RAMAPO COLLEGE
OF NEW JERSEY

Strategic Plan
2014-2018

PUSHING BOUNDARIES

June 24, 2013

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Under the previous Strategic Plan, 2007-2012, the College has made significant progress. Of particular note, budgeting and planning, previously carried out in relative isolation, are becoming fully integrated and, in furtherance of such integration, the new Strategic Plan presented here has also been prepared in tandem with the Academic Plan and the emergent Campus Facilities Master Plan.

This Strategic Plan, 2014-2018, is the product of over one year's work by a 25-member task force made up of faculty, students, staff, administration and including representatives of the alumni, the Ramapo College Board of Trustees, and the Ramapo College Foundation Board of Governors. Discussion and deliberations of the task force, both as a whole and in smaller working groups, were unfailingly comprehensive, data-driven, constructive and cordial. During the last several months of the process, the task force was ably guided and assisted by an external consultant with a rich and extensive background in higher education strategic planning.

The task force produced a plan that, compared with its predecessor, is more concise – witness the revised mission statement – and more focused with each goal accompanied by clear objectives and targets. This greater precision requires increased attention to whether the goals, objectives, and targets are being met and I intend to appoint a small review committee to issue an annual progress evaluation and report that will be publicly available.

The "bookends" to the strategic plan are the statements of Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles and the Glossary of Key Ideas and Definitions. Together they provide a context for understanding and implementing the plan. Several groups of task force members met individually with a broad array of college constituencies to receive their comments and suggestions on the draft of the plan. That feedback was incorporated into the plan as the Strategic Planning Task Force deemed appropriate.

This last point is important. Reasonable people often disagree on matters of content and emphasis but ultimately it is the representative task force's decision as to what was submitted to the Board of Trustees at its June 2013 meeting. It was then entirely within the Board's prerogative to accept the report or remit it to the task force for further consideration.

The new Strategic Plan, in identifying the strategic goals of advancing academic excellence and engagement, enhancing financial strength and institutional sustainability, improving internal and external relations and communications, and cultivating and supporting

diversity and inclusiveness is a kind of blueprint for the immediate future. It should lead not only to the increased recognition of Ramapo as a high quality college but also to our achievement of a state of financial equilibrium with debt starting to be retired significantly, predictable tuition revenues and ancillary revenues sufficient to cover continuing shortfalls in state funding.

I look forward to the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Peter P. Mercer
President

MISSION

Ramapo College is New Jersey's Public Liberal Arts College, dedicated to providing students a strong foundation for a lifetime of achievement. The College is committed to academic excellence through interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding. Ramapo College emphasizes teaching and individual attention to all students. We promote diversity, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement.

VISION

As the region's premier public liberal arts college, Ramapo College of New Jersey prepares students to be successful leaders for a changing world through its distinctive commitments to hands-on learning and faculty-student mentoring.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Consistency with Mission and Vision
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 a diverse faculty, staff, alumni, and local, state, and global communities.

Assessment, Accountability, and Analysis
All strategic goals and objectives must be defined to champion accountability, bestow measurements for assessment, and conclude in analysis.

Collaboration and Transparency
All strategic goals and objectives must be defined and pursued with transparency, consultation and open communication.

Goal 1: ADVANCE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND ENGAGEMENT

Ramapo College advances academic excellence and student engagement in the undergraduate experience through its General Education Program and major and minor programs; continued focus on interdisciplinary and experiential learning, and international and intercultural understanding; and increased integration of the Course Enrichment Component (CEC). In addition, the College offers a small number of graduate programs in areas of existing undergraduate expertise and anticipated high demand. To these ends, the College supports a highly qualified, engaged and accessible faculty.

The College seeks to better serve students from underrepresented groups, transfer students, international students, graduate students, and adult learners through programs and services that address the distinctive needs of these growing populations. The integration of technology in support of all these endeavors will be emphasized. The College continuously develops, assesses, and refreshes curricula and improves services.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 The College will offer rigorous curricula and experiential activities that prepare all students for a lifetime of achievement.

Achievement Target 1.1.1
100% of major, free-standing minor, and graduate programs will:
- make curricular adjustments when student proficiency falls below satisfactory benchmarks as set by the respective convening groups of those academic programs;

- Evaluate their requirements by using peer-normed data (NSSE, CLA, and/or other standardized assessment instruments) in order to assess and improve overall academic rigor.

Achievement Target 1.1.2
90% of undergraduate major programs will require students to successfully engage, by the time of graduation, in an extended experiential activity (study abroad, co-op, internship, training, clinical, service learning, and student/faculty research); and 50% of undergraduate major programs will require successful engagement by graduation in a meaningful international experience (study abroad, service learning abroad, international internship/co-op, foreign language study, intensive specialized international course).

