

MIDDLE STATES: SELF-STUDY 2020

# REAFFIRMING

*Our Promise*



# *Self- Study*

Submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

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by

*Ramapo College of New Jersey*

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AT RAMAPO COLLEGE

AAC - Administrative Assessment Committee	CSI - Center for Student Involvement
AACRAO SEM - American Association of Collegiate Registrar and Admissions Offices - Strategic Enrollment Management	CSS - Center for Student Success
AACSB - Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business	CSWE - Council on Social Work Education
AACU - American Association of Colleges and Universities	CWA - Communications Workers of America
ACEN - Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing	CWAAC - College-Wide Academic Assessment Committee
ACPA - American College Personnel Association	DAC - Diversity Action Committee
AF - Administration and Finance	DCP - Degree Completion Program
AFT - American Federation of Teachers	DLE - Diverse Learning Environments
APA - American Psychological Association	EDIC - Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Compliance
APAS - Annual Performance Assessment System	ELO - Ethics Liaison Officer
ARC - Academic Review Committee	EMSA - Enrollment Management and Student Affairs
ASB - The Anisfield School of Business	EOF - Educational Opportunity Fund
AY - Academic Year	ER - Employee Relations
BOG - Board of Governors	ESR - Emergency Student Relief
BOT - Board of Trustees	ETF - Task Force on Extending the Strategic Plan
BSW - Bachelor of Social Work	FA - Faculty Assembly
CA - School of Contemporary Arts	FAEC - Faculty Assembly Executive Committee
CAEP - Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation	FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid
CAT - Curriculum Assessment Team	FDD - Faculty Development Day
CCEC - Civic and Community Engagement Center	FDF - Faculty Development Funding
CEDO - Chief Equity and Diversity Officer	FERPA - Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
CHCS - Center for Health and Counseling Services	FLC - First-Year Learning Communities
CIO - Chief Information Officer	FRC - Faculty Resource Center
CLEP - College-Level Examination Program	FSSE - Faculty Survey of Student Engagement
CLT - Campus Leadership Team	FY - Fiscal Year
CNA - Collective Negotiations Agreements	FYE - First-Year Experience
Co-ops - Cooperative Education Experiences	FYS - First-Year Seminar
COPLAC - Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges	GE - General Education
COS - Chief of Staff and Board Liaison	GECCo - General Education Curriculum Committee
CRW - Center for Reading and Writing	GEIT - General Education Implementation Team
CRWT - Critical Reading and Writing	GETFII - General Education Task Force
	HGS - School of Humanities and Global Studies
	HR - Human Resources
	IA- Institutional Advancement

IACUC - Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

IDC - Instructional Design Center

IFPTE - International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers

IIP - Individualized Implementation Plan

ILS - Integrated Library System

iPaSS - Integrated Planning and Advising for Student Success

IRB - Institutional Review Board

ITS - Information Technology Services

LDP - Learning, Development and Performance

LIS - Leaders in Service

LMS - Learning Management System

MAEL - Master of Arts in Educational Leadership

MASE - Master of Arts in Special Education

MBA - Master of Business Administration

MSAC - Master of Science in Accounting

MSET - Master of Science in Educational Technology

MSN - Master of Science in Nursing

MSW - Master of Social Work

NACAC - National Association for College Admission Counseling

NASPA - National Association of Student Personnel Administrators

NCLEX - National Council Licensing Exam

NCTA - National College Testing Association

NJAC - New Jersey Athletic Conference

NJASCU - New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities

NSSE - National Survey of Student Engagement

OED - Office of Equity and Diversity

OFM & CP - Offices of Facilities Management and Capital Planning

OSS - Office of Specialized Services

PAC - President's Advisory Council

PAR - Performance Assessment Review

PLA - Prior Learning Assessment

PRC - Position Review Committee

RCRP - Roadrunner Collegiate Recovery Program

RMM - Reclaim My Math

RSA - Ramapo Staff Association

SAAC - Student Athlete Advisory Committee

SAC - School Assessment Committee

SAIL - Sophomores Advancing in Leadership

SARM - Student Activities Revenue Management

SEM - Strategic Enrollment Management

SGA - Student Government Association

SIAH - Studies in Arts and Humanities

SLO - Student Learning Outcome

SMAAC - Space Management and Allocations Advisory Committee

SPIF - Strategic Priority Incentive Fund

SPOL - Strategic Planning Online

SPTF - Strategic Planning Task Force

SRAB - Strategic Resource Advisory Board

SSHS - School of Social Science and Human Services

SSI - Social Science Inquiry

TAC - Transfer Advising Corps

TAS - School of Theoretical and Applied Science

TEAC - Teacher Education Accreditation Council

TFSG - Task Force on Shared Governance

TLTR - Teaching and Learning with Technology Roundtable

VIP - Violence Intervention Peer

VM - Virtual Machine

VPAF - Vice President of Administration and Finance

VPEMSA - Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs

VPIA - Vice President of Institutional Advancement

WAC - Writing Across the Curriculum

WI - Writing Intensive

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### **Accreditation Liaison Officer**

Stephanie Sarabia - Associate Professor, Social Work

### **Steering Committee**

Co-Chair: Stephanie Sarabia - Associate Professor, Social Work

Co-Chair: David Nast - Director, Office of Specialized Services

Lead Writer: John P. McTighe - Associate Professor, Social Work

- Gurvinder Khaneja - Director, Office of Institutional Research
- Dorothy Echols Tobe - Chief Planning Officer, Office of Planning
- Michael Unger - Associate Professor, Political Science and Director of Assessment
- Susan Vallario - Vice Chair, Board of Trustees
- Sharlene Vichness - Member, Board of Trustees
- Stephan Lally - President, Student Government Association (SGA)
- Max Koestler - Freshman, Student Government Association (SGA)
- Stephanie Steiner-Otto - Freshman, Student Government Association (SGA)

### **Standard I Working Group**

Co-Chair: Edward Saiff - Interim Dean, School of Theoretical and Applied Science

Co-Chair: Barbara Harmon-Francis - Director, Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program

- Donna Gibson - Professor, Psychology
- Cardacia Davis - Associate Director of Field Placement, Social Work
- Susan Kurzmann - Archivist, Reference and Instructional Librarian/Faculty
- Rebecca Root - Associate Professor, Political Science International Studies and Director, Honors Program
- Purvi Parekh - ITS/Banner Systems Analyst

### **Standard II Working Group**

Co-Chair: Melissa Van Der Wall - Dean of Students

Co-Chair: Michael Tripodi - General Counsel

- Jacqueline Braun - Assistant Professor, Experimental Psychology
- Jill Brown - Associate Director, Office of Human Resources
- F. Shawn O'Neill - Director, Office of Financial Aid
- Bridgette Quimpo - Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation/Coach

### **Standard III Working Group**

Co-Chair: Aaron Lorenz - Dean, School of Social Science and Human Services

Co-Chair: Ben Levy - Director, International Education

- Timothy Babassade - Director of Client Services, ITS
- Michael Bitz - Professor, Teacher Education and Director, Instructional Design Center (IDC)
- Richard Brown - Director, Center for Student Involvement
- Kelly Dolak - Associate Professor, Television Production
- Nicholas Salter - Associate Professor, Industrial and Organizational Psychology and Director Faculty Resource Center (IDC) – on leave

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Co-Chair LaQuan Norman - Associate Director, Cahill Career Development Center

- Stephanie Barlow - Assistant Director, Residence Life
- Tamika Quick - Associate Director, Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Compliance
- Thomas Kitchen - Director, Center for Reading and Writing

### **Standard V Working Group**

Co-Chair: Susan Hangen - Interim Dean, School of Humanities and Global Studies

Co-Chair: Peter Campbell - Interim Dean, School of Contemporary Arts

- Paramjeet Bagga - Professor, Biology
- Sarah Carberry - Associate Professor and Convener, Chemistry
- Christina Connor - Assessment and Instruction Librarian/Faculty
- Timothy Hasse - Associate Professor, Economics
- Shaziela Ishak - Associate Professor, Psychology
- Jacqueline Skrzynski - Associate Professor, Painting and Drawing
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Co-Chair: Jason Hecht - Professor, Finance

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Co-Chair: F. Shawn O'Neill - Director, Office of Financial Aid

- Nicole Morgan Agard - Chief Equity and Diversity Officer, Office of the President
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- Mary Cicitta - Director, Publications
- Janelle Ferraro - Graphic Designer, Marketing and Communications
- Trish Williams - Team Implementation Specialist, Instructional Design Center

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Now in its 50<sup>th</sup> year of service, Ramapo College proudly celebrates its history and standing as New Jersey's Public Liberal Arts College and reaffirms the commitment it has made over the decades to its students and to the wider community: to be a touchstone of excellence in higher education and to provide a rigorous learning experience aimed at preparing a diverse community of students to explore and assume their future roles, not only as professionals but as citizens. Equipping its graduates with the skills of critical thinking and self-understanding that are the product of a grounding in the liberal arts, Ramapo College readies students for 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership in a global economy through its culture of teaching and individual attention.

This Self-Study is presented to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) as the fruit of a nearly two-year process of reflection by a broad and diverse group of faculty, staff, and administrators charged with examining all areas of the College's life and functioning through the lens of the Standards established by the MSCHE. After an overview of the Ramapo College story, each of these Standards will be discussed in detail to illustrate Ramapo's full compliance with both the Standards themselves and the Requirements of Affiliation particular to each of them. Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation, when identified, will be articulated at the conclusion of each Standard.

### **Standard I: Mission and Goals**

This section describes the Mission, Vision, and Values of Ramapo College and introduces the goals of *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*. It then goes on to detail the alignment of *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* with the fiscal and curricular priorities of the institution. A presentation of both the external and internal contexts in which the College is pursuing its goals sets the stage for a description of efforts across the institution to achieve those goals through a consistent focus on student learning and institutional improvement.

### **Standard II: Ethics and Integrity**

This section offers a detailed examination of Ramapo College's commitment to ethics and integrity in the areas of: academic freedom and integrity, diversity, the effective management of grievances, avoidance of conflicts of interest, fairness and impartiality for its employees, honesty and truthfulness in communications, affordability and informed decision-making, compliance, and transparency.

### **Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**

This section describes Ramapo College's academic programs and their roots in the College's founding commitment to an education that is international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, and experiential in scope. A review of Ramapo's new General Education (GE) curriculum, as well as examples of several international and experiential learning opportunities afforded to students are detailed along with the host of services available to augment and support the learning experience of native and transfer students alike. The makeup and credentials of the faculty are described, as are the variety of faculty resources aimed at ensuring the fulfillment of the College's commitment to outstanding teaching.

### **Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience**

This section describes the comprehensive student experience at Ramapo College from first contact to the point of degree completion and beyond, as overseen by the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA). The goals of EMSA are reviewed, as well as the College's strategies for ensuring access for a diverse body of undergraduate (including transfer students) and graduate students. Ramapo's efforts to address the academic, personal, social, and civic engagement of its students, and their retention and ultimate completion, are explored through an elaboration of the multiple supports made available to students. These include a program of comprehensive academic advisement, tutoring in writing, math and other subjects, and accommodations for students with disabilities, as well as assistance with internships, affordability, co-ops, and ultimate employment or advancement to higher study.

### **Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

This section describes the program of assessment that enables Ramapo College to ensure delivery of the rigorous learning experience that is its hallmark and its constant goal. From the design and administration of assessment to the analysis and interpretation of results, closing the loop, and the regular updating of the curriculum, this process is overseen by a variety of administrators and faculty including the Vice Provost for Academic Programs, the College-Wide Academic Assessment Committee, the School Assessment Committees, Conveners, and finally, faculty members themselves.

### **Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

This section describes Ramapo's process of mission-driven planning that oversees and secures the alignment between the



Mission and Strategic Plan and decisions regarding the use of fiscal and other resources at the College. These decisions involve not only the design and delivery of College programs and initiatives but the maintenance and development of College infrastructure through a thoughtful process of facilities management and capital planning. This requires the careful stewardship of all resources facilitated by a budgeting process that is grounded in the Mission and Strategic Plan, a comprehensive approach to Human Resources that views employees as the College's most valuable resource, and an information technology and infrastructure plan that aims for both cutting-edge technological excellence and optimal return on investment. The most recent efforts at Ramapo have seen the expansion of the culture of assessment to administrative areas as well as other departments that support the overall goals of the College. These efforts are discussed in this section.

### **Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration**

This section describes the framework of Shared Governance that supports and facilitates the ongoing life and activity of a community as complex and diverse as Ramapo College. Beginning with the Board of Trustees, its charge, leadership, committees and operations, the section goes on to discuss in detail the roles of the President and Cabinet, Faculty Assembly, Ramapo Staff Association, Student Government Association, and the President's Advisory Council. As it seeks to be ever responsive to the evolving needs of the campus and to maintain a vibrant and responsive governance structure that can address those needs, the College undertook a reorganization of the Divisions that is described in this section. In a similar vein, multiple efforts to enhance communication and to foster the experience of shared community are described. Finally, several illustrations of shared processes that have enhanced the educational offerings and functioning of the College as well as its ability to respond to the needs of the students are provided.

## II. REAFFIRMING OUR PROMISE: THE RAMAPO COLLEGE STORY

Ramapo College at a Glance: 2018

### Profile:

- Founded: 1969
- Location: Mahwah, N.J.
- Type: Public, Liberal Arts
- Areas of Study: 39 Degree Programs
- 625 course offerings
- Student to Teacher: 16:1
- Average Class Size: 21
- Students: 6,174 (5,609 undergraduate)

### Accolades:

- *Princeton Review* – Best in the Northeast
- *U.S. News and World Report* – Best Regional University-North
- Colleges of Distinction – Career Development
- NICHE – #1 Best College Dorms in New Jersey
- Payscale.com – Top School, Return on Investment
- *College Choice* – #1 NJ Public/#3 Overall in the State
- *Victory Media* – Best Military Schools

Ramapo College of New Jersey stands on 300 wooded acres rich in historical significance. In 1700, settlers established a trading post near the Ramapo River in the fertile Ramapo Valley region, traversed for centuries by Native Americans. In the late 1800s, the Havemeyer and Birch families, owners of the estate up to the 1960s, used the land for farming. In 1969, the property and several of its structures, including the Birch Mansion and Ramapo's iconic Arch, were purchased and became the property of the people of New Jersey and the newly planned public college.

As New Jersey's Public Liberal Arts College, Ramapo College has been dedicated, from its beginning, to providing students a strong liberal arts foundation for a lifetime of achievement through its emphasis on rigorous and engaged teaching and individual attention to all students. Moreover, the College promotes diversity, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement. At the heart of this enterprise is Ramapo's exceptional faculty, 93 percent of whom hold a doctoral or terminal degree.

In its 50-year history, the College has established itself as the premier liberal arts institution in New Jersey and continuously aspires to that status in the region. This has been accomplished through thoughtful strategic planning of academic offerings and specialized programming, expansion of on-campus classroom, study and research space, and data-driven enrollment and retention management.

Ramapo College welcomes nearly 1,000 first-year, degree-seeking students and approximately 530 transfer students annually, primarily from New Jersey, the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions of the United States, as well as from various countries. In the fall of 2018, Ramapo College received nearly 7,000 applications for its incoming first-year class from all 21 counties in New Jersey, 30 states and territories, and 23 countries.

Undergraduate students may choose to concentrate their studies in one of five schools with more than 625 course offerings and 39 academic programs. Bachelor's degrees are offered in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies that include business, elementary education, nursing, and social work.

Aided by a student-faculty ratio of 16:1 and an average class size of 21, the College facilitates the individualized attention and mentorship that faculty and staff provide to each student with a view toward helping them accomplish their educational and personal goals. Ramapo College students reap the rewards of the institution's impressive retention and graduation rates that rise above national and state averages. In recognition of Ramapo's commitment to student success, the College was a recent recipient of an Integrated Planning and Advising for Student Success (iPaSS) grant, funded by EDUCAUSE, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, to directly support student success.

Since its founding, the College has been nimble in adapting to ever-changing societal needs. Today the College recognizes and supports the need for lifelong learning that is key to keeping pace with the changing demands of the workplace. Graduate programs at Ramapo lead to Master's degrees in accounting, business administration, educational technology, educational leadership, nursing, social work, and special education. The College proudly reports exceeding the primary goal of its strategic enrollment management plan to enroll more than 8 percent of its students in graduate programs. As of fall 2018, graduate enrollment stands at 9.2 percent of total enrollment.

Through a fervent commitment to hands-on learning and faculty-student mentoring that goes well beyond the boundaries of the classroom, Ramapo prepares learners to be successful leaders and community stewards for a changing world. These

close-working relationships with faculty actively prepare Ramapo students for careers and graduate school. Internships, co-op experiences and service-learning further connect theory with practice in real-world environments. In January 2018, Ramapo launched a new career management system, Handshake, with 3,721 internship postings already made available to Ramapo students. In addition, a wide range of study abroad and student exchange relationships with institutions all over the world provide students opportunities for an international educational experience. Self-submitted Ramapo College student, alumni, and faculty success stories may be found at [www.ramapo.edu/success-stories](http://www.ramapo.edu/success-stories).

With a focus on outcomes, Ramapo develops critical thinking abilities, a broad perspective, and technical and problem-solving skills in its students. This results in graduates who are adaptable, innovative professionals who flourish and are prepared to lead in today's information-based economy.

Like many institutions nationwide, Ramapo College operates in a higher education landscape that is facing unprecedented challenges. Not least among these are financial challenges. Ramapo's operational state appropriations, as a percent of revenues, have declined over the past 12 years to a low of 11.1 percent in 2018. This represents a 30.2 percent cut in state appropriations since 2006. The cost of employee benefits has simultaneously risen to a current full-time fringe rate of 49.1 percent. To offset these costs and deficits, the College has taken several steps. It has leveled out its debt, revised its Investment Policy, sustained a Strategic Priority Incentive Fund (SPIF), advanced a comprehensive capital campaign and, in fiscal year 2018, 2.9 million dollars in awards were received by Ramapo faculty and staff.

The College's progress on its Campus Facilities Master Plan is visible in consistent and ongoing infrastructure enhancement projects. These include the recently completed renovation of the G-Wing academic building, which houses the Schools of Social Science and Human Services and Theoretical and Applied Science, as well as the construction of the Adler Center for Nursing Excellence, a 36,000-square foot facility with expanded classroom, research, and simulation laboratory space connected by an overhead walkway to G-Wing. In addition, significant investments have been made in improvements to the College's fiber optic network, residence halls, dining facilities, and athletics fields.

The College's ongoing and thoughtful investments in its infrastructure and capital assets foster student engagement in formative experiences through programming offered at various spaces across campus. The Transfer Student and Veterans Lounge was established in 2016 to provide a hub of resources for these students, including meeting space, a TV, a kitchenette, library and reference materials, a charging station, and computer workstations. Additionally, the office of a dedicated transfer advisor is located in the Lounge for the convenience of students. Renovations to the Fishbowl have facilitated the use of this central space for student led programs and as a learning lobby. And the allocation of support spaces across campus for students managing addictions as well as sexual violence. The Topken World Language Laboratory, established in 2018, is the College's most recently opened facility. It provides access to state-of-the-art language software, a language immersion lounge, and television monitors for students to watch newscasts in the languages studied.

