Ramapo College of New Jersey

Ranked by U.S. News & World Report as number one among public comprehensive colleges in the north, 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 5,600 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 joint degree 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 17:1 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 extracurriculum. The international mission is further accomplished through an emphasis on global programs such as 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 Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center, with its 1,500-seat arena, fitness center, climbing wall, track and dance/aerobics studio; the Overlook residence hall, and the Village apartment complex. The Angelica and Russ Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts houses performance theaters, art galleries, and specialized spaces devoted to fine arts, computer art, photography, theater, dance, and music. In addition, Laurel Hall, a 432-bed, suite-style residence hall, and a 400-space parking deck, opened in fall 2006.

In addition to Ramapo's ranking in U.S. News, an article in the February 2006 issue of Kiplinger's magazine named Ramapo College among the top 100 public colleges and universities. The article, "Best values in public colleges," included the sub-head, "Yes, you can still get a first-class education at a reasonable price." Ramapo College also is one of 222 select colleges and universities profiled by The Princeton Review in the 2007 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. Thomas Zelante, Esq. is the chairman of the board.
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 thirty-four courses in the first-year seminar program.

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

This year’s summer reading selection, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*, is a national bestseller and has been turned into a movie that is due to be released on November 17. The book has been roundly lauded for its exhaustively researched facts on the fast food industry. Author Eric Schlosser has used his research on the subject to make connections between the fast food industry and many facets of North American society.

The selection process for the first-year seminar summer reading involved a campus-wide solicitation of suggestions, followed by careful consideration and a vote by peer facilitators and members of the first-year seminar convening group. *Fast Food Nation* was chosen from approximately 100 books because it demonstrates far better than any social studies class the need for government regulation, the unchecked power of multinational corporations and the importance of our everyday decisions.

All first-year students will use the summer reading as an initial common subject that they will discuss and debate, armed with research provided in *Fast Food Nation* accentuated by their own personal experiences and viewpoints.

### Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal

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

**National Anthem** .................................................. Adam Poslusny

Class of ’09

**Greetings and Introduction** ...................................... Dr. Beth Barnett

Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs

“An Afternoon with Eric Schlosser”

**Question/Answer Session** ........................................ Jena Renée Romatowski

Student Trustee

**Alma Mater** .......................................................... Melissa Pinglora

Class of ’07

**Closing Remarks** .................................................. Dr. Peter P. Mercer

**Book signing and reception to follow.**

*OPENING CONVOCATION*

**September 8, 2006**

*Excerpted from [www.ramapo.edu](http://www.ramapo.edu)*

*Fast Food Nation* is scheduled to be released at movie theaters across the country on November 17, 2006.

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Eric Schlosser has been investigating the fast food industry for years. In 1998, his two-part article on the subject in *Rolling Stone* generated more mail than any other item the magazine had run in years. In addition to writing for *Rolling Stone*, Schlosser has contributed to *The New Yorker* and has been a correspondent for the *Atlantic Monthly* since 1996. He won a National Magazine Award for “Reefer Madness” and “Marijuana and the Law” and has received a Sidney Hillman Foundation Award for Reporting. His work has been nominated for several other National Magazine Awards and for the Loeb Award for business journalism. *Fast Food Nation* is his first book.

Schlosser’s myth-shattering survey stretches from California’s subdivisions, where the business was born, to the industrial corridor along the New Jersey Turnpike, where many of fast food’s flavors are concocted. Along the way, he uncovers a trove of fascinating, unsettling truths—from the unholy alliance between fast food and Hollywood to the seismic changes the industry has wrought in food production, popular culture, and even real estate.

In a meticulously researched and powerfully argued account, Eric Schlosser visits the labs where scientists re-create the smell and taste of everything—from cooked meat to fresh strawberries, talks to the workers at abattoirs with some of the worst safety records in the world, explains exactly where the meat comes from and just why the fries taste so good, and looks at how the fast food industry is transforming not only our diet but our landscape, economy, workforce, and culture.

Both funny and terrifying, *Fast Food Nation* will make you think, but more than that, it might make you realize you don’t want a quick bite after all.

“Not only will it make you think twice before eating your next hamburger...it will also make you think about the faitout that the fast food industry has had on the social and cultural landscape.” — *The New York Times*

“Eric Schlosser’s *Fast Food Nation* is a good old-fashioned muckraking expose in the tradition of *The American Way of Death* that’s as disturbing as it is irresistible...” — *San Francisco Chronicle*

“*Fast Food Nation* is the kind of book that you hope young people read because it demonstrates far better than any social studies class the need for government regulation, the unchecked power of multinational corporations and the importance of our everyday decisions.” — *USA Today*

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