Achievement Target 1.1.3
The General Education Curriculum Committee (GECCo) will continue to assess student learning outcomes for the General Education Program (as scheduled within the current General Education assessment plan); based on assessment results, the General Education Program will be revised or refreshed and ready for implementation by FY2015.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 The College will ensure that students increase academic, personal, social, and civic engagement by offering enhanced curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programming.

Achievement Target 1.2.1
Using the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a 10% increase in:
- the elements of Active and Collaborative Learning will be used as indication of increased academic engagement;

- the elements of Enriching Educational Experiences will be used as indication of increased personal engagement;

- the elements of Supportive Campus Environment will be used as indication of positive social engagement.

Achievement Target 1.2.2
The College will administer the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) starting in FY2014; faculty use of high impact practices for student success will increase 10% by the second administration of FSSE in FY2016.

Achievement Target 1.2.3
The Civic and Community Engagement Center (CCEC) will facilitate a 50% increase in the number of students who participate in civic and/or community service.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 The College will continue to support and develop a diverse, highly qualified, engaged, and accessible faculty through activities centered on teaching, learning, and advising; scholarship and creative work; and service and college governance.

Achievement Target 1.3.1
The College will:
- assess the teaching and advising effectiveness of 100% of full time faculty through the reappointment and tenure processes, as well as the five-year Career Development process;

- support the participation of faculty in developmental activities on teaching and learning, advising, and integration of technology into teaching, learning, and advising so that by FY2015, 100% of pre-tenured faculty, at least 75% of tenured faculty, and at least 25% of adjunct faculty annually engage in activities to improve teaching and learning, and 100% of full-time faculty annually participate in workshops on advising students;

- expect and support 100% of full-time faculty to be engaged in scholarly and creative work, unless receiving FLEX credit for convening or other service responsibilities.

Achievement Target 1.3.2
With faculty initiative, the College will increase the total number of external grant submissions by 5% each year.

Achievement Target 1.3.3
The College will facilitate the development and implementation of a system for assessing faculty service that is tied to personnel decisions in order to meet the need for broad engagement in governance and contribution to the College by all faculty members.

OBJECTIVE 1.4 The College will increase enrollment and graduation rates among underrepresented groups, transfer students, international students, graduate students, and returning students. The College will identify and make use of currently underutilized capacity within undergraduate academic programs.

Achievement Target 1.4.1
With the goals of maintaining traditional undergraduate enrollment at the current level and continuing to diversify the undergraduate student population, total headcount enrollment will reach 6,000.

Achievement Target 1.4.2
The College will increase the actual number of students from underrepresented racial and socioeconomic populations by 5%.

Achievement Target 1.4.3
Out-of-state students and international students will be 5% and 5%, respectively, of the first time, full time student population.

Achievement Target 1.4.4
While current averages for undergraduate measures of academic quality (SAT and ACT) will remain stable or increase, four-year graduation rates will meet or exceed 65%; and six-year graduation rates will meet or exceed 75%, with all student types enrolled in the undergraduate programs at or within 10% of this target.

Achievement Target 1.4.5
Four-year graduation rates for transfer students will increase to 70% and six-year graduation rates for transfer students will increase to 75%.

Achievement Target 1.4.6
Graduate enrollment share of the overall headcount enrollment will increase to 8%.

Achievement Target 1.4.7
Undergraduate enrollment share (as measured by student credit hour generation) in the arts and humanities will increase by 10%.

Goal 2: ENHANCE FINANCIAL STRENGTH AND INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ramapo College manages its financial, human, and physical resources sustainably. Through revenue generation, reallocation, expense reduction, and fundraising the College seeks to become even more financially robust.

OBJECTIVE 2.1 The College will enhance its strength by managing its financial risk and improving its financial position while maintaining conservative utilization of future debt.

> Achievement Target 2.1.1
> The College will manage its revenues and expenses in order to increase its Composite Financial Index (which is comprised of the following ratios: Primary Reserve, Net Operating Revenue, Return on Net Assets and Viability) to or above a rating of 5 in order to allow for the financial flexibility to operate in a more competitive higher education environment and to fulfill the goals of the strategic plan.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 The College and the Foundation will continue to increase external funding through all constituencies to support the College's mission and strategic initiatives.

> Achievement Target 2.2.1
> The College and Foundation will increase secured revenues from competitive grants by 25% to reach $4.1 million annually by 2018.