Current building projects include the renovation of the George T. Potter Library into a 21<sup>st</sup> century Learning Commons. This space will serve as a dynamic hub where students can interact and collaborate on projects in a manner consistent with a contemporary team approach to problem-solving and will include the library collection, meeting and study spaces, classrooms, and state-of-the-art research tools. In addition, a campus-wide photovoltaic installation project for supplementing power resources to the campus, established through a public-private partnership, was completed in August 2019.

Consistently recognized through numerous rankings, awards, and accolades, "quality" and "value" are words that have become synonymous with a Ramapo College education. Ramapo has been named among the top three (after Princeton University and Stevens Institute of Technology) institutions of higher education in the State of New Jersey and number one among the public institutions in New Jersey in *College Choice's* ranking for 2018. The College is also ranked among the top 10 annually by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the Best Regional Public Universities in the North, is a Top College for the Value according to *Money* magazine, and is listed by the *Princeton Review* as being among the "Best in the Northeast." The John Templeton Foundation named the College to its Honor Roll for "Character-building Colleges," which recognizes institutions that emphasize character development as an integral aspect of the undergraduate experience.

Ramapo College also joins an elite group of institutions to earn the distinction of accreditation by the Board of Directors of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), an accolade given to fewer than 5 percent of business schools worldwide. The Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work degrees are fully

accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Additional accreditations include the Nursing Program (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing), the Teacher Education Program (Teacher Education Accreditation Council), and the Teacher Certification Program, approved by the State of New Jersey.

Ramapo College is committed to supporting diversity and creating a community where talented students, faculty, and staff from various backgrounds and experiences create an inclusive and supportive environment in which all may thrive. One of Ramapo's ongoing strategic goals is to "Cultivate and Support Diversity and Inclusiveness," and the College has made investments in this regard that include the expansion of its equity and diversity programming, the establishment of the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Compliance and the increased allocation of grants dollars towards diversity and inclusion. This is based on the belief that diversity stimulates the examination of perspectives and values, enriches the learning experience, and encourages engagement.

Through its Mission and Strategic Plan, its academic and co-curricular programs, and the investment and careful stewardship of its resources through effective leadership and planning, Ramapo College remains unwavering in its commitment to *reaffirming our promise* to students and to the wider community we serve. This is the story that will be told in the pages that follow.

# REAFFIRMING *Our Promise*

## STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

### STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

#### Ramapo College Meets the Requirements of Standard I

A full description and illustration of the ways Ramapo College meets the four criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard I, as well as *Requirements of Affiliation 7 and 10*, are presented throughout this Standard.

#### 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 (S1.C1: Mission, Vision, Values).

#### 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.

#### Values

Ramapo College is the Public Liberal Arts College of the State of New Jersey. The work of the College and its members is conducted with integrity. Our values are:

- Teaching, learning, and mentoring – we are actively engaged in and out of the classroom.
- Developing the whole person – we are scholars, we are creators, we are local and global citizens, and we are individuals.
- Respecting each other and our environment – we are an open, inclusive, supportive, and sustainable community (S1.C1: PAC Minutes 9.23.16).

#### Ramapo College Mission and Goals: An Introduction

The Ramapo College Mission and Values statements were developed through collaborative processes that engaged a broad representation of stakeholders, as called for in *Requirement of Affiliation 7* (S1.C1: BOT Minutes 9.24.13). Further, the College's past and present strategic plans have been grounded in the principles of the Mission and designed to provide students, faculty, staff, alumni, and leadership at the College with guidance and direction as they advance the Mission. This synergy between the Mission and the strategic plan provides a set of goals that guides planning, resource allocation, curricular development, and assessment in order to promote student success.

Ramapo College is committed to the broad dissemination of its values to all who interact with our community. For this reason, the College displays its Mission and Values statements throughout every academic building on campus, as well as on its website and in campus publications. Although the Ramapo Mission statement has evolved throughout the history of the College, the essence of the Mission has been maintained since the College's inception.

Ramapo was established in 1969 as an interdisciplinary, liberal arts college dedicated to innovative teaching, individualized attention to students, and experiential learning. A focus on international and intercultural education was added to the Mission statement as a result of a 1986 New Jersey Governor's Challenge Grant to internationalize the curriculum. Three years later, sustainability was formally added to the Mission. The current Mission and Vision statements are the fruit of the 2012-2013 Strategic Planning Task Force (SPTF) that included 25 representatives from all of the primary constituencies of the College: students, faculty, the Board of Trustees, administration, professional and classified staff, alumni, and the Board of Governors (S1.C1: SPTF Minutes 1.23.12).

The guiding principles for the work of the SPTF included consistency with Mission and Vision; assessment, accountability, and analysis; as well as collaboration and transparency (S1.C1: Strategic Plan 2014-2018). Stressing these principles, task force members met individually with College constituencies, conducted a series of open meetings, and posted a draft plan on the College's internal website to receive comments and suggestions on the first draft of the plan (S1.C1: SPTF Minutes 5.3.13). The task force reviewed the feedback and made adjustments to create the final strategic plan.

In line with **Requirement of Affiliation 7**, the Board of Trustees approved the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan on 6/30/2013 (S1.C1: BOT Minutes 9.24.13; S1.C1: 2014-2018 Strategic Plan) and, in so doing, also approved the revised Mission and Vision statements. One of the overarching goals of the process was to create a cogent Mission and Strategic Plan that might be assessed simultaneously (S1.C1: SPTF Minutes 1.23.12; S1.C1: SPTF Minutes 1.30.12; S1.C1: SPTF Minutes 2.27.12; S1.C1: Priorities and Indicators 1.30.12). The 2014-2018 Strategic Plan featured the revised Mission and the following four goals with specific objectives and measurable achievement targets.

1. Advance Academic Excellence and Engagement
2. Enhance Financial Strength and Institutional Sustainability
3. Improve Internal and External Communications
4. Cultivate and Support Diversity and Inclusiveness

As described below, these goals guided administration, faculty, and staff in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program and curricular development, and the identification of institutional and educational outcomes during this time period. To further advance the common goal of academic excellence and student engagement, the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) partnered to launch the Student Engagement Project, which has been identified as a best practice across many national conferences including American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU), American College Personnel Association (ACPA), National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and American Association of Collegiate Registrar and Admissions Offices – Strategic Enrollment Management (AACRAO) (SEM).

To enhance financial strength and institutional sustainability, resources were redirected to facilitate the establishment of new graduate programs. In addition, a Freecycle program was implemented and a photovoltaic installation project was established through a public-private partnership. To improve internal and external communications, the College's website was redesigned, a task force on shared governance was established, the President's Advisory Council (PAC) was formed, and the three new monthly online newsletters were created for alumni, parents, and the Board of Governors (S1.C1: Alumni Newsletter January 2017). The Ramapo Staff Association also revised its bylaws and expanded its membership.

To cultivate and support diversity and inclusion, the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Compliance (EDIC) was launched and resources were allocated to diversity training and inclusive programming. The College was officially declared to be stigma-free with respect to mental health issues, and support services for students on the autism spectrum were expanded.

Assessment of the strategic plan is led by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning and the Office of Institutional Research. Much of the indicator data, published in the Fact Book, is available on the College website (S1.C1: Fact Book 2018). Under the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, the Chief Planning Officer identified which units would provide the baseline and subsequent annual data necessary to track progress on the goals and objectives of the Plan. This progress was presented periodically to the Cabinet and Board of Trustees and made available to the campus via Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (S1.C1: KPI Updates Reports).

For example, the Plan called for increasing the diversity of our students. Annual KPI reports on this metric revealed a decline in 2014 and 2015 in the percent of first-time degree-seeking students who self-identified as non-White. This data drove the decision to shift resources in academic year 2015-2016 toward targeted, high school-specific strategies such as on-site admissions and guidance counselor lunches, as well as targeted marketing campaigns. These strategies were deemed effective, yielding a trend reversal from 30.3 percent in 2014 and 28.2 percent in 2015 to 35.4 percent in 2016 and 41.6 percent in 2017 (S1.C1: KPI Dashboard for Ramapo Spring 2018). As will be described in greater detail below, considerable data analysis informed the development of the current Strategic Plan (S1.C1: Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise S1.C1: Revised Strategic Plan with Targets; S1.C1: SPTF Appendix; S1.C1: Strategic Plan Progress Narratives).

Toward the end of 2017, Task Force on Extending Strategic Plan 2014-2018 (EFT) was charged with making

recommendations concerning adding, continuing, modifying, or closing out individual objectives and outcomes within the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan so that the goals might be extended, as appropriate, for academic years 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 (S1.C2: Charge for Task Force on Extending Strategic Plan 2014-18).

In accordance with the Shared Governance Protocols that were adopted by the College in 2017, the charge of the Task Force on Extending the Strategic Plan (ETF) was advanced through a formal collaboration between the College President, the President of the Student Government Association, and the President of the Faculty Assembly. The membership of the ETF included an academic Dean (as chair), three faculty members from various schools of the College, four managers, two staff members, and two students from the Student Government Association.

The ETF based its evaluation of the transition to a new Strategic Plan on assessment data related to the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan (S1.C1: Revised Strategic Plan with Targets; S1.C1: SPTF Appendix; S1.C1: Strategic Plan Progress Narratives). It also embraced the College's Values statement and the following four guiding principles as it pursued its work:

1. Consistency with Mission and Vision
2. Assessment, accountability, and analysis
3. Collaboration and transparency
4. Institutional health and solvency

Within the framework of these guiding principles, the ETF was given the mandate to ensure that all strategic goals and objectives were consistent with the College Mission and Vision and the centrality of student learning, while also taking into account the needs and interests of diverse faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as local, state, and global communities.

In line with **Requirement of Affiliation 7**, the ETF completed its work at the end of June 2018 and, with input from the President and Cabinet, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* was approved by the Board of Trustees in September, 2018 (S1.C1: *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*; S1.C1: BOT September 2018 Open Minutes).

The four goals of *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* are:

1. Increase Student Success and Student Engagement
2. Cultivate and Support Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
3. Advance Innovation as the College's Promise and Obligation to its Students, Community, and the State of New Jersey
4. Improve Long-Term Financial Strength

While the goals changed somewhat from the previous strategic plan, the outcomes associated with them remained largely consistent. Thus, the Mission and Vision statements were not revised. *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* features the above-mentioned four goals, 25 objectives, and 26 outcomes.

In an effort to engage the entire campus in the work of promoting and carrying out the strategic plan, Dashboard 2021, a user-friendly document that presents the College's progress on the goals, objectives, and outcomes of *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*, was created. Dashboard 2021 is designed to create a transparent presentation with which all stakeholders are able to interface (S1.C1: Dashboard 2021). The 63 indicators in Dashboard 2021 are each mapped to specific goals, objectives, and outcomes and, thus, to the College Mission. Each is connected to baseline data for 2017 and/or 2018 as well as a target for 2021. A mapping of the goals and objectives in *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* to the College's Mission was generated as well to demonstrate the synergies among resources (S1.C2: Fulfilling Our Promise Mapping). The semi-annual tracking of the College's strategic plan moved to this dashboard model in part to foster a culture of institutional effectiveness, assessment, and vigilance while also taking into account the reality that shifting fiscal, political, and environmental conditions may prompt the College to adjust its path forward on a year-to-year basis.

Over the course of the 2018-2019 academic year, College leadership made presentations on Dashboard 2021 as part of campus-wide Communications Meetings in an effort to inform and engage the entire campus on the value and accessibility of this tool and to make the assessment process both meaningful and useful (S1.C4: Communication Meetings). Additionally, by engaging the entire campus, Dashboard 2021 reflects the College's ownership of and pride in its commitment to continuously learn about and improve the student experience at Ramapo College.

### **Alignment of the Strategic Plan and the Allocation of Funds**

The Strategic Resource Advisory Board (SRAB) was formed in 2017 with the support of the Provost and others across campus (S1.C1: SRAB webpage; S1.C1: SRAB Post Review June 2017). Comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators, SRAB is charged with ensuring alignment of resource allocations with institutional and academic priorities and is responsible for assessing the integrity and effectiveness of requests. Further, it makes recommendations to the Cabinet on resource allocation to various units to support the achievement of the goals and objectives of *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* (S1.C1: SRAB Charge).

In fall 2018, the College implemented the Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) software, replacing the previous planning and assessment collection software, WEAVE. SPOL is being used to coordinate the development of Unit-based plans and targets, to map those plans to the College's strategic plan, to assess progress on those plans, and to capture effectiveness of the Strategic Priority Incentive Fund (SPIF). The goal of this initiative is to strengthen the alignment of Unit resources and energies with institutional and academic priorities. In line with *Requirement of Affiliation 10*, SPOL is used to design and inform institutional planning that "integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement." Further, the SPIF/Capital Request process includes a requirement to provide assessment criteria for SPIF and capital items (S1.C3: SPIF Capital Budget Policy; S1.C3: SRAB Request Scoring Rubric; S1.C3: SRAB Meeting Minutes 8.1.19). At the current stage of implementation, SPOL is being used to assess administrative units, with information from our academic assessment program to be added subsequently. Nonetheless, academic assessment results are still considered in all resource allocation decisions.

SRAB has reviewed SPIF and Capital Requests for the FY18 and FY19 planning years and has participated in a self-evaluation and an internal audit. After the first year, SRAB members were polled to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the process. These assessment results were used to improve the process (S1.C4: Audit Report Responses). This included such actions as the creation of a rubric utilized by SRAB members via a Qualtrics survey to score SPIF and Capital Request proposals.

### **Alignment of the Strategic Plan and the Curriculum**

Curricular development is also linked to the strategic plan. *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* and Dashboard 2021 make explicit the strategic objective to "facilitate curricular innovation and to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant, founded in the liberal arts, attuned to students' needs, and responsive to the economic environment." The Academic Review Committee (ARC), a faculty body that is charged by the Faculty Assembly, reviews all course development as well as proposals for new programs such as majors and minors. The Committee's New Program Checklist specifically requires that all new programs be aligned with the strategic plan and Mission (S1.C1: Academic Review Committee's New Program Checklist). This alignment is illustrated in the College's recent approval of both Bachelor's and Master's programs in Data Science (S1.C1: Data Science Proposal).

The College supports scholarly inquiry and creative activity as part of its effort to fulfill its Mission and goals. *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* links faculty scholarship directly to student success and engagement (Goal 1: Increase Student Success and Student Engagement, Objective 1.7-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). Relevant indicators are identified including the percentage of faculty engaging with undergraduate students on research each year (e.g., 58 percent in 2018) and total-dollar amount of awards of competitive grants to fund research (e.g., \$5.5 million in 2018). The Office of Grants & Sponsored Programs actively supports faculty applying for competitive external grants and initiated a Grants Challenge to incentivize first-time grant applicants, increasing the number of proposals received from 35 in 2014 to 52 in 2018.

Monies to support research, such as the annually awarded Foundation Allocation Grants sponsored by the Ramapo College Foundation, are made available from within the College as well. The webpage and application are clear in stating that the top criterion for awarding these monies is whether the project supports the strategic plan and Values statement (S1.C2: Grants Application). In addition, all faculty can apply for Faculty Development Funds funded by the operational budget to support research during the summer months. Each of the five academic schools at the College provides funds for conference travel, as well as funds dedicated to support faculty-student research. Research and scholarly activity are significant factors in faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion as per the Faculty Handbook (S1. C2: Faculty Handbook Section 5.2).

Students are also supported in scholarly and creative work. Whether they are engaged in faculty-student research, such



as working on digital archiving with the Jane Addams Paper Project or completing an Honors Program senior thesis, many students are taking advantage of faculty mentorship to become scholars themselves. For example, 44 percent of the first-year students responding to the NSSE survey indicated that they have worked or are currently working (4 percent) or plan to (40 percent) work with a faculty member on a research project. At the senior level, 24 percent indicated that they have worked or are in the process of working with faculty on a research project, while another 10 percent still plan to do so (S1.C1: CA Faculty Student Research 2019; S1.C1: HGS Faculty Student Research 2017-2018; S1.C1: TAS Research 2016-2019; S1.C1: SSHS Faculty Student Research 2016-2017). The responses reflect rates that are close to national peers (S1.C4: NSSE 2018 Survey). Two campus events in particular highlight the scholarly work of our students. Scholars' Day and the Honors Program Symposium both provide students with opportunities to present their research in poster and oral presentations (S1. C2: Honors College Newsletter; S1. C2: Ramapo News Article about Honors College Trip to Nepal; S1.C1: Scholars' Day Program). In addition, the College sends students to the annual conference of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) where they present their original work to students and faculty of other member institutions (S1.C1: COPLAC conference 2018).

### **External Context: Public Institutions in Northern New Jersey**

Ramapo's Mission and strategic plans exist within an external geo-political context. Program development and student recruitment are done with an awareness of the programs available at the other northern New Jersey public institutions. There are two other New Jersey public institutions of higher education within 25 miles of Ramapo College: William Paterson University (12.1 miles) and Montclair State University (23.5 miles). Both are larger than Ramapo and have increased their graduate offerings substantially in recent years. Montclair State University offers more than 50 graduate degree programs, while William Paterson University lists 30 such programs.

Ramapo College is unique in northern New Jersey as a medium-sized, predominantly undergraduate, public liberal arts college. On a day-to-day basis, this is reflected in an average class size of 21, a student-faculty ratio of 16:1, and a revised General Education (GE) program that continues to focus on delivering a well-rounded liberal arts education. The College does not have a graduate faculty separate from the undergraduate faculty; all full-time faculty teach in the undergraduate programs. In 2018, graduate students constituted 9.2 percent of the total student enrollment (S1.C4: Fact Book 2018 Page 51).

Across New Jersey, nine of the 11 public institutions have university status. Ramapo College is one of the two that has chosen to remain a college, with a focus on undergraduate education and the enrollment of a primarily undergraduate student body.

The College currently offers seven graduate programs, four of which were launched since the College's last accreditation:

- Master of Business Administration (MBA) (launched in 2012)
- Master of Science in Accounting (MSAC) (launched in 2017)
- Master of Science in Education Technology (MSET)
- Master of Arts in Educational Leadership (MAEL)
- Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
- Master of Arts in Special Education (MASE) (launched in 2014)
- Master of Social Work (MSW) (launched in 2015)

During the same period, two Master's programs, the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies and Master of Arts in Sustainability Studies, were discontinued due to a continued decrease in enrollment (S1.C4: Fact Book 2017 Page 78). In line with Ramapo's strategic plan, the decision to increase the number of graduate programs is based on areas of demonstrated undergraduate strength, response to societal needs, and ability to generate a positive net revenue within three years so as not to detract from the undergraduate experience. Program planning and development involved, among other elements:

- market analysis that included an examination of labor statistics and projections
- surveys of residents in the surrounding communities
- a detailed consideration of Ramapo's students and their intentions with respect to graduate education (S1.C4: Master in Accounting Proposal; S1.C4: MSW Proposal; S1.C4: MSN Proposal).

Review and approval by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education of the State of New Jersey is also required before Ramapo College is permitted to offer any new degree program.

Ramapo College is located at the northern border of Bergen County, New Jersey, only two miles from the border of Rockland County, New York to the northeast. There are seven community colleges within 40 miles of Ramapo College. There are 12 other public and private four-year institutions within a 40-mile radius of Ramapo College in New Jersey, as well as more than 20 four-year institutions within that same radius in New York (S1.C4: Map of College and Universities Near Ramapo College).

