

Ramapo College of New Jersey Intercultural Understanding Task Force

The Intercultural Understanding Task Force was charged on December 6, 2006 with defining Intercultural Understanding, one of the four educational pillars at Ramapo College, developing a vision statement that is aligned with the mission statement and that of DAC (The Diversity Action Committee), and setting college learning goals that promote Intercultural Understanding.

This task force consists of:

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I. Working Definition of Intercultural Understanding

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 serves for preparation for membership in a diverse and pluralistic global community.

II. Vision Statement for Intercultural Understanding

Intercultural Understanding is an integral component of the curriculum and the community at Ramapo College. All students will be encouraged to develop the knowledge and skills required to negotiate and flourish in a diverse, transnational environment (one that acknowledges the impact of globalization on our local experiences). Their educational and co-curricular experiences should enable students to become empowered global citizens ready to continue their engagement in critical analysis of privilege and power structures. This learning process and outcome will emphasize the cultivation of equitable local and global relationships both across and within nations.

III. Learning Goals that Promote Intercultural Understanding

- Disposition towards lifelong learning that includes a critical engagement with cultures.
- Recognition and value for one's own cultures as well as the cultures of others.
- Knowledge of cultural differences among peoples within nations as well as across nations.
- Development of global citizens and preparation for active membership in a diverse and pluralistic global community.
- Development of skills to negotiate and flourish in a culturally diverse environment.

- Engage in critical analysis of privilege and power structures through an understanding that position informs perspectives.

These approaches should be integrated across educational and co-curricular experiences at the college. Convening groups should be able to point to the opportunities within the major where students are meeting these learning goals. Co-curricular activities could include:

- Lived experience
- Student club activities and cross-club interactions
- Lecture series
- Alternate spring break
- Teacher Education: Student Teaching
- Field work (e.g. as used in Psychology and Social Work Convening groups)
- Internships
- Volunteer work
- Education Abroad

IV. Recommendations for quality learning experiences

Graduation requirement that acknowledges increased intercultural understanding. This can be incorporated in the form of a mandated 60 hours of service during a student's college career in co-curricular programs that include:

- Alternative spring break
- Student literacy core
- Big Brother Big Sister
- Internship experience with community organizations
- Education Abroad
- Volunteer work
- Student teaching
- Diversity-oriented faculty-student research