> Achievement Target 2.2.2
> The College will work with the Foundation to ensure that its operational support payments to the College and endowment corpus grow 25% by 2018. This cumulative increase and support for capital projects are expected to surpass $9.7 million over the term of the Strategic Plan.

OBJECTIVE 2.3 The College will provide a supportive environment for work, study, and social interaction.

> Achievement Target 2.3.1
> The College will administer an employee opinion survey that will evaluate work-life flexibility, internal employee communication, empowerment, recognition, and other work environment components. 80% of employees surveyed will rate the overall work environment as favorable.

> Achievement Target 2.3.2
> The College will complete an essential functions analysis and continually assess the optimal level, classification, and use of personnel for institutional effectiveness.

Achievement Target 2.3.3
The College will repair and renovate at least one building identified in the Campus Facilities Master Plan as "poor" or with "significant condition issues" with particular focus on the academic core.

Achievement Target 2.3.4
The College will reduce, from 26% to 20%, the amount of space identified in the Campus Facilities Master Plan as "inadequate."

Achievement Target 2.3.5
The College will demonstrably align space resources with current and future demands.

OBJECTIVE 2.4 The College will be environmentally sustainable.

Achievement Target 2.4.1
The College will decrease its total waste by 20% and increase its recycling rate by 20%.

Achievement Target 2.4.2
The College will further its obligation to the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment by reducing its carbon footprint by 10%.

Achievement Target 2.4.3
The College will review, on a per project basis, the costs of incorporating New Jersey Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards, and will use this information when prioritizing elements of the Campus Facilities Master Plan.

Achievement Target 2.4.4
The College will implement a "Freecycle" program for the campus.

OBJECTIVE 2.5 The College will ensure that its major institutional decisions are based on timely, accurate, and reliable data.

Achievement Target 2.5.1
The College will develop and implement comprehensive processes for collecting data to enable accurate and timely decision making.

Achievement Target 2.5.2
By FY2015, the College will develop and implement a more effective system of data analysis and utilization to enable accurate and timely decision making.

Achievement Target 2.5.3
Data regarding alumni will continue to be systematically and centrally collected. Of graduates for the last five years, contact information will be available for 80%, additional education information for 95%; and employment information for 30%.

Goal 3: IMPROVE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ramapo College recognizes the value of communication and consultation with and among constituents to further develop effective collegial planning and governance structures. To this end, the College seeks to enhance relationships with internal stakeholders in order to foster collaborative and transparent communication and with external stakeholders to strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 The College will improve communication among constituents.

Achievement Target 3.1.1
By FY2014, the College will have in place an institution-wide governance structure which will be the vehicle for communication, broad engagement, and collaboration between and among multiple campus constituencies.

Achievement Target 3.1.2
By FY2014, the College will develop and implement, through a representative group, an ongoing process for assessing its communications which will include both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Achievement Target 3.1.3
By FY2014, the College's Website and social media tools will be evaluated through objective and normative measures. By FY2015, the College website and social media tools will be modified as needed to ensure they are effective communication and marketing resources.

OBJECTIVE 3.2 The College will strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships with alumni, parents, friends, business, professional organizations, as well as community and government agencies.

Achievement Target 3.2.1
Using data collected on alumni, by FY2016 the College will increase alumni engagement by 10% annually.

Achievement Target 3.2.2
By FY2017, 250 additional partnerships with alumni, parents, friends, business partners, professional organizations, and community and government agencies, will enhance College initiatives such as co-op placements, advisory boards, and other student engagement opportunities.

Achievement Target 3.2.3
The College will complete and act on a feasibility study on pedestrian, cycling, and transportation infrastructure access to the campus.

Achievement Target 3.2.4
The College's government relations committee will support the President's advocacy initiatives at local, state, and federal levels.

Goal 4: CULTIVATE AND SUPPORT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

Diversity encourages the examination of perspectives and values, enriches the learning experience, and prepares people to be more effective members of their community. The College thus seeks to create an inclusive and supportive environment characterized by high rates of retention and continuation of a diverse student population; providing curricula and programming that encompass diversity in all its forms; and attracting, developing and retaining faculty and staff who reflect and are committed to diversity and inclusiveness.

Objective 4.1 The College will create a safe and supportive environment for all, with particular consideration toward members of underrepresented and marginalized groups.

Achievement Target 4.1.1
100% of administrators, faculty and staff will participate in workshops related to issues of diversity and inclusion.

Achievement Target 4.1.2
Following participation in workshops related to issues of diversity and inclusion, 100% of participating administrators, faculty and staff will demonstrate increased knowledge and competence for dealing with issues of diversity and inclusion.