Given this geographic density of institutions, there is significant competition for potential students. Regional demographic trends show there are fewer high school graduates each year, a great concern considering 59.8 percent of the College's annual revenues as a percent of total operating revenues comes from tuition and fees (S1.C4: Fact Book 2018 Page 167). Meeting enrollment targets is an ongoing priority at Ramapo College, and EMSA has put in place a strategic enrollment management plan designed to achieve specific outcomes annually (S1.C4: SEM Plan 2019-2020).

Interest in Ramapo continues to grow as evidenced by its increase from 6,699 applications in 2014 to 6,943 applications in fall 2018 (S1.C4: Fact Book 2018 Page 1). Of further note is the increasing diversity of applicants to Ramapo College. In fall 2014, students of color made up 31 percent of the applicant pool. In fall 2018, this number increased to 52 percent. In addition, in fall 2014, 27 percent of accepted students were students of color. In fall 2018, this number increased to 44 percent. Lastly, in 2014, 28 percent of deposited students were students of color. In fall 2018, this number increased to 38 percent (S1.C4: Fact Book 2018 Page 14). All three measures have shown significant improvement over a six-year period and demonstrate that the College's efforts in recruitment and marketing are achieving the objectives and goals set forth in the College's strategic plan.

Finally, Ramapo's goal to Cultivate and Support Diversity and Inclusiveness (Goal 2) requires more than an increase in the percentage of its ethnically-diverse students. As a liberal arts institution in one of the most economically and racially diverse regions in the nation, Ramapo is committed to developing students who are prepared and eager to engage as citizens of a multicultural, global society. Given Ramapo's long-standing attention to international, intercultural, and experiential education, inclusiveness is a key priority for the College. Examples of the College's support for this priority include the appointment of a Chief Equity and Diversity Officer (CEDO) to the President's Cabinet and the establishment, in October 2016, of EDIC. Comprised of the Offices of Affirmative Action, Title IX, and Equity and Diversity Programs, EDIC works with stakeholders across campus to develop policies, procedures and programs that reflect the College's commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and compliance and to deliver diversity and bias-related workshops, along with training programs relating to Title IX, affirmative action, discrimination, and sexual harassment. Other examples of the focus on inclusiveness include the work of the Name Committee (S1.C3: What's in a Name Provost Page), the increasing number of students participating in study abroad programs (S1.C3 Study Abroad Data), and revision of the Board of Trustees' Committee Charter to include responsibility for monitoring progress in growing a campus culture that welcomes and promotes diversity and inclusion (S1.C3: Board of Trustees Committee Charter). Further information about these initiatives is presented in Standard II.

### **Internal Context: Reaffirming our Promise**

Understanding the internal context of Ramapo College requires reflection on the concerted effort to fulfill the promise made to the students and the community by living the Mission and executing its strategic plan. Ramapo's pride as the public liberal arts college of New Jersey is reflected in the priority given to critical thinking, a broad-based GE program, and methods for engaging students in our ever-changing world. These in turn flow from the foundational qualities that support the fulfillment of the Mission and that are the hallmarks of a Ramapo education – one that is international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, and experiential. All of the College's learning goals come together around the common aim of supporting students for a lifetime of achievement. Numerous examples of this can be seen throughout the Ramapo experience, several of which are shared below. The College's prioritization of diversity and inclusion is evidenced by its prominence in the strategic plan, through events sponsored by EDIC and the Women's Center, through advances in diversity-related allocation grants and through the Visiting Scholars Program supported by Schomburg Grants (S1.C3: Schomburg Award History) just to name a few.

The past decade was marked by stability of high-level leadership. In Academic Affairs, this stability has resulted in sustained focus on the curriculum, including a revision of the GE program, support for innovative teaching approaches, and the evidence-based development of new programs that are consistent with the Mission. Among other examples, the College has provided support and resources of the Instructional Design Center (IDC) (S1.C3: Instructional Design Center) for faculty to develop and launch online and hybrid courses. Furthermore, the Faculty Resource Center (FRC) (S1.C3: Faculty Resource Center) continues to serve as a valuable hub that coordinates ongoing faculty development in pursuit of

academic excellence.

Administrative stability in other departments has facilitated a consistent focus on strategic goals and the informed, logical reorganization of some administrative offices. The position of Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the Ramapo College Foundation has been filled by the same individual for the past 25 years. In recent years, Institutional Advancement has successfully completed two comprehensive capital campaigns, the last one raising \$56.1 million, significantly surpassing the original goal of \$40 million. These campaigns yielded capital support for the construction of the Anisfield School of Business, the Adler Center for Nursing Excellence, and the renovation of the G-wing of the academic complex. Currently, Institutional Advancement is leading a campaign to support the transformation of the George T. Potter Library into a 21<sup>st</sup> century Learning Commons, having already secured nearly \$10 million of the \$15 million fundraising goal. The Office of Grants & Sponsored Programs, housed within Institutional Advancement, works collaboratively with all of the Deans, program coordinators, and center/institute directors to engage faculty and administrators in securing state, federal, and private grants. This collaboration has resulted in increased grant revenues from nearly \$1.8 million in FY14 to nearly \$5.5 million in FY18 (S1.C3: OGSP Strategic Plan 2014-2018).

In 2018, the Ramapo Foundation, a separate 501c3, concluded a five-year Foundation strategic plan (S1.C3: Foundation Strategic Plan FY2014-2018) that mirrored the goals of the College's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. As one component of that plan, successful fundraising increased operational support to the College, grew endowment funds for student scholarships and faculty development, and secured restricted gifts and grants to enhance academic programs, centers, and research (S1.C4: BOG Annual Report 2018; S1.C4: BOG Annual Report 2019). On July 19, 2018, the Board of Governors approved The Ramapo College Foundation Strategic Plan for 2019-2021 that once again maps specifically to the College's *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* (S1.C3: Foundation Strategic Plan FY2019-2021) and that is reflected on Dashboard 2021. Progress made toward achieving the goals and objectives of the Foundation Strategic Plan is reviewed quarterly by the Board of Governors and serves as the basis for development officers' annual assessments.

In the past decade, in response to a variety of data (e.g., 2010 Middle States Self-Study, internal enrollment and marketing returns), Enrollment Management has expanded beyond the traditional offices of Admissions, Financial Aid, and Advisement to include such student support-related offices as the Center for Student Success, Marketing and Communications, Residence Life, Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation, Public Safety, Health and Counseling, and Career Services (S1.C3: October 2014 Establishment of EMSA). The establishment of the position of Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs in 2015 brought together marketing, recruitment, retention, student wellness, student engagement, and student completion as a cohesive application-to-graduation trajectory. The College develops and implements annual strategic enrollment management plans (S1.C4: SEM Plan 2019- 2021) that focus primarily on increasing the diversity and retention of incoming classes. Significant in this regard has been Ramapo's strategic use of technological resources to promote student success (S1.C3: EMSA Technology Group Charge). For example, Starfish Retention Solutions' student advisement, case management, and early alert system, known on campus as Connect, has allowed faculty and staff to track students' academic progress more closely and to provide needed support. Refer to Standard IV for more information on this topic.

The Division of Administration and Finance has made significant strides in focusing efforts to educate and empower all units of the College in fiscal responsibility and stewardship of campus resources. For example, the purchase and campus-wide implementation of the software package Adaptive Insights has allowed units to see year-to-date spending, historical trends, and projections for their budgets in one place. This visibility has allowed units to track, predict and adapt in a manner that allows more ownership of the Unit's data (i.e., revenue and expenditures). In addition, ITS has been instrumental in the integration of numerous technology solutions that improve the efficiency and viability of academic and administrative initiatives, including Starfish Retention Solutions' Connect, uAchieve, Adaptive Insights, Argos, SPOL, HireTouch, and Banner 9. Further, the Budget Office has collaborated with ITS to develop a campus-wide policy regarding software purchases in order to eliminate redundancy and ensure the necessary compatibility of any software purchased.

### **Mission Driven Goals**

As stated earlier the goals in both Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* are consistent with and complement the College's Mission and Values statements (S1.C2: Table of Intersection of Mission and Strategic Plan Goals). The goals, objectives, and outcomes are realistic, and the achievement targets and indicators are specific and measurable.

In July 2018, the Board of Trustees participated in a retreat in which it reviewed the College's progress on the following KPIs under Strategic Plan 2014-2018: graduation and retention rates, educational and occupational outcomes, ethnicity/race of students and full-time employees, composite financial index and debt burden ratio, student debt, Facilities Condition Index, and work environment (S1.C4: Board Assessment and Outcomes 2018; S1.C4: 2018 KPIs and SP). That review, which revealed significant progress in several areas as well as the need to increase attention or shift focus to others, led the Board to endorse an extension/revitalization of the strategic plan moving forward. This ultimately led to *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*.

As described earlier, the goals of *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* were largely extensions from the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. Ramapo College leadership, including the Board of Trustees and the Cabinet, determined that it would be more appropriate to evaluate the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan with an eye to extending goals that were not yet achieved and potentially closing out those that were met. This decision occurred for several reasons, including the review of the Strategic Plan assessment results and the transition to both a new Provost and a new Vice Provost, as well as recognition of the College's accreditation cycle.

The development of *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* was described as a refresh of the previous 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, so a discussion of both plans is important to demonstrate the thought and effort put into aligning the Mission of the College and the goals of both strategic plans. A primary goal in the process of creating the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan was to ensure alignment between it and the Mission of the College, which received a thorough review as part of the process (S1.C2: SPTF Minutes of 1.23.12). Given that the *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* is an extension of the previous plan, and in order to ensure that alignment with the Mission continued, the ETF conducted a thorough review of data related to the goals of the strategic plan and their connection to the Mission in order to determine if they should be kept, modified, or adjusted (S1.C2: Revised Strategic Plan with Targets; S1.C2: SPTF Appendix; S1.C2: Strategic Plan Progress Narratives).

### **Our Consistent Focus: Student Learning and Institutional Improvement**

In line with *Requirement of Affiliation 10*, all of the goals of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan as well as the current *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* are focused on the experience of students and their success at Ramapo College and beyond, in addition to the continuous improvement of the institution. As mentioned previously, Dashboard 2021 documents ongoing progress made toward each goal and objective.

**Goal 1: “Increasing Student Success and Student Engagement”** focuses on all the factors that best practices suggest support a meaningful and connected experience at the College. An intentional definition of student success that includes access, engagement, completion, and employment is incorporated into the Plan. These practices are supported by groups such as Enrollment Management, which maintain targets for recruitment, retention, and graduation rates, and faculty who aim to engage students through teaching, faculty/student research, and the broader life of the College. Other examples include the use of the Cahill Career Development Center to connect students to cooperative learning experiences and internships, as well as the Center for Student Involvement and other offices tasked with creating and facilitating students' access to meaningful extra-and co-curricular opportunities.

**Goal 2: “Cultivate and Support Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion”** creates a rich and healthy culture of learning and growth through immersion that benefits students for a lifetime. As described in this chapter, EDIC has assumed leadership on working with all departments, and stakeholders to ensure that diversity and equity are achieved throughout all sectors of the College. Some of the aspects of this goal include enhanced cultural competency training, programming, and professional development as well as concerted efforts to close the achievement gaps among students from under represented populations.

**Goal 3: “Advance Innovation as the College's Promise and Obligation to its Students, Community, and the State of New Jersey”** prepares students for the future not only with research-informed knowledge and cutting-edge skills but also with the ability to apply that knowledge and those skills to the service of the community throughout their lifetime. Some of the objectives and targets of this goal focus on the College's ability to generate new academic programs and attract the attention of businesses who might hire graduates or place students as interns, while others focus on the use of technology to improve communication, efficiency, and learning opportunities.

**Goal 4: “Improve Long-term Financial Strength”** continues a culture at the College that values fiscal responsibility. As stewards of this institution, the leadership of Ramapo College is committed to minimizing the financial burden

that so many students and their families experience as part of attending college. Objectives related to this goal include fundraising, affordability, raising the public profile of the College risk management, and wise stewardship of all institutional resources across campus.

### **Fulfilling our Mission and Goals**

The fundamental question routinely asked at Ramapo College pertains to the fulfillment of the College Mission and the goals of the Strategic Plan. This question can only be answered by continuous review of ongoing assessment results (S1.C4: Dashboard 2021). In order for this to be effective and sustained, stakeholders must find the data to be accurate, accessible, relevant, and actionable.

Under *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*, Goal 4, Objective 4.3 “To address space allocation, its optimization, and deferred maintenance in light of enrollment and economic trends” and more specifically Outcome 4d. “College resources are allocated to ensure the long-term security and safety of its assets and the effective use of space” speaks to creating efficiencies that both support the financial strength of the College and are mindful of the prominence of sustainability in the College’s Mission.

For example, as a result of the capital project to renovate and expand our Library into a new Learning Commons, the Capital Group needed to find a place for the Library to be housed for several years while that renovation took place. When other significant renovations occurred in recent years, make-shift classrooms and offices were constructed with trailers in the parking lots. This caused significant stress to campus related not only to the accessibility and comfort of the temporary locations but also the significant loss of parking. In addition, as many units are housed in the Library, the ease for students of having those spaces co-located has been essential to the student experience.

Whereas the existing Library space is approximately 60,000 square feet, a temporary relocation space of 15,000-20,000 square feet was sought. Capital worked to find an ideal location that would meet student needs and cause the least disruption possible to other units. After reviewing several spaces, Capital advanced the idea of taking Linden Hall offline as a resident facility and used the prior Master Plan which had assessed the future needs of campus (S1.C4: Swing Space Assessment Memo; S1.C4: Facilities Campus Master Plan). It was noted that this plan to convert Linden Hall into a more student facing and administrative space after the Learning Commons opened would allow the College to maximize efficiencies without adding more square footage. In this way, the College would neither expand its carbon footprint nor increase associated deferred maintenance or operating costs.

## **II. Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

Based on this process of assessment of and reflection on Ramapo College’s fulfillment of Standard I, the following opportunity for improvement and innovation has been generated:

1. Continue to use Dashboard 2021 as a tool to involve the entire campus in an ongoing conversation about the College’s goals and progress.

# REAFFIRMING *Our Promise*

## STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

### STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

#### Ramapo College Meets the Requirements of Standard II

A full description and illustration of the ways in which Ramapo College meets the nine criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard II, as well as *Requirements of Affiliation 1, 2 and 4 through 15*, are presented here.

Ramapo College is dedicated to fostering an environment marked by unwavering ethical behavior and integrity for the benefit of all members of the campus community. The variety of ways the College strives to accomplish this through effective policies and procedures is described in detail throughout this section and speaks collectively to the heart of Ramapo’s commitment to ethics and integrity.

#### Ramapo’s Commitment: Respect for Academic Freedom and Integrity

Ramapo College fully acknowledges the importance of academic freedom in institutions of higher learning. This freedom is essential to the full search for truth and its free exposition. It applies to both teaching and research and shall not be abridged or abused. The College’s commitment to ensuring faculty and staff full freedom in research and in the publication of results as well as freedom in the classroom to discuss their own subject are explicitly stated both in academic policy (S2.C1: Academic Freedom) as well as the most recent faculty collective negotiations agreements (S2.C1: AFT Contract 2015-2019 Page 3; S2.C1: AFT Adjunct Agreement 2015-2019 Page 18).

The policies and procedures of the College’s Tenure and Promotion Policies and Plan were designed to enable the College to protect academic freedom, reappointments, tenure, promotion, and the requirements of academic due process. The principles implicit in these regulations benefit all members of the College. A college or university is a marketplace of ideas, and it cannot fulfill its purposes of transmitting, evaluating, and extending knowledge if it requires conformity with any orthodoxy of content or method (S2.C1: Faculty Handbook Section 7).

As of fall 2018 and in line with *Requirement of Affiliation 15*, the composition of the faculty and librarians was as follows:

Category	Faculty	Librarians	Overall % of Faculty
Tenured	175	8	81.3
Tenure-Track	23	1	10.7
F/T Temporary	18	0	8.0
<b>Total</b>	216	9	100.0

Scholarly inquiry is a required component of tenure and promotion. The faculty follow the Faculty Handbook to ensure that they adhere to the criteria set forth and as agreed upon by the administration and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the union to which full-time Ramapo College faculty belong. In addition to the review of scholarship and research produced by faculty as they pursue tenure and promotion, faculty also highlight their scholarly productivity as part of the career development process that occurs every five years after tenure (S2.C1: Faculty Handbook).

The broad definition of scholarly growth used by the College in evaluating faculty for tenure and promotion also demonstrates the College’s commitment to academic freedom (S2.C1: Faculty Handbook Section 5). Scholarly achievement is recognized in forms beyond that of traditional academic publication. Examples include exhibits, compositions, performances and exhibitions in the fine arts, and other creative work as well as application of scholarly expertise to teaching and learning, community problems and projects, and private consulting.

Service by faculty is another component of the tenure and promotion processes, and one in which the faculty are greatly invested. Outlined in the Faculty Handbook, service comprises assistance and participation on all levels from the Convening Group to the school, College and even the wider community and includes a variety of committee work, curriculum development, assessment, task force participation, and more (S2.C1: Faculty Handbook Section 5.3).

The extent of academic freedom is also seen in the process through which courses and programs are developed, evaluated, and revised over time. Each of the College's five schools is headed by an academic Dean. In lieu of department chairs, academic programs are overseen by Conveners, faculty members who foster and promote the effective collaborative decision-making of the Convening Group, particularly in curricular and personnel matters (S2.C1: Convener Job Description). Curricular proposals are forwarded to ARC. ARC is charged with reviewing academic policies, evaluating new programs, overseeing the GE program, and making recommendations on these areas to the Faculty Assembly (S2.C1: ARC Website). While GECCo handles GE content and assessment, ARC handles the other curricular matters. The voting members of ARC are full-time tenured faculty, one from each of the five schools.

The College's Code of Professional Responsibility, which applies to all employees, states that "the College is a proper forum for critical inquiry and the free exchange of ideas. Rights of academic freedom and freedom of expression shall be preserved and shall not be abridged in the application of the Code" (S2.C1: Code of Professional Responsibility). Similarly, the Faculty Handbook discusses faculty and student freedom of speech and assembly (S2.C1: Faculty Handbook Section 14), and the importance of freedom of speech for students is explicitly acknowledged in the Student Code of Conduct (S2.C1: Student Code of Conduct). The College espouses Value statements that resonate with academic freedoms, specifically that members respect each other and their environment as an open, inclusive, supportive, and sustainable community (S2.C1: Mission, Vision, and Values).

While the College has defined intellectual property rights for faculty members, librarians, and unclassified professional staff who are part of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) collective negotiations Unit (S2.C1: AFT Contract 2015-2019 Pages 45 and 46), the self-study process has revealed that the College lacks a comprehensive intellectual property rights policy applicable to all of its constituents. As a result, Ramapo College has committed to developing a robust policy to address the intellectual property rights related to research, scholarship, and innovation of the overall College community, inclusive of students and employees not covered by the AFT Agreement (S2.C1: Institutional Policy Committee Minutes Intellectual Property 10.28.19).

