickness should mimic the weight of the type.

C. Cross-Hatch Pattern / Patterns can be set in colors from our palette and placed in a rectangular or (semi-) circular holding shape.

D. Mega-Type / Outline **Open Sauce**, set in a large type size, and place it breaking the edge of the grid to accent pieces.

E. Cutouts / Cut out people, places, or things and set them in full-color or duotone for a distinctive way to include photography.

F. Checker Pattern / See "Cross-Hatch Pattern."

G. Badge / Set in our bright red, these shapes contain short phrases or numbers and are multiplied over photos and pattern holding shapes.
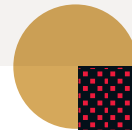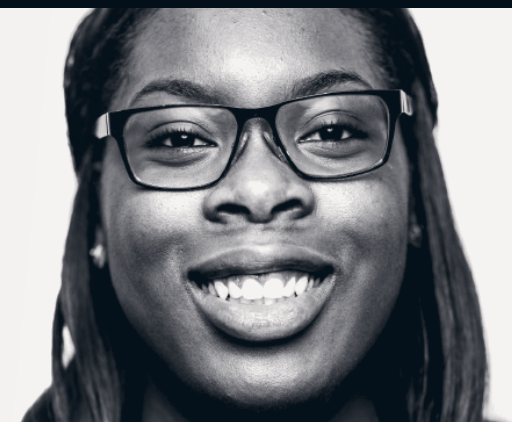
MAKE History

RAMAPO

Education
UNDAUNTED

BOLD DOESN'T LOOK BACK
We're too busy pushing ahead.

1969

UNDAUNTED Exploration

PHOTOGRAPHY

Inspired Portraits
Everything at Ramapo College of New Jersey begins with our students, including our photography. Specifically, we'll feature **vibrant, close-up portraits** of individual students or small groups of students in authentic situations.

Capturing **candid** portraits evokes our **inviting** and **"everyone-has a seat at the table"** personality. Whereas, capturing **posed** portraits where the subject is looking **boldly** into the camera brings out our **"roll-up-your-sleeves"** attitude.

Photography Tip
Whenever possible, shoot in **natural light** and at a **low aperture** to encourage a distinct foreground and background.

PHOTOGRAPHY

A. Bold Lifestyle
We provide students with **integrated and experiential learning opportunities** and our photography should prove it.

Capture Ramapo students and faculty **in motion** and **hands-on** in their work. Capture the relationships at Ramapo by shooting **engaged groups and pairings**, as well as individuals.

B. Picturesque Environmental
From **indoor facilities** to **natural landscapes**, use environmental photography to share the full Ramapo student experience and showcase our **beautiful, safe home-base** location and its connection to a vibrant, metropolitan city.

Photography Tips
Shoot in natural light whenever possible, and avoid shots that look staged.

When possible, **include human interaction** in these **wide-shot** scenes.

DUOTONES

Color duotones are an effective way to add color and create a neutral backdrop for text and graphics. We can use a duotone effect on our cutouts, full-bleed images, and photos cropped into a shape.

🔆 Designer Tip

To make a photograph duotone in InDesign, first open the image in Photoshop. In the top menu, select **Image > Mode > Grayscale.** Save the image as a **TIFF** or **JPEG**, and import into InDesign. Click once on the image to change the background color. Click twice to change the foreground color.

Background
White

Foreground
PMS 202 C

Transparency
Normal

Background
White

Foreground
PMS 7407 C

Transparency
Normal

Background
PMS Warm
Gray 1 C
50% Tint

Foreground
PMS 426 C

Transparency
Normal

Background
PMS 202 C

Foreground
PMS 426 C

Transparency
Multiply / 25%

SAMPLE LAYOUT BANK

See your
POTENTIAL
in bold new ways.

Pos ditiani nihit volor mint odisque odi non nos asperitat dolor magnis esecatum simillo represenia dem aboriat emperum rempedi odit utendant fugia serum dolupta tectur sum aut mos esedis quiate si derci tent eribusa nditas ad earum antem invercit.

Learn more at **ramapo.edu** →

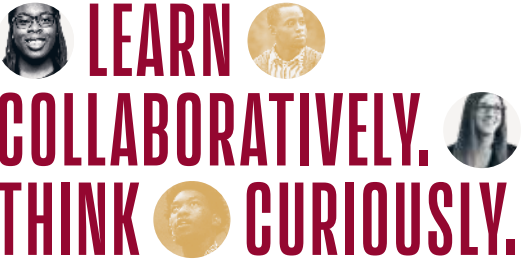**RAMAPO COLLEGE** OF NEW JERSEY

BE BOLDER
than the
status quo.

Pos ditiani nihit volor mint odisque odi non nos asperitat dolor magnis esecatum simillo represenia dem aboriat emperum rempedi odit utendant fugia serum.

Learn more at **ramapo.edu** →

RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

LEARN COLLABORATIVELY. THINK CURIOUSLY. SPEAK CONFIDENTLY.

Learn more at **ramapo.edu** →

Pos ditiani nihit volor mint odisque odi non nos asperitat dolor magnis esecatum simillo represenia dem aboriat emperum rempedi odit utendant fugia serum ribusa nditas ad earum antem invercit.

RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

ADDITIONAL
Resources

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This guide is put together by the Office of Marketing and Communications. For additional resouces, please refrence this information.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Office of Marketing and Communications is responsible for overseeing a number of centralized marketing and communications functions at Ramapo College including: branding, advertising, marketing, publications, graphic design, photography, the official College websites and social media channels, and internal and external public relations.

For more details, visit ramapo.edu/marketing-communications

LOGO

PRIMARY LOGO — BASIC
Most preferred option

BIG ARCH

VERTICAL

It is essential that the Ramapo College logo and official marks be utilized appropriately on all Ramapo College visual communications. The College logos are not to be adjusted or modified in any way.

For more details, visit ramapo.edu/brand/logos

SOCIAL MEDIA

Official Ramapo College social media accounts are managed by the Office of Marketing and Communications. Marketing's Social Media Strategist & Content Manager. Social media enables the various Ramapo College constituents (students, alumni, faculty, staff and administration) to easily connect with and communicate about the College, very often in real-time through a variety of social channels.

For more details, visit ramapo.edu/brand/social-media

PROJECT REQUEST FORM

All projects are now being designed in our new brand, which we look forward to fully introducing to the campus. Your project will look and sound different from what you might be used to because of the bold new design elements, and we thank you in advance for your understanding and for supporting the Ramapo College brand.

To submit a project, visit ramapo.edu/project-request