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 around 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 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 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 boasts an average student/faculty ratio of 17:1 and average class size of 22, affording students the opportunity to develop close ties to Ramapo'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 faculty and student exchanges, as well as through international cooperative education. Additional experiential programs include internships, co-op and service learning.

A construction boom during recent years has resulted in the completion of the Bill Bradley Sports and Recreation Center, the Overlook residence hall and the Village apartment complex, and the Angelica and Russ Berrie Center for Performing and Visual Arts, which houses performance theaters, art galleries, and specialized spaces devoted to fine arts, computer art, photography, theater, dance and music.

Diversity Action Committee

The newly formed Diversity Action Committee, to be chaired by Dr. Patrick Chang, associate dean of students, is comprised of ten selected volunteers. Although the committee itself will develop a detailed charge, its three main areas of concern will be campus equity and atmosphere, student recruitment and retention, and faculty/staff recruitment and retention. The committee will seek advice and counsel from many additional volunteers. In addition, the Office of Affirmative Action and Workplace Compliance and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning will serve as resource units to the DAC. Board of Trustees Member Remberto Perez will serve as the Board's liaison to the Office of the President on matters related to the diversity initiative.

American Democracy Project

Ramapo College is a participant in the American Democracy Project, a multi-campus initiative that seeks to create an intellectual and experiential understanding of civic engagement in the United States in the 21st century. The project targets undergraduates enrolled at institutions that are members of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). The project grows out of a concern about decreasing rates of participation in the civic life of America in voting, in advocacy, in local grassroots associations, and in other forms of civic engagement that are necessary for the vitality of our democracy. Karen Booth, director of Ramapo’s Service Learning Program, will coordinate the ADP on campus.
Lani Guinier, the Bennett Boskey Professor of Law, became the first black woman tenured professor at Harvard Law School when she joined the faculty there in 1998. She was on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania Law School for ten years before going to Harvard. Professor Guinier first came to public attention in 1993 when then President Clinton nominated her to head the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and then withdrew the nomination without a confirmation hearing. Clinton acted in the face of a media firestorm generated by inaccurate and unfounded criticism about her views on democracy. She is “an idea woman” who does not shrink from controversy and “a prophetic voice” for issues of racial justice, gender equity, and democratic transformation. She has used her public platform to write five books, including her most recent, The Miner's Canary, (coauthored with Gerald Torres). Her fourth book, Who's Qualified (with Susan Sturm) discussed new ways of addressing issues of diversity and excellence to open up opportunity, not just for people of color and women, but for everyone. She also coauthored Becoming Gentlemen: Women, Law School and Institutional Change, and published a personal and political memoir, Lift Every Voice. Her primary teaching and writing interests include voting rights, democratic theory, law and social change, and the legal profession and the responsibilities of public lawyers. She co-founded the Racetalks Initiative, a research and public education project that seeks to develop new interdisciplinary paradigms for linking racial and gender justice to the project of building more inclusive institutions. Professor Guinier was assistant counsel and head of the Voting Rights Project for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in the 1980s and worked in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department in the late 1970s. She received her B.A. from Radcliffe College of Harvard University and her J.D. from Yale Law School. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including the 2002 Sacks-Freund Teaching Award, the 1995 Margaret Brent Woman Lawyers of Achievement Award, the Champion of Democracy Award, and eight honorary degrees.