The importance of academic integrity is clearly articulated in the College's academic policies. All members of the community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Since violations of academic integrity erode community confidence and undermine the pursuit of truth and knowledge at the College, academic dishonesty is not acceptable. The College has established policies related to violations of academic integrity, including violations related to cheating, plagiarism, academic misconduct, and fabrication that are articulated on all College syllabi and that are being fully implemented campus-wide. The College has a number of resources aimed at helping students learn to avoid plagiarism, including a module on plagiarism created by the Librarians that is available for use in the First-Year Seminar (FYS) course taken by all incoming first-year students (S2.C1: Plagiarism Module). In addition, the Center for Reading and Writing offers resources related to the avoidance of plagiarism (S2. C1: Center for Reading and Writing Resources). Cases of academic integrity violations by students, faculty, or staff are dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy published in the College Catalog (S2.C1: Academic Integrity Policy), which is included on all course outlines as mandated in the ARC manual and emailed to all students by the Registrar. Student infractions are adjudicated through the Office of the Provost.

The IDC offers workshops and videos on utilizing TurnItIn, an excellent resource for helping students effectively understand how to use sources properly and in their own words, and for combating plagiarism (S2.C1 IDC TurnItIn Recorded Workshop). When an instructor receives a TurnItIn high similarity index on a student's written work, they may complete an Academic Integrity Violation Reporting Form, which is then sent to the Vice Provost for Academic Programs (S2.C1: TurnItIn Data). The faculty member has the option of resolving the case themselves or submitting all supporting documentation to the Vice Provost who will then adjudicate the case and impose sanctions ranging from awarding a zero on the assignment involved to failing the course.

Another dimension of Ramapo's Academic Integrity Policy (S2.C1: Academic Integrity Policy) relates to the use of human subjects and the care of animal subjects. All faculty and student research proposals that involve human participants are overseen by the College's Institutional Review Board (S2.C1: IRB Website), and research involving animals is

overseen by the College's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The College's IACUC is a five-person committee, composed of both scientists and non-scientists, who oversee a wide range of issues related to the use of animals at the College. The IACUC assures that the institution operates in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act and Public Health Service Policy on Human Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (S2.C1:PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals).

### **Ramapo's Commitment: Respect for Diversity in all its Forms**

The College underscored its commitment to creating a climate that fosters respect by incorporating diversity as a stand-alone goal in both the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan (S2.C2: Strategic Plan 2014-2018) and *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* (S2.C2: Strategic Plan 2018-2021).

In the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, Goals 1 and 4 were both associated with diversity and inclusion and had specific objectives related to this focus. In *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*, Goal 2 is similarly associated with diversity, and diversity-related objectives, outcomes, and indicators have been developed and captured through Dashboard 2021 in order to monitor progress and support transparency (S2.C2: Dashboard 2021). For example, indicator #27 in Dashboard 2021 notes, "Four-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time, non-White degree seeking students shall be within 10 percent of the overall four-year graduation rate." Data collected for this indicator in 2019, based on the College's 2014 cohort, found that the rate for non-White students was 56.6 percent as compared to the overall rate of 60.5 percent. In addition, indicator #30 in Dashboard 2021 notes, "Percent of faculty that report they spend "some" or "quite a bit" of time structuring their courses so that students learn about understanding people of other backgrounds (economic, racial/ethnic, political, religious, nationality, etc.) will grow from 44 percent in 2016 to greater than 50 percent in 2021." Data collected on this indicator in 2018 found that 58 percent of faculty spend "some" or "quite a bit" of time structuring their courses so that students learn about understanding people of other backgrounds (S2.C2: FSSE Pages 16-17).

The College maintains a commitment to equitable, diverse, and inclusive policies, practices, and programs. As mentioned in Standard I under "Internal Context: Reaffirming Our Promise," EDIC was established in 2016 within the Office of the President with the goal of coordinating leadership for equity, diversity, inclusion, and compliance throughout all facets of the College (S2.C2: EDIC Website). EDIC has adopted values to foster its Mission (S2.C2: EDIC Values) and has defined the terms pertinent to areas within its purview (S2.C2: EDIC Definitions).

Prior to the establishment of EDIC, for many years the College brought together faculty, staff, and students through Diversity Action Committee (DAC). Reporting to the President, the purpose of DAC was to support issues of diversity, equity, and inclusiveness at the College through the advancement of diversity-related initiatives (S2.C2: DAC Website). Among these, DAC administered three campus climate surveys in 2005, 2013, and 2016. The 2016 survey revealed that African-American and Hispanic students felt less welcome on campus and expressed a need for faculty and staff diversity training. In response to this, a Diversity and Inclusion Task Force (DI Task Force) was created by the President in 2016 to address the issues identified by the survey. The DI Task Force existed in tandem with and included members of DAC until later that year when EDIC was fully implemented, and both DAC and the DI Task Force voluntarily disbanded. In fall 2018, the position of Secretary of Diversity and Inclusion was added to the Student Government Association Executive Board. The person in this position meets regularly with the CEDO. In addition, EDIC implemented mandatory employee diversity training that was delivered to faculty in April 2018 and to staff (including administrators) in June 2019. This training will reoccur every two to three years.

In 2014, the Center for Student Involvement (CSI) developed the Office of Equity and Diversity Programs, which was dedicated to diversity programming for students (S2.C2: OED Website, Definitions and Mission). Led by then Assistant Director of Equity and Diversity Programs, the Office of Equity and Diversity Programs oversaw the programming for all heritage and awareness months as well as associated programs and peer-led discussions connected with LGBTQ+ services and support. A number of campus-wide, large-scale events were launched to serve a community of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives as evidenced by Diversity Day, the We Care program (food pantry and student financial emergency relief), Pridefest, Students of Color Rites of Passage graduation celebration, and many more (S2.C2: Examples of Equity and Diversity Events). In 2018, as a way to move all diversity and inclusion efforts under one umbrella program, the President announced that the diversity planning and student-based programming efforts within the CSI Office of Equity and Diversity Programs would be subsumed under EDIC with the creation of an Associate Director position reporting to the CEDO.

On November 21, 2018, the College's application to be inducted into the third cohort of the NASPA Culture of Respect



Collective was accepted. As members of the Collective, the College continues to affirm its commitment to addressing campus sexual violence. NASPA defines the endeavor as an ambitious two-year program that brings together institutions of higher education to enact efforts toward ending campus sexual violence and to guide each other through a rigorous process of self-assessment and targeted organizational change. The program is grounded in an expert-developed public health framework, cross campus collaboration, and peer-led learning to make meaningful programmatic and policy changes. There are 40 institutions from the U.S., Mexico, and Canada who were accepted into cohort three. The project is lead by co-chairs: the Prevention Education Coordinator and the Dean of Students. Together, they chair the Campus Leadership Team (CLT), which is comprised of faculty, staff, and students who advance the objectives of the project.

On June 1, 2019, the CLT submitted the CORE Evaluation (155 questions), otherwise known as a self-study that assesses the College's efforts toward sexual violence awareness. These efforts are grouped into six pillars: Survivor Support, Clear Policies, Multi-tiered Education, Public Discourse, School-wide Mobilization, and On-Going Self Assessment.

On July 11, 2019, the CLT received the Baseline Results Summary – a document that revealed how the College scored in each of the six pillars (S2.C2 CORE Baseline Results Summary). The Baseline Results Summary was a talking point at an Open Forum hosted by the CLT on October 18, 2019. The keynote speaker at the forum was NASPA's Senior Director of the Culture of Respect Collective (S2.C2 Culture of Respect Open Forum Poster).

The CLT identified areas, via SMART goals, that the College will be working on to improve the score on the CORE Evaluation. The SMART goals were captured in an Individualized Implementation Plan (IIP) and submitted to NASPA on September 30, 2019. At present, the IIP is awaiting approval from NASPA. Over the course of the next year, the CLT will be working to advance these goals with the intent of moving the needle on the six pillars. Furthermore, the College will be re-taking the CORE evaluation in December of 2020 to assess how well initiatives from the IIP evolve into impactful policies, practices, and education around sexual violence awareness.

The College is committed to promoting diverse perspectives, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement. As a means of fostering open dialogue in the community, the President's Advisory Council (PAC) was established in 2014 (S2.C2: Establishment of PAC) and serves as a college-wide body that is an expression of Ramapo's shared governance structure (S2.C2: PAC Website). More information about the PAC may be found below.

The College advances a fair and unbiased process for faculty promotion as promulgated in the Faculty Handbook (S2.C2: Faculty Handbook Section 9). The process includes the presence of equal employment opportunity-related discussions with respect to candidates who are members of protected classes. The All-College Promotion Committee and All-College Tenure Committee include a non-voting affirmative action representative. More information about promotion is included below.

The College values equity, diversity, and inclusion in the classroom as a place for students to discuss, understand, and find themselves challenged by social issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The GE program exemplifies the College's commitments in these areas. Goal 4 (expand our world – develop compassion and ethical understanding across cultures and become an engaged global citizen), for example, includes four related objectives:

- Understand diverse communities on local, national, and/or global levels (First-Year Seminar; Historical Perspectives; Global Awareness)
- Analyze ethical implications of the global distribution of power and resources (Historical Perspectives; Social Science Inquiry; Values and Ethics; Systems, Sustainability, and Society)
- Question assumptions about individual and group identity (Historical Perspectives; Social Science Inquiry; Culture and Creativity; and Values and Ethics)
- Demonstrate intercultural understanding required to effectively negotiate a diverse global society (Global Awareness)

The College recognizes the value of assessing how its community thinks and feels about diversity-related policies, procedures, practices, and programs. In spring 2012, students, faculty, and staff were invited to complete a campus climate survey. The executive summary was discussed at town hall meetings held in spring 2013 (S2.C2: Campus Climate Survey Summary 2012). The preview of the results was discussed at town hall meetings in spring 2016 (S2.C2: Survey Results Preview Slides). One of the outcomes of this was that the Cabinet-level position of Chief Equity and Diversity Officer (CEDO) was created. A new campus climate survey titled Diverse Learning Environments (DLE), distributed to students in the spring of 2016, led to the creation of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force which, as described earlier,

helped inform the structure of the EDIC office. Using the results from the DLE survey, the Faculty Fellow for Equity and Diversity conducted focus groups in spring 2019 to better understand the way students think and feel about the Ramapo experience. A report by the Faculty Fellow will be submitted to the CEDO in the spring of 2020 to continue to shape the College's diversity plan.

### **Ramapo's Commitment: The Management of Grievances**

The College ensures that acts of harassment, discrimination, and intimidation are managed by adhering to published and distributed grievance policies. Union labor contracts also strictly forbid any acts of intimidation, discrimination, or interference.

The College recognizes that, as a recipient of federal funds, there must be an avenue for students, faculty, and staff to file grievances. As a public academic institution in the State of New Jersey, members of the College are bound by and must comply with ethical standards and behavior as set forth in statutes, regulations, codes, and guidelines promulgated by federal and state entities. All new staff, faculty, and adjuncts are required to complete a checklist that includes acknowledgement of receipt of the Uniform Ethics Code (S2.C3: Notification of Receipt of Policies and Procedures). In addition, all employees are required to complete annual online training regarding the Uniform Ethics Code (S2.C3: Uniform Ethics Code). The process is managed by the College's General Counsel/Ethics Liaison Officer and is distributed according to the Yearly State Ethics Commission Requirements (S2.C3: Yearly State Ethics Commission Requirements).

The Student Handbook serves as the vehicle for communication to the student population of policies, procedures (including those for student-on-student complaints), and expectations of behavior (S2.C3: Student Conduct Website). The Code of Conduct (S2.C3: Code of Conduct), Section B of which describes how a student can file a complaint, may be found in the Student Handbook. The policy has been established as fair and impartial because it outlines a student's Rights in All Disciplinary Proceedings. Due process rights are embedded in the procedures. These rights involve procedural protections, including time frames, so that the complaint process unfolds in a timely fashion. Students receive the Student Handbook twice per year (September and January) via their ramapo.edu email account.

Students are also afforded the right to file complaints of a non-academic nature (S2.C3: Student Complaints of a Non Academic Nature). This policy was created to serve as a mechanism for students to file complaints when the nature of the complaint might concern policies and procedures of the College or the behavior of a person affiliated with the College. Unit Heads are required to keep a log of the complaints of a non-academic nature that documents when the complaint was filed and the manner in which it was resolved. As of fall 2019, students may file a complaint through an online submission form that is available on the Ramapo College website (S2.C3: Student Complaint Form). This does not preclude a student's right or ability to make a complaint in person but, it is hoped, will allow students an expedient and, if they so wish, anonymous means of filing a complaint. Inasmuch as this is a new vehicle for lodging a complaint, current students are being informed of its existence in the following ways: 1) a link now exists on the bottom of the home page (S2.C3: Ramapo Home Page) that immediately redirects students to the online student complaint form; 2) students who appear in person to complain will be made aware of (but not required to complete) the online student complaint form; 3) information about the new online student complaint form has been shared with Division/Unit staff who regularly interact with students so they can informally share news of the launch of the online form; and 4) the Student Government Association leadership has been informed of the launch of the online student complaint form. Information about the existence and use of this form will also be included in student orientation materials. In addition, a master log of all complaints (regardless of how they are filed) and their resolutions is maintained and analyzed on an annual basis in order to address frequently appearing complaints/issues in a more comprehensive manner and thereby improve the overall student experience at Ramapo.

The Complaint Committee, under the Provost's Office, reviews these complaints, looks for any patterns that need to be addressed, and provides accountability to ensure that complaints are resolved in a timely manner for students. The purpose of this committee is not to hear actual student complaints, which are handled by the pertinent department, but rather to determine if policy revisions or other enhancements are warranted. The existence of this committee and its prescribed work is necessary for the College to remain in compliance with federal regulations.

The College is committed to maintaining an environment free from harassment and discrimination for everyone and does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other protected status. Students who believe they have been subject to discrimination can file a complaint with the Director of Affirmative Action and Workplace Compliance under the College's Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy

(S2.C3: Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy). All complaints are addressed in a manner that is prompt, thorough, and impartial in compliance with Title IX and/or the New Jersey State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace.

The College is in full compliance with Title IX federal regulations and does not deny or restrict a student or employee from participating in a program on the basis of sex or gender. Students may file a complaint of sexual misconduct under the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy Governing Students (S2.C3: Sexual Misconduct Policy Governing Students). The policy is located in the Student Handbook, and sexual assault and reporting options are found on the Title IX website (S2.C3: Title IX Website). The policy documents the College's commitment to conducting and completing an investigation and/or other appropriate resolution of a report of sexual misconduct in a timely manner. Through the Office of Violence Prevention, the policy is also the focus of many sexual misconduct prevention and education programs that are routinely scheduled for both new and continuing students throughout the academic year, so that students are constantly being reminded of their options for reporting acts of sexual misconduct. Some programs include SCREAM™ Theater and Zero Shades of Grey that will be discussed further in Standard IV, as well as Violence Prevention Week, Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and NCAA training policy (S2.C3: Sample Violence Prevention Programs).

Grievances filed by faculty/AFT professional staff can be addressed in several ways. The Statement Concerning Conduct, Responsibility, and Due Process (S2.C3: Faculty Handbook Section 14) is found in the Faculty Handbook and provides that a faculty member accused of violations of College regulations shall be afforded a hearing in accordance with the procedures adopted by the College. A Collective Negotiations Agreement exists between the State, the Council of New Jersey State College Locals, and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT/AFL-CIO) ("AFT Agreement") and governs faculty and professional staff at Ramapo College. ARTICLE VII of the AFT Agreement addresses the Grievance Procedure (S2.C3: AFT Contract 2015-2019 Article VII).

In addition to the Faculty Handbook and AFT Contract, faculty/AFT professional staff members are subject to provisions under all college-wide policies as set forth by Board of Trustees Policies (S2.C3: Policies and Procedures Website). The Controversies and Disputes Policy gives the Board of Trustees jurisdiction over all controversies and disputes concerning tenure, personnel matters of employees not classified under Title 11A of the New Jersey Statutes, and other issues arising under Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes involving higher education (S2.C3: Controversies and Disputes Policy). Faculty/AFT professional staff must also adhere to the policies in the Employee Handbook found under "College Policies" (S2.C3: Employee Handbook Website). This document contains a number of complaint procedures that are relevant for faculty and staff including State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Sexual Harassment Policy, Code of Professional Responsibility, Workplace Violence Policy, and Ethics Policy. The Ethics Policy connects the employee to the College's Whistleblower Policy (S2.C3: Whistleblower Policy). These policies are posted on the Human Resources webpage and provided to all College personnel upon hire in step two of the required online new hire/orientation process (S2.C3: New Hire Orientation Website).

The grievance procedure for members of the International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers (IFPTE) collective negotiations Unit is summarized under Article VII of the Local 195 Collective Negotiations Agreement and provides the exclusive vehicle for prompt and equitable solutions and settlements of individual employee grievances and Union grievances arising from the administration of the contract and/or other conditions of employment (S2.C3: IFPTE Contract 2015-2019 Article VII). The grievance process for members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) collective negotiations Unit is summarized under Article 4 of the agreement, which permits CWA members to use the grievance process to resolve grievances and assures prompt and equitable solutions to problems arising from the administration of the collective negotiations Unit agreement or other conditions of employment by providing a vehicle for the settlement of grievances (S2.C3: CWA Contract 2011-2015 Article 4 ; S2.C3: CWA Memorandum of Agreement 2015-2019).

Managers such as administrative, professional, supervisory and confidential staff not included in the collective negotiations units of CWA, AFT, and IFPTE have recourse to due process procedures for the resolution of an alleged violation of College policies, administrative regulations, and statutes with respect to conditions of employment or for grieving disciplinary actions under the Employee Complaint Processing Policy (S2.C3: Employee Complaint Processing Policy).

### **Ramapo's Commitment: Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest**

There are clear and established conflict of interest requirements for the College Trustees, officers, faculty, and staff. As a New Jersey State public higher education institution, the College follows the New Jersey Conflict of Interest

Law (N.J.S.A. 52:13D-12, et seq.), Uniform Ethics Code (S2.C4: Uniform Ethics Code) and New Jersey State Ethics Commission regulations to avoid conflicts of interest (S2.C4: State Ethics Commission Regulations), Executive Order No. 64 (Christie, 2011) (S2.C4: Executive Order No. 64) and Executive Order No. 2 (Murphy, 2017) (S2.C4: Executive Order No. 2).

Executive Order No.1 (Corzine, 2006) (S2.C4: Executive Order No. 1) requires that every State department, board, commission, authority, agency, and instrumentality, including the public State colleges and universities, appoint an individual to serve as an Ethics Liaison Officer (ELO). Currently, the College's Vice President and General Counsel serves as ELO, and the Assistant Director for Employee Relations serves as the Deputy ELO. The ELO is responsible for administering an agency-based ethics compliance program at the College to ensure that College Trustees, officers, faculty, and staff avoid conflicts of interest (S2.C4: State Ethics Liaison Officers' Responsibilities). The State requires 100 percent compliance with this policy and would inform the College if any employee had not completed the program. The College has not been informed of non-compliance.

