Ramapo College of New Jersey

Ranked by U.S. News & World Report as fifth in the north in the Top Public Universities-Master's category, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 5,700 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

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

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

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

A campus-wide building program during recent years has resulted in the completion of the Anisfield School of Business academic facility, a central feature of the main entrance to the campus; the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center, with its 2,200-seat arena, fitness center, climbing wall, track and dance/aerobics studio; the Overlook and Laurel residence halls and the Village apartment complex. The Angelica and Russ Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts, completed in 1999, houses performance theaters, art galleries and specialized spaces devoted to fine arts, computer art, photography, theater, dance and music. The Sharp Sustainability Education Center is scheduled for completion in 2008. The Salameno Spiritual Center will be completed by 2009.

In addition to Ramapo's ranking in U.S. News, the College recently was recognized by two national publications. An article in the February 2008 issue of Kiplinger's magazine named Ramapo College among the top 100 public colleges and universities. Ramapo College also is one of 212 institutions recommended by The Princeton Review in the “Best in the Northeast” section in the 2009 edition of The Best Northeastern Colleges.

Dr. Peter Philip Mercer became the College's fourth president on July 1, 2005. The College is governed by a Board of Trustees who are appointed by the Governor of the State. The Reverend Dr. Vernon C. Walton is the chairman of the board.
OPENING CONVOCATION
September 17, 2008

President’s Welcome................................. Dr. Peter P. Mercer
President

National Anthem...................................... Adam Posluszny
Director, Mack Brandon
Professor of Music

Greetings and Introduction.......................... Dr. Beth Barnett
Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs

“An Afternoon with Natalie Angier”
Best-selling Author of
The Canon: A Whirligig Tour of the Beautiful Basics of Science

Question/Answer Session

Gift Presentation...................................... Thomas Ng
Student Trustee

Alma Mater............................................. Jenna Myers
Class of ’09
Director, Mack Brandon

Closing Remarks...................................... Dr. Peter P. Mercer
Book signing follows immediately after presentation.
Please remain seated for the duration of the program.

First-Year Seminar Summer Reading Program

The Ramapo College summer reading experience serves to engage new students in a common academic activity that accentuates critical reading, discussion, and writing skills. The summer reading is a common thread among all 34 courses in the First-Year Seminar Program.

The summer reading experience is not restricted to first-year students. The entire College is encouraged to participate by reading the selected book and discussing it so the campus might share a common academic experience.

Every year, a book is chosen by faculty, students, and staff as the Summer Reading to be read by all incoming freshmen and a significant number of other members of the College. The summer reading for the class of 2012 is “The Canon: A Whirligig Tour of the Beautiful Basics of Science” by Natalie Angier.

“The Canon” distills the scientific canon to the absolute essentials, delivering an entertaining and inspiring one-stop science education. Angier interviewed a host of scientists, posing the simple question “What do you wish everyone knew about your field?” “The Canon” provides their answers, taking readers on a joyride through the fascinating fundamentals of the incredible world around us and revealing how they are relevant to us every day.

All first-year students will use this summer reading as an initial common subject that they will discuss and debate, using “The Canon” as a guide to the explorations of the scientific process. As many of the scientists interviewed by Angier encouraged, first-year students will be challenged to embrace the world as they find it, not as they wish it to be.