Achievement Target 4.1.3
100% of administrators, faculty, staff, and students will be informed of where to direct diversity concerns.

Achievement Target 4.1.4
The College will seek a 10% increase in overall participants in a campus climate survey.

Achievement Target 4.1.5
80% or more of the respondents of the National Survey of Student Engagement and Graduating Senior Survey will agree that the College provides a supportive social, classroom, and living environment.

Objective 4.2 The College will retain and continue a diverse student population.

Achievement Target 4.2.1
First- to second-year undergraduate retention rates will exceed 90%, with all student types enrolled in the undergraduate programs at or within 10% of this target.

Achievement Target 4.2.2
Third year retention rates will exceed 73%, with all student types enrolled in the undergraduate programs at or within 10% of this target.

Achievement Target 4.2.3
Ramapo College average student indebtedness will remain less than or equal to the average indebtedness of the State of New Jersey as reported in the annual Project on Student Debt.

Objective 4.3 The College will develop and promote curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs that demonstrate the value of diversity, self-awareness, examination of multiple perspectives, and respect for others.

Achievement Target 4.3.1
75% of major programs will have student learning outcomes that address the value of diversity, self-awareness, examination of multiple perspectives, and respect for others.

Achievement Target 4.3.2
The College will increase by 50% participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular programs that address the value of diversity, and that increase self-awareness, examination of multiple perspectives, and respect for others.

Achievement Target 4.3.3
By FY2015, the College will implement a process for publicizing diversity programming both internally and externally.

Objective 4.4 The College will recruit and retain employees who reflect and are committed to diversity and inclusiveness.

Achievement Target 4.4.1
The College will increase employee recruitment activities aimed at underrepresented and marginalized groups by 25%.

Achievement Target 4.4.2
The College will increase retention of employees from underrepresented and marginalized groups by 10%.

Achievement Target 4.4.3
80% of respondents will agree that the College provides a supportive workplace environment as measured by a campus climate survey.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In September of 2011, the College embarked upon a new cycle of strategic planning by seeking nominations for faculty, staff, students, and others to serve on the 2012-13 Strategic Planning Task Force.

At its fall 2011 retreat, the President's Senior Cabinet gathered input from faculty, staff, students and others regarding the most significant issues likely to confront higher education over the next five years and how to engage constituents in the deliberations over a renewed strategic plan. As a result, the Strategic Planning Task Force, a representative body comprised of College stakeholders, embarked on the development of the new strategic plan in January 2012.

Adapted from John Bryson's *Strategic Planning in Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, the challenge of the 2012 Strategic Planning Task Force was to deliver a strategic plan that would serve as a tool to help Ramapo College focus its energy, to ensure that all College stakeholders are working toward the same goals, and to assess and adjust the College's direction in response to a changing environment.

President Mercer chaired the Strategic Planning Task Force, and, per Bryson, championed a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that aimed to shape and guide what Ramapo College is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future. The task force, a dynamic group of 25 individuals, met regularly throughout the year. Updates on the task force's progress were provided periodically via the College Web site, Communications Meetings, Board of Trustees Meetings, and the President's State of the College addresses.

The task force began its work by evaluating institutional progress on the previous Strategic Plan, reviewing findings from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's March 2010 report of the College, developing guiding principles, and meeting with members of the College's Master Plan Steering Committee. Through this assessment and deliberation, the task force quickly arrived at two major decisions: (1) the College mission merited revision in order for it to more effectively drive the plan, and (2) the new Strategic Plan would include more specific output measures.

The College mission was revised and the task force complemented the brevity of the new mission with a supplemental resource, the Glossary of Key Ideas and Definitions, that defined and, in many cases, also sourced the 10 key ideas of the mission.

Thereafter, through a process of iterative feedback and two formal workshop retreats, the task force arrived at the plan's goals and multiple objectives. Mindful of the need for measurability and input, "on the road" working groups, comprised of task force members, visited individual units, presenting to them the draft plan and collecting their input. The plan was posted to the College Web site and input was further solicited through a Web

form.

The task force then engaged in a final vetting of the plan and identified an internal resource group to assist others with implementing the plan and annually assessing institutional progress on the plan. On June 24, 2013, the Board of Trustees endorsed the Strategic Plan and implementation immediately followed.

STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

Beth Barnett	Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs
Caroline Brisson	Assistant Professor of Engineering and Physics
Danielle Corcione	Student
Cathleen Davey	Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Executive Director of the Foundation
Marc Gidal	Assistant Professor of Music
Brittany A. Goldstein	Special Assistant to the President
Maria Krupin	Associate Vice President for Budget and Fiscal Planning
Dorothy Echols Tobe	Chief Planning Officer
Ann E. Lepore	Assistant Professor of Art
Missy Long	Independent Living Counselor, Academic Advisor
Jonathan Marcus '93	Alumni Association
Peter P. Mercer	President (Chairperson)
Kevin Ng	Student
Lysandra Perez-Strumolo	Associate Professor of Developmental Psychology
Steven Perry	Dean of Contemporary Arts
Emma C. Rainforth	Associate Professor of Environmental Science and Geology
Stephen P. Rice	Professor of American Studies
George C. Ruotolo	Board of Trustees
Ellen Saranovic	Secretarial Assistant, Enrollment Management
Ruma Sen	Associate Professor of Communication Arts, Diversity Action Committee
Rita Shea-Van Fossen	Associate Professor of Management
Robert Tillsley	Board of Governors
Madel Tisi	Circulation, Reference and Instruction Librarian
Melissa Van Der Wall	Director of Affirmative Action and Workplace Compliance
Babette Varano	Assistant Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Planning

GLOSSARY OF KEY IDEAS AND DEFINITIONS

Lifetime of Achievement
The following AACU definition of liberal education was endorsed on 3.28.12 to serve as the definition of a lifetime of achievement.

A liberal education is an education that exposes students to a wide breadth of courses, perspectives, and educational experiences designed to equip them with the essential skills and learning necessary to deal with complexity, diversity, and change, and entails study across many fields, as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a strong sense of personal and social responsibility—important in all spheres of life.

Interdisciplinary
Interdisciplinary education is the interaction, integration, or syntheses of knowledge and learning across disciplines. This is accomplished at all levels of the college curriculum, from individual courses, to majors and minors, to school core requirements, to the General Education program.

Source: Adapted from Provost's Pillars Task Force Report; 06-07
ww2.ramapo.edu/libfiles/Provost2/interdisciplinary%20final%20report%200607.pdf

Experiential
Experiential learning is a purposeful process of engaged, active learning in which the student constructs knowledge, skills, or values by means of direct experiences in authentic, real-world contexts.

Experiential learning often includes the following components:
- 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

*Experiential learning goes beyond the conventional "comfort zone" of college course activities such as reading texts, doing homework, writing papers, performing studio or lab work, etc.

Source: Provost's Pillars Task Force Report; 06-07
ww2.ramapo.edu/libfiles/Provost2/Experiential_report_0607.pdf

International Understanding
International Understanding involves a comprehensive approach to learning that intentionally prepares students to be active and engaged participants in a world that transcends boundaries and embraces cultural differences.

International understanding may include any of the following:
- Concrete focus on international experiences and learning

- Competence in languages other than one's own, or extensive foreign language training
- Creating a multicultural community on-campus and off-campus
- Internationalizing the curriculum

Intercultural Understanding/Competence

Intercultural Understanding is both an approach and an outcome of the learning process. It promotes critical sensitivity to cultural differences among peoples within nations as well as across nations. This approach promotes equal value in all human life and prepares students for effective participation in a diverse and pluralistic community.

Diversity

Human diversity includes, but is not limited to age, ethnicity, race, gender, religion, physical or mental abilities and disabilities, socio-economic status, viewpoint differences (e.g., political), sexual orientation, gender identity, and national origin. In promoting and celebrating diversity, Ramapo College pledges to respect and value personal uniqueness and differences, to seek to attract diverse faculty, staff and students that reflect the changing demographics in the region and beyond, to seek and acknowledge common ground, to challenge stereotyping, and to promote sensitivity and inclusion.

Inclusion

The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.

Source: AAC&U http://www.aacu.org/compass/inclusive_excellence.cfm

Sustainability

Sustainability is a holistic approach to ecological action, one that takes a balanced and ethical account of people (society), planet (ecology), and prosperity (economics), within the frame of intergenerational equity—that is to say, promoting a high quality of life for all without curtailing the ability of future generations to also enjoy a high quality of life.

Student Engagement

Student engagement is the result of the time and effort students devote to activities empirically linked to the intended outcomes of college and what institutions do to both provide these activities and induce students to participate in them. Student engagement is characterized by critical examination, analysis, reflection, and problem solving.

Community Involvement

The collaboration between Ramapo College and its larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) exists for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. Such community involvement may be characterized by the development of students' citizenship skills, the forging of effective partnerships, and the development of shared resources in support of the community and the College's curricular, extra-curricular, and operational needs.

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