### **Ramapo's Commitment: Fairness and Impartiality for its Employees**

The College has policies and procedures in place to ensure fair and impartial hiring practices. The Recruitment, Selection, and Employment Policy calls for the College to recruit and hire the most qualified candidates from a diverse pool using competitive selection processes and in compliance with employment law, applicable collective negotiations agreements, and civil service regulations (S2.C5: Recruitment, Selection, and Employment Policy). Search procedures for classified, civil service staff are governed by New Jersey Administrative Code 4A and the Civil Service Commission. Procedures for hiring classified staff are published (S2.C5: Hiring Procedures for Classified Staff). Article 13 of the CWA Collective Negotiations Agreement and Article 35 of the IFPTE Collective Negotiations Agreement address job postings and announcements for classified staff (S2.C5: CWA Contract 2011-2015 Article 13) (S2.C5: IFPTE Contract 2015-2019 Article 35), as appropriate. In addition, Article XIII of AFT Collective Negotiations Agreement addresses appointment and retention of faculty and professional staff (S2.C5: AFT Contract 2015-2019 Article XIII).

The College maintains a Whistleblower Policy that is administered by the Internal Auditor and overseen by the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees (S2.C5: Whistleblower Policy). The Policy notes, in pertinent part, that Ramapo "is committed to preparing and implementing fair, accurate and complete financial policies, reports and materials, as well as maintaining the internal controls essential to support its financial and accounting systems. This policy provides an avenue for employees, students, vendors, volunteers and any other persons who suspect fraud, abuse or misuse of College resources, dishonest actions, conflict of interest or any other behavior that violates College policies, laws and regulations to be reported to the College."

The College promotes the internal mobility of qualified employees and recruits external candidates by using transparent internal and external recruiting, selection, and executive search practices. The search process is periodically reviewed and revised. EDIC further develops recruitment initiatives and hiring programs geared toward increasing the number of diverse faculty and staff. The College also has a Nepotism Policy that permits the employment of relatives of current employees as long as no potential conflicts of interest result (S2.C5: Nepotism Policy). Further, the College abides by the New Jersey State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace (S2.C5: State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace).

The faculty reappointment process is a comprehensive application process that requires all tenure-track faculty members to be subject to several levels of review during their probationary years of employment with the College. The purpose of this process is twofold:

1. To ensure that faculty receive a thorough evaluation of their performance annually and are adequately informed of any and all areas in need of improvement; and
2. To ensure that the faculty member satisfactorily meets each of the four criteria (Effective Teaching, Scholarly Achievement, Contribution to College/Community, and Fulfillment of Professional Responsibility) (S2.C5: Tenure Process Checklist).

With regard to renewal of contracts for non-tenured faculty and in order to allow the maximum possible period of time for probationary personnel to demonstrate their qualifications for reappointment with tenure, the reappointment process builds on the recommendations for reappointment that are made annually. This allows probationary faculty to receive ongoing feedback, as well as the maximum possible notice of their prospects for eventual reappointment with tenure.

With respect to the promotion of faculty, a policy that is particular to Ramapo is that full professors and associate professors will not exceed 75 percent of faculty and that the percentage of full professors and distinguished service professors will not exceed 37.5 percent of faculty. Pursuant to Article XIII, Section J and Article XIV, Section C of the AFT Contract, the processes for appointment, reappointment, and promotional consideration, respectively, are set forth in the Faculty Handbook (S2.C5: Faculty Handbook Section 5) and Board of Trustee Policy 459 on Professional Rank Ratios (S2.C5: Professional Rank Ratios).

The reappointment process for AFT professional staff is comprehensive and requires all candidates to undergo a thorough review of their qualifications for continued employment at Ramapo College. An Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS) is used to facilitate communication between AFT employees and their supervisors and clarify job expectations (S2.C5: APAS form). The APAS system serves to align individual employee's contributions with the College's planning and assessment activities to ensure that professional staff receive a thorough evaluation of their performance and that evidence of past performance and future potential to the College is presented. Like tenured faculty, employees on multi-year contracts have a contractual right not to have their position terminated without just cause (S2.C5: AFT Contract 2015-2019 Article XIII).

The College uses the Performance Assessment Review (PAR) system to evaluate the performance of classified staff. There are two versions of the PAR, one for employees and one for supervisors (S2.C5: PAR Form Employee; S2.C5: PAR form Supervisor), which are summarized in Article 16 of the CWA Collective Negotiations Agreement (S2.C5:CWA Contract 2011-2015 Article 16) and Article 41 of the IFPTE Collective Negotiations Agreement (S2.C5: IFPTE Contract 2015-2019 Article 41).

In fall 2018 following, in part, data gleaned from the Great Colleges to Work For survey, discussions between senior administration and union leadership, and reports from the Ombudsperson, the College moved from the APAS model to the Manager's Scorecard competency model for the evaluation of managers to address the need to fill leadership competency gaps, improve and better manage workflow, and work more collaboratively to better meet the College's Strategic Plan. The Competencies Review Process is an improved evaluation tool for communication, feedback, evaluation, and review that provides an opportunity to develop a clear definition of the competencies needed to succeed in the manager's leadership role. It establishes employee outcomes and assesses progress toward achievement targets and personal and professional development, encourages dialogue between the supervisor and employee, and provides a means of identifying and addressing job-related learning opportunities, and fosters morale. The supervisor completes their portion of the Manager's Scorecard (S2.C5: Manager Scorecard Form) with the manager twice annually (September and March), and a 360 evaluation is performed every three years (S2.C5: Competencies Review Process). Further, participation in this competency model is tracked in Dashboard 2021.

A Memorandum of Agreement dated October 13, 2011 modifies Article XVI of the AFT Contract, which outlines the process for performance-based promotion for AFT professional staff who meet or exceed the criteria for promotions (S2.C5: Performance Based Promotions). Such promotion consists of advancement to the next higher title in the employee's title series. This provision is separate and apart from the reclassification procedure set forth in Article XVI of the AFT Contract (S2.C5: AFT Contract 2015-2019 Article XVI).

Promotion of classified staff or career service employees are governed by the Civil Service Commission and summarized in Article 34 (Promotion) of the IFPTE Local 195 Collective Negotiations Agreement (S2.C5: IFPTE Contract 2015-2019 Article 34) and Article 7 (Position Reclassification and Reevaluation Reviews) and Article 12 (Promotion) of the CWA Collective Negotiations Agreement (S2.C5:CWA Contract 2011-2015 Article 12). Reclassification procedures are posted on the Human Resources policies and procedures webpage (S2.C5: Reclassification Procedures for Classified Staff). In order for the College to conduct a review of the process, the annual reclassification procedures were suspended as of September 2018, however the College continues to conduct ongoing evaluations of position classifications and make adjustment when warranted.

As for the promotion of managers, the College has procedures for the reclassification of unclassified staff (S2.C5: Reclassification Procedures for Unclassified Staff). A position may be reclassified when the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of that position change so significantly that the current title is no longer appropriate. A request for reclassification of a position may be initiated by the incumbent in that position, the Unit Head, or the appropriate Division Head.

The discharge, suspension, or disciplinary reduction of salary of faculty/AFT professional staff employees during the term of a one-year appointment or reappointment of a faculty member on an initial two-or three-year appointment or any one-year reappointment shall be grievable in accordance with the provisions set forth in ARTICLE VII AFT Contract (S2.C5: AFT Contract 2015-2019 Article VII).

Discipline of a classified staff or manager employee shall only be imposed for just cause. Progressive discipline, applied in graduated steps, provides opportunity and coaching for correcting poor performance and improper behavior. The College is guided in these processes by State regulation and employment contracts, as well as by general law and accepted management practices. When a classified staff member is to be interviewed with the expectation of some disciplinary action against them as a possible result, the employee has a right to have a union representative present to assist them. Employees have appeal rights in discipline matters. Discipline procedures and appeal rights are further summarized in IFPTE Collective Negotiations Agreement – Article 8 (S2.C5: FPTE Contract 2015-2019 Article 8) and CWA Collective Negotiations Agreement – Article 5 (S2.C5: CWA Contract 2011-2015 Article 5). Managers have appeal rights under the Employee Complaint Processing Policy (S2.C5: Employee Complaint Processing Policy).

Non-reappointment provisions for the separation of faculty and AFT professional staff are summarized in Article XIII of the AFT Collective Negotiations Agreement and call for a notification requirement (S2.C5: AFT Contract 2015-2019 Article XIII). Notice of reappointment or non-reappointment of full-time employees governed under the tenure provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:60-6, et seq., shall be given in writing not later than March 1 of the first and second academic years of service and not later than December 21 of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth years of service. When a full-time faculty member is hired at mid-year, unless the individual is appointed to replace someone on leave or in a bona fide emergency, notice of reappointment or non-reappointment for the next full academic year shall be given in writing not later than April 15. Resignation, reassignment, and retirement are addressed in Article XV of the AFT Agreement. Retrenchment rights are also summarized in Article XLI of the Agreement. Classified staff has layoff and recall rights as summarized in Article 28 of the CWA Collective Negotiations Agreement (S2.C5: CWA Contract 2011-2015 Article 28) and Article 38 of the IFPTE Collective Negotiations Agreement (S2.C5: IFPTE Contract 2015-2019 Article 38).

With regard to the separation of managers, the College defines them as at-will employees (S2.C5: Employment: Officers, Senior Administrators, and Managers Policy).

### **Ramapo's Commitment: Honesty and Truthfulness in Communications**

The College values its internal and external communication in such a way that a dedicated goal aligned with communication was included in the College's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan (S2.C6: Strategic Plan 2014-2018). The College aims to further develop effective collegial planning and governance structures by enhancing relationships with internal and external stakeholders, which requires clear, planned, coordinated, timely, and accurate communication. Future, indicator 44 tracts participation in LDP offerings which have included communication topics such as Mindful Communication, Effective Email Communication, Effective Communicating, Having Difficult Communications. As stated previously, Dashboard 2021 was developed to monitor the strategic plan, and there are a number of measurement indicators associated with Goal 3 (S2.C6: Dashboard 2021). In particular, indicator #45 requires 100 percent of College managers to complete a Manager's Scorecard by 2021. The Manager's Scorecard was introduced in 2018 and is part of a new leadership competencies model for managerial performance and evaluation. The model is based on five core competencies including communication.

The President holds a semi-annual State of the College address and maintains a public archive of prior addresses (S2.C6: Office of the President Website). The address conflicts and discusses topics such as external factors confronting the College and higher education in general, enrollment strategies and achievements, news and noteworthy items from each of the Divisions, student accomplishments, and capital improvements. Members of the College are invited to ask the President questions at the conclusion of the address. In addition, the President and senior leadership team host communication meetings twice per semester where timely news and information on trends and initiatives at the College are solicited and shared. Finally, the President's Advisory Council (PAC) (S2.C6: PAC Membership) was established in 2014 as a mechanism to improve communication among the various College constituencies: students, faculty, professional staff, and community members (S2.C6: PAC Guidelines and Digest Announcement). The PAC meets up to four times per year. The President also maintains a website, "The President's Post," where news and campus initiatives are shared (S2.C6: President's Post). Constituents are prompted to view the President's Post by way of the College's Daily Digest.

Under federal law, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act requires that

colleges and universities that receive federal funding through financial aid must communicate campus crime statistics to the community on an annual basis and in the event a timely warning notification is required (S2.C6: Public Safety Website). The communication of statistics is contained in a report, colloquially known as the Clery Report, that is posted online and disseminated via email to faculty, staff, and students each year by October 1 (S2.C6: Clery Crime Fire Report 2019). The Clery Report is designed to provide transparency around campus crime statistics and serves as a document that captures public safety policies and practices, missing student procedures, education about how to get help for alcohol and other drug addiction, and fire statistics. In compliance with the State mandate, the President reports all crime statistics during each regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. As an additional means of fostering communication of a safety-based nature, the campus uses the convenient Alert Me Now system to disseminate timely warnings via email, voicemail, and/or text message to all members of the community. Incoming students are required to register, and new employees are registered as part of the hiring process.

The Annual Institutional Profile for the State of New Jersey is a report published annually that summarizes the College's Vision, Mission, goals, data, characteristics and development (S2.C6: Institutional Profile). The report utilizes tables and charts to show data on information such as student outcomes, demographics, faculty characteristics, academic programs, and development expenditures. The President signs and dates the document certifying that the information is correct to the best of his knowledge. The document is submitted to the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education and is made available on the College website.

As a state institution and under the auspices of the Board of Trustees, the College is required to hold an annual public hearing on the budget. Presented by the Vice President for Administration and Finance, the hearing communicates the proposed budget assumptions, projections for the upcoming fiscal year, and future outlook (S2.C6: Open Forum on the Budget May 2019). The overall higher education environment, including State and Federal issues and their implications for the College, is also discussed with time allotted for a question-and-answer period. The presentation is publicly noticed and is typically attended by members of the Board of Trustees, students, faculty, and staff. The budget hearing materials as well as Board of Trustees Meeting summaries are made available on the College website.

The Divisions of Institutional Advancement and Enrollment Management and Student Affairs are responsible for the College's formal internal and external communications. These Divisions develop and implement strategies to promote the institution in support of the College's Mission and goals through a coordinated advancement, marketing, and communications program. The Institutional Advancement program primarily includes cultivation-centered communication to alumni, parents, and the Board of Governors. Further, media inquiries are directed to the Vice President of Institutional Advancement who serves as the College's Official Spokesperson. The Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs is primarily responsible for enrollment and engagement-centered communications via the Office of Marketing and Communications. The Office of Marketing and Communications oversees all advertising and marketing, publications, graphic design, photography, the official College websites and social media channels, internal and external public relations, and branding. The Office oversees a yearly media plan and advertising placements that promote the College through marketing, recruitment, and admissions materials delivered via print, outdoor signage, digital/web ads, websites, social media, and more (S2.C6: Samples of Recruitment Material). Furthermore, the College is a member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), and all recruiting practices have abided by the Association's Code of Ethics and Professional Practice (S2.C6: NACAC Code of Ethics). Admissions recruitment is a year-round process with dates, timelines, and principles that align with NACAC.

All web and print design publications must be approved using the design standard (S2.C6: Design Standard). The College maintains official social media accounts to promote the College through various interactive networks. All members of the College must utilize social media in accordance with the Social Media Guidelines (S2.C6: Social Media Guidelines), the Student Code of Conduct (S2.C6: Code of Conduct), and the Code of Professional Responsibility (S2.C6: Code of Professional Responsibility). Social media accounts of College units, clubs, and organizations must be approved to become recognized as officially affiliated with Ramapo College.

College faculty, staff, and students are provided with email accounts for the purposes of conducting official College business. It is the College's policy that email is the official communication mechanism for faculty, staff, and students, and that broadcast announcements must not be over-utilized. Announcements are limited to emergencies, health and safety, presidential communications, major campus programs as approved by the Cabinet, and critical alerts related to human resources diversity and inclusion, and information technology. Only authorized staff members are permitted to use the Broadcast email system for their constituent groups under the Broadcast Email and Voicemail Policy (S2.C6: Broadcast

Email and Voicemail Policy). Members of the College are able to communicate with each other about events and campus news via the Daily Digest.

If any person is to appear in a Ramapo publication, a release form must be signed (S2.C6: Photo Image Release Form). The College also has a General Event Photography and Video Policy to clarify when a student image/photo release is required and when it is not (S2.C6: General Event Photography and Video Policy).

The Faculty Assembly is the discussion and final decision-making forum of the College's faculty as a whole and follows Roberts' Rules of Order (S2.C6: Faculty Assembly Bylaws). Within the bylaws, there are flowcharts to demonstrate the correct process guidelines for decision-making. The Faculty Assembly generally meets three times per semester to discuss and vote on matters of importance to the faculty. The Faculty Assembly Executive Council consists of ten members who meet weekly to serve the interests of the College faculty and ensure the faculty's voice is heard via the shared governance of the College (S2.C6: Faculty Assembly Website, Agendas, Minutes).

### **Ramapo's Commitment: Affordability and Informed Decision-Making**

The College has a consumer information page (S2.C7: Consumer Information) and a net price calculator that provide students and their families with information on how affordable and accessible the College is (S2.C7: Net Price Calculator). The consumer information page also provides families with information on graduation rates (S2.C8: Student and Parent Consumer Information Act), health and safety, financial aid, cost of attendance, and academic programs. The New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities (NJASCU), of which Ramapo is a founding member, has a listing of the State colleges' tuition and fees so families can see how affordable Ramapo is compared to other State colleges (S2.C7: NJ State Colleges Tuition and Fee).

Ramapo College is committed to making college affordable by employing strategies toward helping students reduce their indebtedness. The Office of Financial Aid uses a service site named Elm Select that allows a student to compare and review alternative lenders based on interest rates and repayment options (S2.C7: Elm Select Website). The Elm Select resource allows each student and family the ability to choose the loan that is best for them. The Office of Financial Aid staff adhere to a Code of Conduct policy that indicates staff will counsel students and families on borrowing without recommending one lender over another (S2.C7: Financial Aid Code of Conduct). The College has a low cohort default rate (i.e., currently 5.4 percent), which means that students who are procuring loans are indeed paying them back. The Office of Financial Aid includes shopping sheet information on all award letters so that students, veterans, and their families can view the six-year graduation rates, the student loan repayment rate, and the median student loan balance. The College has an official Refund Policy, so if a student decides to withdraw from their courses the financial consequences of such a decision are clear (S2.C7: Refund Policy). Further initiatives and partnerships with community college partners aimed at expanding affordable access to a Ramapo education have included articulation agreements, 3+1 programs in nursing and a steadfast commitment to strong graduation rates.

### **Ramapo's Commitment: Compliance and Transparency**

As articulated in the Verification of Compliance document and in line with *Requirements of Affiliation 5, 6 and 14*, Ramapo College complies with all state, federal, and Commission reporting policies (S2.C8: Verification of Compliance). The College publishes a Fact Book and Fact Sheets to provide students and their families with information about Ramapo College accessible on the Institutional Research website (S2.C8: Fact Book 2018; S2.C8: Fast Facts Spring 2018; S2.C8: Institutional Research Website). For example, the College completes yearly surveys such as IPEDS to allow students and families to use the College Navigator to view cohort default rate, tuition and fees, net price, enrollment, athletics, and crime reports (S2.C8: College Navigator Website).

Recognized as the College's official resource for publicly available data, the Office of Institutional Research publishes reports on institutional assessment and graduation and retention rates (S2.C8: Institutional Research Website). For example, Ramapo College's Nursing Program recently celebrated a 92.7 percent first-time pass rate on the National Council Licensing Exam (NCLEX) (S2.C8: NCLEX 2018 Fourth Quarter Results), an average of 81 percent of Nursing students have graduated within four years, and all Nursing graduates of the past three years have received nursing positions within one year of graduation. A full listing of licensure pass rates specific to programs is provided in the Verification of Compliance document (S2.C8: Verification of Compliance).

The College's Credit Hours Policy is included in the Verification of Compliance document (S2.C8: Credit Hours Policy; S2.C8: Verification of Compliance). Ramapo College also demonstrates a strong track record on compliance with securing



substantive change requests from the Commission in a timely and accurate manner (S2.C8: MSCHE Institutional History Report).

### **Ramapo's Commitment: An Ongoing Commitment to Ethics and Integrity**

The College is governed by ethics laws, regulations, and ethics requirements for its Trustees, officers, faculty, and staff. In addition, academic integrity and community conduct standards are established for the entire College. The Ethics Liaison Officer (ELO) plays an essential role in ensuring that the College's employees are aware of and comply with State ethics laws, regulations, and executive orders. The ELO is also an important direct link between the College and the State Ethics Commission. The ELO ensures that employees receive required documents, complete necessary filings, attend mandatory training, and otherwise meet the requirements of ethics laws, regulations, and orders. The responsibilities of the ELO are set forth by the State Ethics Commission (S2.C9: State Ethics Liaison Officers' Responsibilities). The College has a webpage that details requirements for employees and provides links to resources (S2.C9: Ethics Officer Webpage). Additionally, the College has a dedicated email account (ethics@ramapo.edu) for its ethics program.

In accordance with law, the State Ethics Commission conducts mandatory compliance reviews of all State entities, including the College. The College was audited by the Commission during 2016 and was deemed to be in substantial compliance of all State ethics requirements (S2.C9: 2016 Ethics Compliance Audit Letter).

With regard to institutional ethics and integrity policies for students, the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs annually reviews and updates the Student Handbook, which includes the Code of Conduct. For additional information regarding the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct, please refer to the discussion under Ramapo's Commitment: The Management of Grievances earlier in this Standard. Matters involving the integrity of student's academic endeavors are addressed by the College's Academic Integrity Policy and associated procedures, as described earlier.

### **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

Based on this process of assessment and reflection on Ramapo College's fulfillment of Standard II, the following opportunities for improvement and innovation have been generated:

1. Developing, achieving, and monitoring the outcomes of the Strategic Plan related to diversity, and inclusion will be of great importance for future growth and closing the loop, particularly through the tracking and use of indicators and data gleaned from campus climate surveys to shape decisions.
2. The College should develop an intellectual property rights policy that is more encompassing.

# REAFFIRMING *Our Promise*

## STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

### STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

#### Ramapo College Meets the Requirements of Standard III

A full description and illustration of the ways in which Ramapo College meets the eight criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard III, as well as *Requirements of Affiliation 8, 9, 10, and 15*, are presented here.

#### The Scope of Academic Programs

As the public liberal arts college of New Jersey, Ramapo College is dedicated to providing students a strong foundation for a lifetime of achievement. This cohesive learning experience is organized around the Mission of the College. All new programs are reviewed by ARC and must demonstrate their alignment with the Mission and Strategic Plan of the College in their program goals and outcomes (S3.C1: Data Science Major Proposal).

#### Mission Driven Academic Programs

The academic enterprise at Ramapo College is distinguished by four hallmarks that speak to the nature of the College as an institution of higher education: interdisciplinary and experiential learning and international and intercultural understanding. Eighty percent of majors include an experiential learning outcome or required experience (S3.C4: Experiential Learning Component) and just over half of all academic majors include international learning opportunities (S3.C5: International Education Component). These are described in detail below and will be developed more fully with examples and corresponding assessment data throughout this and other Standards. The culture of learning at Ramapo is:

#### Interdisciplinary

True to its mission as a public liberal arts college, Ramapo's administration, faculty and staff foster an environment in which learning is grounded in ongoing conversation and collaboration between the disciplines. Interdisciplinarity is embedded in the GE program through learning objectives like applying disciplinary and interdisciplinary skills to address complex problems that are shared by three learning experiences: Studies in the Arts and Humanities, Quantitative Reasoning, and Scientific Reasoning. Interdisciplinarity is also expressed in a range of interdisciplinary majors (e.g., Biochemistry, International Studies, and Law and Society) and minors such as Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (S3.C4: Sample Interdisciplinary Description & SLOs). These programs' commitment to interdisciplinarity is reflected in their student learning outcomes. Biochemistry students, for example, will demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of chemical, biological, and biochemical sciences. ASB's Core also demonstrates the College's interdisciplinary education, as students must take courses in each of the seven ASB majors and math, and all students complete an interdisciplinary Capstone (BADM 495: Strategic Management) (S3.C4: ASB Interdisciplinary). In addition, interdisciplinary contract majors allow students to construct a program tailored to their learning interests and needs by taking courses in multiple areas of study (e.g., Liberal Studies, Contemporary Arts and Social Science).

#### Experiential

Ramapo College places great emphasis on students taking an active stance with respect to their learning both within and beyond the classroom. The GE program's experiential learning objective is attached to three required courses (i.e., First-Year Seminar, Studies in the Arts and Humanities, and Social Science Inquiry) each under the control of a faculty director who ensures consistency in meeting the goals of the course and who oversees assessment of that course. Experiential learning is also seen in program requirements (e.g., ASB requires for all of its majors the course FINC 301, which includes a stock trading simulation experiential learning component, in which school core learning outcomes are addressed), for-credit internships and co-ops (S3.C4: CA Internship Opportunities), study abroad (S3.C5: Study Abroad Program Options Webpage), clinical courses (S3.C4: Nursing Clinical Experiences), fieldwork courses (S3.C4: Social Work Field Learning), upper-level laboratory courses (S3.C4: TAS Lab Course), and Capstone courses (S3.C4: Examples

of Senior Seminars with Capstones). Experiential learning opportunities are present in the Strategic Plan in Goal 1, Objective 1.8, Outcome 1, “increased student participation in experiential learning opportunities.”

### **International**

Ramapo’s broad-based, liberal arts education fosters student engagement with the global community. This involves not only the possibility of participation in one of the many opportunities offered by the College for short- and long-term study abroad but the cultivation of an international perspective through a host of curricular and co-curricular offerings on campus. The Global Awareness GE category, for example, includes 50 courses as of fall 2018, and assessment of the learning outcomes started in fall 2019 (S3.C5: Global Awareness Draft Assessment Plan). In addition to the GE program, students can choose from a range of programs with an international focus (e.g., International Business, Music, and Political Science). An International Business learning outcome, for example, is both international and interdisciplinary, as students will be able to recognize the variety of socio-political and economic environments across countries/regions and will use this to analyze global business operations. This is also evidenced in Strategic Plan Goal 2, Objective 2.1, Outcome 2a, “Students demonstrate self-awareness, respect for others, an understanding of the value of diversity, and can examine societal issues from multiple perspectives” (S3.C4: Sample International).

### **Intercultural**

At Ramapo College, an education that prepares students for citizenship and leadership in a world of increasing diversity and complexity must instill sophisticated intercultural understanding both at home and abroad. For this reason, the College actively seeks to cultivate students’ cultural awareness as well as critical thinking and communication so they may better engage in both self-reflection and ongoing dialogue with “the other.” Intercultural understanding is built into the GE program through several learning outcomes including understanding diverse communities on local, national, and/or global levels, which is shared by First-Year Seminar, Historical Perspectives, and Global Awareness. A number of majors contribute to intercultural understanding including American Studies, Psychology, and Visual Arts. In Psychology, for example, students will demonstrate an understanding of the ways individual differences and sociocultural contexts influence behavior (S3.C4: Intercultural Sample).

As a New Jersey state institution, Ramapo College’s requirements for graduation are aligned with those set forth by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education of the State of New Jersey. Within the guidelines and framework set forth by state regulators, Ramapo College consistently fosters a rigorous and dynamic educational experience for all of its students. As a liberal arts institution, Ramapo aims to guide students through an educational experience that is, at once, broad and deep.

As of AY 2018-2019, Ramapo College offers 39 undergraduate degrees and seven graduate degrees, all of which are registered with the New Jersey Department of Education (S3.C1: Higher Education Program Inventory). Undergraduate programs at Ramapo comprise 128 credits including the GE curriculum and at least one major. Masters’ programs require at least 30 credits. An overview of our GE curriculum will be provided in this Standard. The requirements of our undergraduate majors and minors, as well as our graduate degree programs, may be found in the College Catalog (S3.C3: Ramapo College Catalog 2018-2019). For each of these programs, the Catalog lists the Convener and faculty members, information about the program, goals and expected outcomes, and other related information (S3.C3: College Catalog Major Example). The Catalog includes specific four-year plans for each major so that students are aware of the courses they need to take in order to graduate in four years. The GE program goals and objectives are also included in the College Catalog (S3.C2: GE Catalog).

A clear course structure guides students’ academic careers at Ramapo College (S3.C5 GE Infographic). The Ramapo College experience begins with the First-Year Seminar (FYS) course that is coordinated by a faculty member. Though FYS course sections are designed to represent a wide range of disciplines and interests, they share the explicitly stated common learning goals and outcomes of developing students’ critical thinking skills via robust open discussion, reading, writing, and experiential learning opportunities. In AY 2018-2019, Ramapo College offered approximately 40 FYS sections giving students a wide variety of course themes from which to choose (S3.C1: FYS 2018-2019 Courses).

In addition to their shared instructional goals, all sections of FYS incorporate a required common summer reading that is discussed in class and about which all students write a paper. Moreover, the entire student body as well as faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in the common reading experience. The aim is to establish connections not only between the members of the incoming class but also between them, the selected reading, and the wider academic community of which they are becoming members. A committee of students, faculty, and staff oversee selection of the common reading and

solicits suggestions from the wider community. A summer writing contest invites first-year students to submit essays based on the chosen book. Contest winners are awarded prizes and the opportunity to dine with the author who addresses the campus at the Opening Convocation a college wide event delivered by the Office of the President, for the new academic year (S3.C5: Summer Reading Sample).

### **The General Education Curriculum**

Ramapo College provides an education sufficient in scope to draw students to new intellectual experiences as well as to deliver essential foundational skills. Ramapo College's four GE goals are:

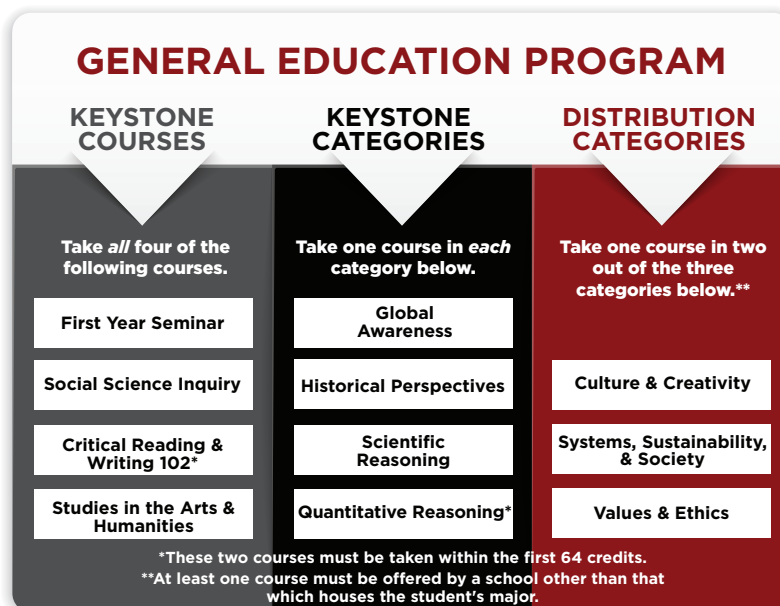
- Explore the world: investigate human cultures and the natural world
- Engage the world: think critically and convey new understanding
- Experience your world: integrate and apply your new learning
- Expand our world: develop compassion and ethical understanding across cultures and become an engaged global citizen

The learning objectives associated with these goals deliver a well-rounded academic experience, expose students to new disciplines, and deliver essential skills (S3.C5: GE Goals and Objectives). Learning objectives are generally shared across different categories (15 out of 16 objectives are shared by two or more categories) yielding multiple learning opportunities for students to acquire and then master the GE objectives (S3.C5: GE Map). In addition, although outside the GE program, the Senior Presentation provides another formal opportunity to develop and assess oral communication skills.

The GE curriculum supports students' development of such skills as oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy. Consistent with the College's Mission, the GE program also includes the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives. A table that illustrates the way in which these skills and perspectives are addressed throughout the GE program may be found in the Evidence Inventory (S3.C5: GE MSCHE Scope and Skills). The process of ensuring alignment of the GE program objectives with major learning outcomes was completed in 2019 (S3.C5: Map to majors Memo; S3.C5: GE Program Alignment Sample). This will allow students to implement what they learn in the GE program throughout their College career until graduation.

Categories in the older, discontinued GE program were College English, Business Perspectives, Social Issues, History, International Issues, Mathematics, Intercultural North America, Readings in the Humanities, Science with Experiential, Topics in Arts and Humanities, and Topics in Social Science (S3.C5: GE Description) (S3.C5: GE Course Layout). In May 2013 the Faculty Assembly (FA) voted to form a General Education Task Force (GETFII) that was charged with developing a new, updated GE curriculum. In their final November 2015 report (S3.C5: GE Task Force Report 11.5.15), GETFII outlined a proposed new GE program that received a favorable vote from the FA the following month. The new program included a reduction in assessed objectives from 27 to 16 (S3.C5: GE Comparison). The General Education Implementation Team (GEIT) oversaw the implementation of the new program, and the new GE program was implemented in fall 2018 once all State requirements regarding transfer students were completed. The GE program is steered by the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECCo), which is comprised of faculty representing each of the schools.

The new GE curriculum consists of eleven possible courses, of which students must take ten, divided into two categories (S3.C5 GE Infographic). "Keystone" categories provide the students with a strong foundation in the GE. "Distribution" categories are designed to build on the knowledge gained in the Keystone courses. With respect to the Keystone categories, the program is structured to ensure that students are exposed to common learning experiences through First-Year Seminar, Critical Reading and Writing, Studies in the Arts and Humanities, and Social Science Inquiry. Students also are required to take courses from a wide variety of disciplines beyond their major through the categories Historical Perspectives, Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Reasoning, and Global Awareness. Students then choose two of the three Distribution categories of Culture and Creativity, Values and Ethics, and Systems, Sustainability and Society, making sure that at least one of the Distribution courses chosen is offered outside their major's school. This further encourages students' learning beyond their primary discipline.



In the Global Awareness category, students are given the opportunity to demonstrate intercultural understanding. In FYS, Historical Perspectives, and Global Awareness, students begin to understand diverse communities on local, national, and global levels and learn how to question assumptions about individual and group identity. Students also analyze the ethical implications of the global distribution of power and resources and learn how to critically interpret history and engage with the products of culture in Historical Perspectives and Social Science Inquiry. These concepts are reinforced in the three Distribution categories.

Students gain basic oral communication skills in the FYS course. This skill continues to be reinforced throughout their time at Ramapo and is used within the students' discipline when they complete their Senior Presentation. Written communication is introduced in Critical Reading and Writing, a prerequisite for Studies in the Arts and Humanities where students further develop these skills. Logic and reasoning is an objective that is shared by three Keystone categories and all three Distribution categories. The infusion of logic and reasoning in various courses was intentional, highlighting the significance of critical thinking across the curriculum. Students also learn how to locate, evaluate, and employ information in FYS, Critical Reading and Writing, and Studies in the Arts and Humanities.

Students learn how to apply mathematical concepts effectively in Quantitative Reasoning and Social Science Inquiry. Scientific methods are introduced in Scientific Reasoning and reinforced in Systems, Sustainability, and Society. Students also learn how to use technology effectively in FYS and Quantitative Reasoning. They use the interdisciplinary knowledge and skills gained through the GE program, along with disciplinary knowledge and skills, to solve complex problems in Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Reasoning, and Studies in the Arts and Humanities. As mandated by the GE Academic Policy, all Ramapo College students must complete the GE requirements in Critical Reading and Writing and Quantitative Reasoning by the time they have earned 64 credit hours.

The GE program also gives students opportunities to practice reflective intrapersonal and interpersonal skills in Critical Reading and Writing as well as in Value and Ethics. In FYS, Social Science Inquiry, and Studies in the Arts and Humanities students participate in at least three engaged experiential activities that are embedded in the GE program so that they will connect what they learn in the classroom to real world settings, thus preparing them for a "lifetime of achievement" (Strategic Plan Goal 1, Objective 1.8, Outcome 1d).

### Writing Intensive Requirement

Ramapo College is dedicated to ensuring that all graduates are confident and competent writers. Every undergraduate student at Ramapo College takes at least five writing intensive courses in order to graduate, two of which are required in the GE curriculum: Critical Reading and Writing and Studies in the Arts and Humanities. The other three courses are taken in the student's major. Writing intensive courses emphasize the process of writing, including prewriting and revision. Writing intensive courses are steered by the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) committee, which is comprised of faculty members from each of the schools (S3.C1: WAC Policies). Student writing progress is also supported by the

Center for Reading and Writing, a fully staffed drop-in and appointment-based center where students can receive one-on-one writing support and attend workshops (S3.C1: CRW Workshop Schedule).

### **Services for Transfer Students**

The point at which the majority of GE curriculum is completed is also the time that many transfer students enter the Ramapo community. Transfer Connection is an organization within the Center for Student Success that is designed to provide helpful and relevant resources for transfer students at Ramapo College. The Transfer Connection Student Coordinator works to create a monthly transfer newsletter that updates students on upcoming events, disseminates important academic information, and gives advice relevant to the transfer population (S3.C4: Transfer Connection Newsletter).

### **Advisement and the Choice of a Major**

Academic advisement is an integral and critically important aspect of the student experience. Through its use of the appreciative advisement model (S3.C1: My Advisees Webpage), the Center for Student Success (CSS) serves as the primary resource for academic advisement and works collaboratively with faculty and staff in offering optimal advising services to students at Ramapo College.

Every first-year student is assigned an advisor in CSS who produces and shares with each advisee a major-specific four-year plan (S3.C1: Four Year Plan Example). After the first year, students who have declared a major are assigned a faculty advisor from their major Convening Group. Those who remain undeclared stay with the CSS advisor until such time as they declare a major, which must occur by the time the student accumulates 64 credits (S3.C1: Policy Declaring Major). Upon declaring a major (and often minor), students are guided by faculty in one of our five schools: Anisfield School of Business (ASB), School of Contemporary Arts (CA), School of Humanities and Global Studies (HGS), School of Social Science and Human Services (SSHS), and School of Theoretical and Applied Science (TAS).

Instructors and advisors use Starfish Retention Solutions' software Connect in order to communicate with CSS and reach students who may need additional academic or emotional support (S3.C1: Connect Resource Center Webpage). Every semester, instructors are asked to complete progress reports on students using the Connect system. Any warnings or flags included in these progress reports are then visible to advisors who are encouraged to speak with their advisees about any identified academic performance-related issues. Early alerts for students affiliated with offices such as the Office of Specialized Services (OSS), Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation, or the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) are simultaneously sent to advisors in these departments as well. The work of these offices will be discussed below.

Students are encouraged to establish an ongoing, collaborative relationship with their advisor (S3.C1: My Advisees Webpage). This is intended not only to help students progress smoothly through their degree requirements but also to help them deepen their appreciation of their field of study and refine their academic and professional goals. As a means of reinforcing the importance of the advisement relationship, students are required to meet with their advisors at key points in their academic careers in order to be able to register for classes (S3.C1: Advisement by Year: First; S3.C1: Advisement by Year: Second; S3.C1: Advisement by Year: Junior).

### **Learning Opportunities and Resources in Support of Student Success**

Multiple learning opportunities and resources, spanning both Academic Affairs and the Center for Student Success, are made available to students. In addition, to meet the evolving needs of the student population and address assessment feedback, the College continually reorganizes, updates, and reevaluates academic and support services including the Center for Reading and Writing and the Mathematics and Science Tutoring Center.

#### **The George T. Potter Library**

Since December 2015, the George T. Potter Library has increased its outreach to the campus with a new Reference, Instruction, and Outreach Librarian position (S3.C2: Outreach Librarian Position). This has helped the Library increase its visibility by making connections with campus offices and committees, student organizations, faculty, and staff to promote and share information about the Library and its resources and services.

The Library maintains a collection of course reserve materials to support faculty members' course-specific instructional requirements, as well as a subsidiary collection of permanent reserve items such as valuable books and DVDs, extremely oversized or undersized books that do not fit in the library stacks, and unique format items (e.g., pop-up books, books with multiple pieces, etc.). The Library participates in the VALE Reciprocal Program, comprised of 51 VALE member colleges and universities. Ramapo faculty, staff, and students who are in good standing qualify

for onsite borrowing privileges at these colleges and universities by presenting a signed “VALE Reciprocal Borrowing Application Form” from Ramapo’s George T. Potter Library.

As part of a redesign in fall 2017, the Library website was built using responsive design to better accommodate various devices and updated to reflect current web design standards. Librarians assist students and faculty with their research and informational needs through our “Ask a Librarian” service. Patrons who have research-related questions may chat online with Ramapo librarians, as well as text, call, email, and visit the Research Help Desk. In February 2018, the Library implemented a proactive chat invitation, in which a customized chat box appears on the Library’s webpages asking if patrons need help. This has resulted in a 135 percent increase in the number of chats held.

The Integrated Library System (ILS) is a major component of the Library’s infrastructure. ILS is the source of patron, circulation, and library collection data. Based on Library staff consultations, recommendations from other libraries, meetings with vendors, and budget considerations, the College transitioned in 2015 from the LibLime Academic Koha ILS to an open source version of Koha supported by Bywater Systems.

### **Honors Program**

The Ramapo College Honors Program is a community of faculty and students dedicated to intellectual, creative, and moral engagement. Students admitted to the Honors Program benefit from dedicated first-year housing, use of the Honors Lounge with computer and printer access, priority registration, as well as special conferences and field trips. Completion of the Honors Program requires six targeted courses, a project related to the student’s major, and co-curricular civic engagement (S3.C4: College Honors Program Brochure; S3.C4: College Honors Program Annual Report 2017-2018).

### **First-Year Learning Communities**

First-Year Learning Communities (FLC) is a signature program at Ramapo College and reflects the College’s desire to foster students’ engagement with the campus and deepen their academic and personal interests and learning. Students who opt to participate in the FLC are part of an academic and residential community along with other students who have similar academic, cultural, and social interests. Participating in a program designed to enhance and enrich learning experiences and community engagement in the first year, FLC students develop ongoing and lasting relationships with classmates, faculty, and professional staff. Peer facilitators work with students individually to help them make connections between the theme and experience of their FLC and the content of their common first-year courses (S3.C5: First Year Learning Communities). The FLC program has gone through multiple iterations since it was first launched, always striving for improvement based on faculty and student feedback as well as assessment results. For example, to address some logistical issues that were discovered, the program was modified in recent years to better accommodate students’ scheduling needs by creating affiliated courses rather than directly linked courses (S3.C5: FLC Report).

### **Labs for Student Learning**

Ramapo College has a number of labs to support student learning. The Topken World Languages Lab is one physical example that demonstrates Ramapo College’s continued commitment to the international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, and experiential dimensions of the Mission and that enables Ramapo students to explore languages and cultures from around the globe in a state-of-the-art facility and enhances the College’s World Language Program. The Lab is the regularly scheduled classroom for many of the existing language classes and is the location of weekly tutoring sessions, which are available to students enrolled in language classes as well as anyone in the College community who has a desire to engage with world languages. Individuals may use the Lab for independent language learning during tutoring hours, and co-curricular activities such as conversation hours are hosted in the Lab (S3.C4: Topken World Languages Lab).

The recently renovated G-Wing houses faculty-student research labs for molecular biology, bioinformatics, cell biology, surface chemistry, analytical chemistry, environmental science, Palestro Neurodevelopmental Lab, Behavioral Neuroscience Lab, Cognitive Development Lab, virtual reality, optics, cold temperature physics, and nanotechnology (S3.C4: Faculty Student Research Labs). Additional computers and software in the Computer Science and Bioinformatics labs located in the Anisfield School of Business are updated regularly. Furthermore, a fully computerized four-bed nursing simulation lab, which is appropriately located in the Adler Center for Nursing Excellence, has a main control room and conference rooms.

Additional labs that support and enhance student learning include the Mathematics and Science Tutoring Lab, the Photography Lab, and the state-of-the-art Music Studio, which was supported with SPIF (S3.C4: CA Capital Request).

### **Faculty-Student Research**

In the spirit of experiential learning, one of the hallmarks of Ramapo's Mission, the College encourages undergraduate students to conduct research that furthers intellectual curiosity, promotes independent and collaborative work, enhances critical and creative thinking, and develops expertise in a particular field of study. Indeed, 44 percent of freshmen responding to the NSSE survey indicated that they are currently working (4 percent) (S3.C4: NSSE 2018 Survey Page 11) or plan to work (40 percent) with a faculty member on a research project. At the senior level, 24 percent indicated that they had worked or are in the process of working with faculty on a research project while another 10 percent still plan to work with faculty on a research project (S3.C4: NSSE 2018 Survey Page 29; S3.C4: Faculty Student Research). These responses are close to their national peers. Students who work closely with faculty on research projects benefit from strong mentorship and from the opportunities that will emerge as they push their intellectual boundaries. FSSE data points focused on undergraduate research are employed and tracked in Dashboard 2021.

Each year, the prestigious Faculty-Student Research Awards are given to a team of students or up to two individual students in each of the academic schools who have conducted exemplary research in close collaboration with faculty mentors and made a significant contribution to the project. Students considered for the awards have presented or exhibited the research at an outside conference or submitted it for publication. In addition, the Office of the Provost provides each selected student with a special award. A few examples of Award-winning Faculty-Student Research projects may be found here (S3.C5: Examples of Faculty Student Research).

### **Ramapo Journal of Law and Society**

The Ramapo Journal of Law and Society is an interdisciplinary, online journal devoted to the publication of undergraduate scholarship in Law and Society (S3.C5: Ramapo Journal of Law and Society). The Journal is published by an editorial board of faculty and students representing the College's undergraduate program in Law and Society in collaboration with colleagues at other institutions nationwide. The Journal's mission is to provide a platform for undergraduate students from across disciplines to engage with socio-legal issues in the context of the liberal arts.

### ***Trillium***

*Trillium* is Ramapo College's Literary Magazine (S3.C5: *Trillium*). Since the early 1970s, *Trillium* has featured poetry, fiction, photography, and other visual arts works of Ramapo College Students. While *Trillium* is edited by students enrolled in LITR 202 Magazine Workshop, its content comes from students pursuing all majors from across the College. The magazine is published every spring and is available year-round free-of-charge.

### **Certificate in Spanish for Healthcare Professionals Department of Education Grant**

In 2018, the Spanish language faculty received a \$154,794 Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support the Certificate in Spanish for Health Care and Human Services Professionals. The award supports four new courses including study abroad, two annual symposia, experiential learning, and a certificate program. This interdisciplinary, international program relies on many parts of the campus working together (e.g., three academic schools, the Roukema Center for International Education, and Grants). The first symposium was well-received based on data analyzed by an external evaluator (S3.C5: Spanish Certificate Grant).

### **International, Intercultural and Experiential Learning Beyond the Classroom**

In line with Ramapo's commitment to international, intercultural, and experiential learning, a number of important programs are offered to foster students' engagement with and increase their understanding of the global context. These initiatives are intended to help students prepare for and make an effective transition to the world beyond the classroom as they pursue their academic, professional, and personal goals.

### **Schomburg Grant Program**

In 1987, the Minority Faculty and Staff Association of Ramapo College, in concert with the administration, developed a distinguished visiting minority scholars' program, named the Schomburg Grant Program after the Puerto Rican historian, writer, and activist Arturo Schomburg. The Schomburg Grant Program was originally designed to impact students' learning experiences by providing exposure to a greater minority presence in the Ramapo community and



enriched offerings related to interculturalism/multiculturalism. To date, it continues to provide Ramapo College students with the opportunity to interact with scholars, activists, authors, and artists from diverse backgrounds who have expertise in intercultural/multicultural education (S3.C5: Schomburg Awards).

### **International Programs and Partnerships - The Roukema Center for International Education**

Ramapo College offers a robust portfolio of international experience opportunities, including study abroad, research abroad, internships abroad, global field experiences, and more. Through intentional strategies, there has been a sizeable increase in programs and partnerships. Indicators #24, #25, and #26 in Dashboard 2021 rely in part on FSSE data to track international engagement among students, faculty, and the curriculum. In addition, there has been a significant increase in graduate-level courses now taught overseas (S3.C5: Study Abroad Data). The Roukema Center for International Education has worked to identify and thoroughly vet international program options for every academic program offered at Ramapo College (S3.C5: Study Abroad Options). In addition, the Center has worked to develop individual webpages for each academic program to highlight these worldwide opportunities (S3.C5: Study Abroad Program Options Webpage). Finally, the Center has begun to work with some academic programs to create course equivalency maps with partner international institutions (S3.C5: Study Abroad Communication Arts; S3.C5: Study Abroad Literature). This will allow interested students to be directed to programs that have been thoroughly reviewed and approved by the faculty of their major.

### **Cooperative Education**

Cooperative education experiences (co-ops) create educational partnerships linking Ramapo College faculty and students with appropriate employers in order to combine classroom learning with practical work experience. These experiential opportunities, tracked in Dashboard 2021 under indicator #11, allow students to earn academic credit and often a salary as well. Ramapo College students are matched with local, state, and national employers. They are assigned to a variety of special projects and given duties that blend academic requirements with company goals. Students may earn up to eight academic credits from Cooperative Education courses throughout their academic career at Ramapo College (S3.C5: Cooperative Education Process and Sample Employers).

### **The Pathways Program**

Designed to begin in students' first year of college, the Pathways Program helps students develop a rich understanding of the career development process by exploring their interests and strengths, résumé writing, and professional interview preparation. Further information on the Pathways Program will be presented in Standard IV.

## **Concern for the Whole Student**

In an effort to develop the whole student, Ramapo offers a variety of additional services intended to support student learning and each individual's integration into the campus. Some of these services include the following:

### **Center for Student Success**

The Center for Student Success (CSS) provides a comprehensive introduction to the academic and social environment of the Ramapo College community with a focus on the success and retention of all students. CSS provides a wide range of services including new student orientation for first-year students, transfers, re-admits, adult learners, and families, as well as academic advisement and retention programs. CSS serves as the primary resource on academic advisement for all Ramapo students and works collaboratively with faculty and staff to offer optimal student support services (S3.C4: First Year Student Orientation Schedule; S3.C4: Student Transfer Schedule; S3.C4: Family Orientation Schedule; S3.C4: Family Transfer Orientation Schedule).

### **Office of Specialized Services**

Recognizing the diversity of learners, Ramapo College features an Office of Specialized Services (OSS) to facilitate equal access and to offer optional academic support for approximately 500 differently-abled students with documented physical, sensory, learning, and/or psychological disabilities (S3.C4: OSS Webpage).

### **Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF)**

The Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Program at Ramapo College provides access to higher education and support for highly motivated students who exhibit the potential for success but come from families/communities disadvantaged by low income and lack of access to the quality educational preparation necessary to attend college. The EOF program provides such students full-time admission to the College and necessary support to maintain their continued enrollment through graduation. EOF-based support includes grants and scholarships which minimize

the financial burden of college attendance, as well as services designed to foster academic success and scholarship, promote social responsibility, and cultivate for students the connection between their education and the world of work and graduate study (S3.C4: Educational Opportunity Fund Webpage).

### **Testing Center**

The Testing Center seeks to provide high-quality testing services for Ramapo College students. The Center administers tests in a comfortable, technologically-advanced environment with the goal of promoting satisfaction and achievement in reaching academic goals. The Center follows the National College Testing Association (NCTA) Professional Standards and Guidelines for post-secondary testing centers and offers placement essays, math tests, world languages tests (STAMP), and the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) (S3.C4: Language Testing Data).

### **The Design, Delivery, and Assessment of Courses and Programs**

In line with *Requirements of Affiliation 8, 9, 10, and 15*, design, delivery, and assessment of courses and programs at Ramapo is accomplished through a multi-tiered internal review process that engages key stakeholders from across the College. Proposals for new courses and programs, as well as revision of existing ones, begin at the faculty member and Convening Group levels and are driven by the learning needs of students and the particular requirements of each academic discipline. Comprised of a representative from each school, ARC is a standing committee of the Faculty Assembly (FA) and has oversight responsibility for all undergraduate and graduate programs as well as the GE program at the College (S3.C1: ARC Course Manual). As will be discussed further below, a number of programs (e.g., Business, Social Work, Nursing) are also subject to review by external accrediting bodies, the requirements of which are followed without exception. A first step in the development of new academic programs is a feasibility study that is reviewed and approved by the Provost. New program proposals are reviewed by ARC and then by the FA. Additionally, ARC is charged with reviewing academic policies and making policy-related recommendations to the FA.

Through its weekly meetings, ARC has established guidelines and criteria to ensure that every course at the College meets a common standard of excellence and ensures a rigorous, quality-learning experience for each enrolled student. For example, ARC has developed guidelines specifying the anticipated rigor and the general nature expected for each course level (e.g., 100-level, 500-level, etc.), and all courses reviewed by ARC are scrutinized according to these standards (S3.C1: ARC Course Manual). For courses designated as writing intensive, the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Committee has developed guidelines regarding the expectations of these courses (S3.C5: WAC Guidelines). To achieve appropriate levels of rigor and effectiveness in the classroom, the FRC (S3.C2: Faculty Resource Center Webpage) and the IDC (S3.C2: Instructional Design Center Webpage) offer workshops on current pedagogy. Finally, the extensive work done to assess student outcomes is a testament to the high standard of learning the College achieves and towards which it continually strives. All of these mechanisms collectively ensure that students receive an excellent quality learning experience that is consistent no matter the academic program or course.

### **Program Review**

In line with *Requirements of Affiliation 8, 9, 10, and 15*, and in accordance with Goal 1, Objective 3.1, and Outcome 3b (“A systematic approach is used to review and, when appropriate, re-envision academic programs and modes of delivery”), in fall 2018 the College adopted a new program review process featuring a self-study and external review (S3.C8: Program Review Changes). From 2010 to 2018, each academic program completed an annual, though smaller scale, internal review that included examining program-specific data (e.g., enrollment, student credit hours per full-time employee) provided by the Office of Institutional Research and faculty and staff evaluation of program performance in various areas (S3 C2: Sample Old Program Review).

Based on an assessment of the briefer annual internal review reports and the conclusion that these were not sufficient to facilitate programmatic assessment and development, in fall 2018 the Provost announced a new plan for academic program review at Ramapo College (S3.C2: Program Self-Study). The new academic program review process, designed to encourage thorough and honest analysis of a program’s curriculum in relation to its goals and those of the College, is tracked via indicator #36 in Dashboard 2021. This new plan calls for a deep review of each program every five years, including a self-study, a review by an external panel summarized in a report, and a discussion of the overall findings between the program and the administration. While the previous program review invited groups to reflect on yearly assessment results, the new program review encourages a multi-year, holistic analysis of assessment results (S3.C2: Program Self-Study Page 11). It also allows groups to receive valuable assessment-related feedback from external reviewers with demonstrated expertise in their discipline. The five-year program assessment cycle schedule, with

approximately one-fifth of programs assessed each year (S3.C2: Program Review Schedule), allows for fuller and more meaningful assessment of programmatic curricula and efficacy with time for new initiatives to generate assessable outcomes and data. These in-depth reviews will produce a balanced assessment of Ramapo College's educational effectiveness, planning procedures, resource allocation, and areas of need in a format that can contribute to the accreditation process.

The new academic program review process has already influenced College planning. English and Literary Studies (formerly Literature), while completing the first five-year review, identified a need for a faculty line in African-American Literature (S3.C2: Literature Program Review), and the external review team agreed (S3.C2: Literature External Review; S3.C2: English and Literature Studies Name Change). In spring 2019, the Provost announced a search for a tenure-track position in African-American Literature (S3.C2: Faculty Searches 2019-2020). The recent fall 2019 review of the Political Science program initiated conversations regarding structure and curriculum that will be resolved by closing the loop through a plan of action in Spring 2020 and subsequent assessments.

Ramapo College is committed to delivering a quality learning experience in every course regardless of mode of delivery: in-person, online, or hybrid. In 2017, the administration charged a Task Force for Online and Hybrid Learning to evaluate the experience of students in these different course modalities (S3.C1: Task Force for Online Learning Report). Based on this evaluation, the Task Force made recommendations that led to the development of a resource document identifying best practices for online education. In addition, the Task Force Report was used to guide the IDC's offerings outlined on their webpage that include an online course manual, teaching and training resources, best practices, and articles on online teaching pedagogy (S3.C1: Instructional Design Center Teaching Online Webpage). A comprehensive review of Ramapo's online and hybrid courses will be undertaken in AY 2019-2020.

### **Assessment of Student Learning Programs**

In line with *Requirements of Affiliation 8, 9, and 10*, the College evaluates its academic and other programs with respect to student learning both inside and outside the classroom. Efforts to assess student learning in academic courses are described in detail in Standard V. This includes the assessment of majors and minors, as well as the GE program. In keeping with the College's view of shared governance and commitment to a collaborative approach to the curriculum, the development of the current GE program was driven by the systematic use of assessment data and evolved as a product of faculty investment and leadership. Efforts to assess co-curricular learning opportunities and support programs are detailed in Standard IV. Examples of the use of data to inform a wide variety of programmatic decisions are highlighted throughout Standards III and V (S3.C8: OSS; S3.C8: EOF; S3.C8: IDC; S3.C8: Transfer Student Success; S3.C8: International Education; S3.C8: Pathways; S3.C8: Career Center).

### **Graduate and Certificate Programs**

Ramapo College offers graduate programs that respond to the needs of today's professionals, allowing students to engage in a collaborative setting with dedicated faculty in curricula that truly blend theory and practice (S3.C6: Graduate Program Descriptions). The College's graduate programs are accredited by national and international professional associations, which provides evidence of the quality of graduate academic offerings. A full list of these may be found in the Verification of Compliance document. All accredited programs at Ramapo College remain in good standing.

The graduate programs at Ramapo College offer a number of opportunities for students to conduct research with faculty as well as participate in other scholarship experiences such as conference presentations (e.g., the annual conference of the New Jersey Council for Exceptional Children). For example, the Master of Arts in Special Education (MASE) offers graduate students multiple opportunities to participate in research and scholarship. All MASE students must complete a Capstone thesis course, and some Capstone course projects include student research (S3.C6: Conference Presentations).

Master of Arts in Education Leadership (MAEL) students are required to examine school-based research methods and related strategies that support the educational leader as researcher and change agent. Students gain deep understanding and competence in the application of the action research process to drive school curricular and instructional improvement. Students formulate research proposals that include a detailed problem statement, targeted questions, literature review, recommended research methodologies, and recommendations for curriculum design, development, and renewal. Ultimately, students present white papers that describe their studies and offer findings, analysis, and recommendations (S3.C6: EDLD 604 Syllabus; S3.C6: Action Research Project Rubric; S3.C6: EDLD 604 Sample Data Sheet; S3.C6: EDLD 606 Sample Work Product). In addition, Ramapo's graduate programs have developed numerous international

experiences to further strengthen their curricula and students' global understanding and engagement with their respective disciplines (S3.C6: Graduate Programs and Study Abroad).

## **The Ramapo College Faculty**

### **Faculty Credentials and Qualifications**

In line with *Requirement of Affiliation 15*, the College has assembled a faculty that, as Standard III states, is “rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment, scholarly inquiry, and service for the design, delivery, and assessment of student learning experiences.” The Ramapo College Faculty Handbook outlines hiring and employment procedures and policies to ensure that high standards of faculty excellence are maintained (S3.C2: Faculty Handbook Section 2). For full-time positions, after administrative approval is granted to fill a position, a national search is initiated. The hiring manager, in most cases the school Dean, forms a search committee that is charged with developing a job description. Once approved, the open position is advertised through whichever outlets are deemed most appropriate for the given field. The search committee reviews all applications received, conducts phone interviews, and invites finalist candidates to campus. This campus visit commonly consists of meetings with the search committee, staff, faculty, and administration, as well as the hiring manager. Beyond these steps, candidates are asked to briefly demonstrate their teaching and present their research. Portions of the campus visit are open to the public. Following all on-campus visits, the search committee provides a final report and makes recommendations concerning the hire. Finally, the hiring manager makes and negotiates the offer and notifies Human Resources/Employee Relations to finalize the process, which ultimately requires Presidential and Board of Trustees approval.

According to data from the 2018 Fact Book, 82.9 percent of Ramapo College full-time faculty hold a doctorate, and the remaining 17.1 percent hold the requisite degrees in their field (S3.C2: Fact Book 2018 Page 162); S3.C2: Minimum Degree Requirements; S3.C2: Faculty Credential Policy). When applicable, external accrediting bodies also review the credentials of faculty members in the related academic programs.

As a reflection of Ramapo's commitment to high quality teaching and faculty development, all new full-time faculty are given a course release in their first semester to ensure they are able to adjust to the culture and professional expectations of the College. This course release allows new faculty time to invest in extensive course preparation and to participate in a semester-long orientation program through the FRC designed to introduce faculty to the workings of the College and the available supports for their teaching.

Faculty members are reappointed through a rigorous process of review by colleagues, students, and administrators. The reappointment process requires faculty members to demonstrate their effectiveness in the areas of teaching (40 percent), scholarship (30 percent), and service to the College and community (30 percent). New full-time faculty are appointed for an initial two-year period, after which time reappointment reviews are conducted on an annual basis through the sixth year when they may apply for tenure. If granted, tenure is effective as of the beginning of the seventh year. In recognition of superior performance, faculty members who hold the entry-level rank of Assistant Professor are able to apply for promotion to the rank of Associate Professor and, later, Full Professor (S3.C2: Faculty Handbook Section 8).

Ramapo College has small class sizes (average of 21) with an overall student-faculty ratio of 16:1. Detailed statistics on student-faculty ratios, as well as full-time versus adjunct faculty, can be found in the Evidence Inventory (S3.C2: Fast Fact Spring 2019) (S3.C2: Courses Taught by Full vs Part Time Faculty). In addition, externally-accredited programs often require specific student-faculty ratios. As demonstrated by the evidence for the Verification of Compliance document, Ramapo College is in compliance with the following organizations that accredit programs at the College: the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (S3.C2: CSWE BSW Accreditation Confirmation; S3.C2: CSWE MSW Accreditation Confirmation; S3.C2: CSWE Accreditation Standards), the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (S3.C2: AACSB Standards), the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) (S3.C2: ACEN Accreditation Standards) (S3.C2: ACEN Nursing Accreditation Confirmation), and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) (S3.C2: CAEP Standards) (S3.C2: TEAC Accreditation Confirmation).

### **A Commitment to Rigorous and Effective Teaching**

Ramapo College's commitment to rigorous and effective teaching is shown not only in the comprehensive methods of evaluating teaching described below but also in the productive relationships between faculty and students. As outlined in the Faculty Handbook, Ramapo College faculty are evaluated on their teaching using a multifaceted approach that includes student evaluations, peer and Dean class observations, and a self-evaluation by the faculty member that identifies their teaching aspirations and reflects on the feedback received from students, peers, and leadership on their progress

toward those aspirations (S3.C2: Faculty Handbook Section 5.1). Teaching is formally evaluated each academic year during the reappointment and tenure processes and throughout a faculty member's career through faculty development and opportunities for promotion. As an institution, Ramapo College demonstrates the importance it places on teaching and the enthusiasm with which it supports the development of this craft through the numerous opportunities it offers faculty to improve their teaching effectiveness. Such opportunities include programs conducted by the FRC and the IDC. The utility of both Centers is tracked under indicator #46 of Dashboard 2021.

### **Professional Growth and Innovation**

Ramapo College is dedicated to the professional growth of its faculty in order to ensure the highest quality learning experience and to stimulate advancement in innovation, one of the elements of the Strategic Plan. There are a number of different on-campus opportunities for professional development of the faculty. Among these are:

#### **Faculty Resource Center**

The FRC offers faculty many opportunities each semester for professional growth and innovation, particularly in their capacity as teachers (S3.C2: Previous FRC Sessions). Programs include workshops scheduled throughout the semester, discussion groups that meet every other week, and online resources such as an entire library of webinars. FRC programs are very well attended (e.g., 68 percent and 77 percent of pre-tenured faculty attended an FRC event in AY 2016-2017 and AY 2017-2018, respectively). Though faculty of all ranks and levels of experience participate in FRC programs, pre-tenured faculty may benefit most from the offerings in that, as educators in the early stages of their career, they are often still developing their teaching styles. According to a fall 2018 satisfaction survey, faculty at Ramapo report being highly satisfied with the FRC (i.e., 82.5 percent satisfied with the FRC overall, and 81.4 percent satisfied with the variety of programs offered).

In addition to a one-day new faculty orientation held annually in August to which all new faculty (tenure-track, temporary, and adjunct) are invited, the FRC facilitates a semester-long program for first-semester tenure-track faculty who are given a course release for their participation. This semester-long, weekly orientation program introduces faculty to key College personnel and the work of important offices on campus, as well as the important work of assessment (S3.C2: Fall 2018 New Faculty Orientation). In addition, new faculty participate in two teaching circles in their first semester. One of these is always focused on course design (S3.C2: FRC Teaching Circles 2018-2019). Adjunct instructors and full-time non-tenure track faculty, who do not get course release, are also encouraged to attend any programs of interest.

Faculty feedback on FRC programming solicited at the end of the semester (S3.C2: Fall 2015 New Faculty Orientation Summary) is used in planning orientation for the following year and has resulted in adjustments to format, the schedule of presenters, and the timing of information delivered. Recent faculty feedback indicated that, while they felt a growing sense of connection to Ramapo as a result of their fall orientation, this feeling diminished as they fell into the more ordinary routines of faculty life. In response to this opinion, the Director of the FRC has instituted a mentoring program that pairs each new faculty member with a more senior faculty mentor beginning in the spring semester of their first year as an ongoing means of support. As the mentoring setup is a new initiative, feedback will be solicited regarding new faculty members' and mentors' experience. All of these support opportunities are intended to help new faculty acclimate well, be productive as scholars and community members, and deliver the best possible learning experience for Ramapo's students.

#### **Instructional Design Center**

The mission of the IDC is to guide and support faculty and staff to integrate relevant technology designed to improve teaching and learning and to enhance professional development. Along with one-on-one support facilitated by two full-time professional IDC staff, faculty are able to attend workshops dedicated to best practices in educational technology (S3.C2: IDC Workshop Schedule) and intended to bridge the gap between technology and pedagogy (S3.C2: Instructional Technologies; S3.C8: IDC Example). The IDC computer lab is available for faculty use and has both Windows and Macintosh computers, as well as a variety of specialized hardware and software for scanning and printing. The professional staff, a faculty director, and skilled student aides are available to assist users who either drop in or schedule appointments for consultation or training.

Most recently, the IDC has enhanced its offerings dedicated to online and hybrid course delivery. The "Teaching Online" section of the IDC website features resources, best practices, research, and more (S3.C2: IDC Teaching Online Webpage). The IDC is helping faculty to develop online and hybrid courses with learning outcomes that are identical to on-campus

sections but that have been adapted for online delivery platforms. The IDC also offers at least one workshop every semester dedicated to best practices for online and hybrid courses.

Every semester the FRC and the IDC collaborate to host Faculty Development Day (FDD). FDD is scheduled on a day free of all other meetings so that faculty members can fully participate. The FRC sessions are dedicated to topics related to pedagogy and scholarly development. The IDC sessions are devoted to new technologies and resources for increasing student engagement and academic advancement (S3.C2: Faculty Development Day Schedule).

### **Digital Humanities**

The School of Humanities and Global Studies (HGS) launched Advancing Digital Humanities at Ramapo College to revitalize humanities majors by integrating digital humanities skills throughout the humanities curriculum. HGS received two external grants, from Bringing Theory to Practice and from the Booth Ferris Foundation, to deliver faculty development workshops over the course of AY 2019-2020. These are multi-institution grants, awarded to both Ramapo College and Seton Hall University. The Teaching and Learning with Technology Roundtable (TLTR) and the Ramapo College Foundation also supported faculty development workshops in this area in June 2019 (S3.C2: DH Grant and Examples).

### **Faculty Award and Recognition Programs**

There are several opportunities to recognize faculty for their achievements and to promote further professional development, which include conference travel allocations and grants to spur technology in the classroom.

- **The Fred and Florence Thomases Faculty Award** is given annually to one or two members of the faculty who demonstrate significant and ongoing contributions to the development of the College. Such contributions include teaching, scholarship, service to committees, and outstanding fulfillment of professional responsibility (S3.C2: Thomases' Award Winners).
- **The Henry Bischoff Excellence in Teaching Award**, created to honor deceased Ramapo colleague and historian Henry Bischoff when he retired in 1997, is given to a faculty member whose work as a teacher embodies the best of Ramapo's teaching culture. Nominations are made by a faculty member on behalf of a colleague (S3.C2: Bischoff Award Winners).

### **Faculty Funding Opportunities**

A number of funding sources are available to faculty to support their professional development in teaching and scholarship (S3.C2: List of Grants/Funds for Faculty Professional Development; S3.C2: Ramapo Foundation Grants; S3.C2: TLTR Grants; S3.C2: Platinum Award Assessment Form; S3.C2: List of Global Grant Awardees).

### **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

Based on this process of assessment and self-reflection of Ramapo College's fulfillment of Standard III, the following opportunities for improvement and innovation have been generated:

1. Continue implementation and ongoing assessment of the new GE program.
2. Although ARC reviews each online and hybrid course for rigor and to ensure credit hour policy is satisfied, a more comprehensive system of auditing online courses should be developed to ensure that online and hybrid courses mirror on-ground courses in their requirements and content.

# REAFFIRMING

*Our Promise*

## STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

### STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

#### Ramapo College Meets the Requirements of Standard IV

A full description and illustration of the ways in which Ramapo College meets the six criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard IV, as well as *Requirements of Affiliation 8 and 10*, are presented here. Criterion 6, pertaining to the periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience, will be addressed throughout the Standard. Similarly, in line with *Requirement of Affiliation 8*, Ramapo makes available to the public information regarding the evaluation of its academic and other programs and its continuous efforts to accomplish the goals of the institution (S4.C6: Fact Book 2018; S4.C6: Dashboard 2021). Ramapo College does not use third party providers; therefore, criterion 5 does not apply.

This chapter presents a variety of examples pertaining to how Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation and Center for Student Involvement (CSI) co-curricular activities are woven throughout the offerings of the College. These examples illustrate the complete integration of these Departments within the College and EMSA. These Departments follow the same EMSA assessment and budgeting process as any Department or Unit in the Division (S4.C4: EMSA Org Chart 2018 2019).

#### The Goals of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs: An Overview

From 2010-2014, the Divisions of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs reported separately to the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs. In 2015, an institutional reorganization and restructuring, prompted by the previous Middle States Self Study process, merged the two Divisions into the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) reporting to the then newly created position of Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (VP EMSA) (S4.C1: EMSA Org Chart 2018 2019). At the time of the merger, the Division engaged in a reflective, goal-setting exercise aimed at creating an overall vision statement, a “how we work” document, and a set of Division-wide goals to guide the programs, policies, procedures, and objectives of EMSA.

#### EMSA’s Five Goals:

1. **Campus Climate:** Facilitate a safe, supportive, inclusive, and healthy living and learning environment for students.
2. **Student Engagement:** Offer services and implement programs that provide students with the opportunity to be active academically, socially, personally, and civically engaged members of the community.
3. **Diversity:** Design strategies and implement activities to increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation of under-represented students.
4. **Technology:** Innovatively utilize technology to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness.
5. **Brand:** Promote the Ramapo brand to raise awareness, support strategic goals, and enhance the overall student experience.

In 2017, the EMSA Division furthered their work on a common divisional vision and advanced a set of student learning objectives to guide the delivery of the student experience overseen by EMSA. Each of the student learning objectives is tied directly to one or more of the five divisional goals.

#### Student Learning Objectives for the Student Experience as Delivered by EMSA:

- Students apply curricular and/or co-curricular knowledge and skills to real-world settings. (Goal Connection: Student Engagement)
- Students reflect upon their interactions with individuals from other backgrounds to deepen understanding of diversity and inclusivity. (Goal Connection: Diversity)

- Students interact meaningfully and establish faculty, staff, and peer mentors. (Goal connection: Student Engagement)
- Students demonstrate a strong connection to the Ramapo campus. (Goal connection: Student Engagement)
- Students demonstrate leadership skills. (Goal connection: Student Engagement)
- Students actively engage as responsible citizens of the Ramapo campus. (Goal connection: Campus Climate)
- Students engage in local, national, and global issues. (Goal Connection: Student Engagement and Diversity)
- Students demonstrate self-care, self-management, and wellness skills. (Goal Connection: Campus Climate)

Beginning in fall 2018, each Unit within EMSA identified at least one high-impact, high-priority, or high-cost program it offers that the Unit believes contributes significantly to student learning and that identifies student learning as a primary function. Units were asked to complete a template that included student learning objectives, objectives for the Unit delivering the initiative, a target measure, and a determination of whether the measure was direct or indirect (S4.C6: EMSA SLO Template). The result of the activity was an EMSA SLO mapping document (S4.C6: EMSA SLO Matrix).

In spring 2019, EMSA dedicated one of its divisional leadership meetings to reviewing the assessment plans and results for each EMSA initiative. The focus of that meeting was on the interpretation of the findings, closing the loop, and planning for next year’s programming. Reassessment will occur in spring 2020. Given that AY 2018-2019 was the first year of EMSA’s SLO assessment model, SLOs will be reviewed at the end of AY 2019-2020 to determine if they are appropriate, measurable, and aligned with divisional goals.

### **A Focus on Engagement, Empowerment and Success**

Ultimately, the 17 Units within EMSA work collaboratively to achieve the EMSA vision of fostering an environment for highly engaged, inclusive, and individualized experiences that provide students with opportunities to be empowered for academic achievement, to connect to the campus, to practice responsible citizenship, and to graduate prepared for success in their future endeavors (S4.C1: EMSA SA Webpage). The unique advantage and distinction of the EMSA Division is its intentional focus on ensuring alignment between the institutional promises that are made through marketing and admissions and the delivery of that experience through programs aimed to engage, retain, and ultimately graduate Ramapo students. The alignment between the promise and experience is assessed annually in our first-semester survey in which more than 90 percent of first-year students reported that the College has, early in their career, delivered on its promises (S4.C1: Material Accurately Portrayed the Campus).

EMSA collaborates regularly and intentionally with the highly dedicated faculty and staff in Academic Affairs to design, implement, and assess support programs for students based on national models and best practices. Collectively, EMSA partners with Academic Affairs to advance the institutional purpose and strategic goal of student success. At Ramapo College, student success is defined across four dimensions: access, engagement, completion, and employment (S4.C1: Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Goal 1). The five EMSA divisional goals are woven throughout the four dimensions of student success.

### **Dimension 1: Access**

Since 2010, the College’s enrollment plan has shifted modestly to maintain academic preparedness while placing increasing priority on diversity, the enrollment of non-traditional populations (adult and graduate students), and student success outcomes (mainly retention and graduation) (S4.C1: SEM Plan 2019- 2021). The 2010 Middle States Commission on Higher Education report also suggested that Ramapo “Consider whether using a more holistic approach in the evaluation of students for admission and scholarships will promote the College’s diversity.”

#### **a. Undergraduate Enrollment - New Students**

To enroll its classes, the Office of Admissions applies a holistic approach in the evaluation of students for admission and scholarships. This holistic review consists of a comprehensive evaluation of academic performance including the high school institution, course selection and rigor of courses, earned grades and overall grade point average, performance on standardized tests (SAT and/or ACT), extra-curricular activities, letters of recommendation, and the required essay. Each application is reviewed by at least two staff members before a decision is rendered. A summary of the criteria and processes is outlined on the Office of Admissions website (S4.C1: Admissions Requirement Webpage).

As Ramapo applications continues to grow (S4.C1: Application Admission and Enrollment Figures) of further note is the increasing diversity of them. In fall 2014, students of color made up 30 percent of the applicant pool. In fall 2018, this number increased to 52 percent. Additionally, in fall 2014, 27 percent of accepted students were students of color. In fall



2018, this number rose to 44 percent. Lastly, in 2014, 28 percent of deposited students were students of color, compared with 38 percent in fall 2018. All three areas have shown significant improvement over a four-year period and demonstrate that the College's efforts in recruitment and marketing are achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the College's strategic plan.

Aggressive use of existing housing capacity has enabled the College to compete more effectively in both domestic out-of-state and international student markets. Out-of-state and international students receive an Out-of-State Housing Grant applied to their room charge to help mitigate the financial difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition and benefit from the out-of-state tuition freeze initiative launched in 2018. Ultimately, the College has exceeded its enrollment target of 1,000 first-year students by enrolling a record 1037 students for fall 2019, a 15 percent increase over 2010's first-year enrollment of 900 (S4.C1: Fact Book 2017; S4.C1: New Students Enrolled at Ramapo College; S4.C1: Welcomes Largest-Ever Incoming Class Press Release).

## **b. Transfer Enrollment**

A strategic priority has been to increase the enrollment of transfer students, particularly from partner and feeder county colleges. The College has identified the Northern New Jersey area as a key partnership building area. Beginning in AY 2016-2017 and with seed funding from the iPASS grant referenced above, Enrollment Management, Student Success, and Admissions launched the Transfer Advising Corps (TAC) program. TAC is a program in which Ramapo staff in the Offices of Admissions and Student Success are identified as on-site advisors at partner county colleges, spending at least one day per week on the county college campus. Each TAC advisor is responsible for building the Ramapo brand on the campus, meeting with prospective students to provide early advisement for a more seamless transfer, and connecting county college and Ramapo faculty to create detailed articulation agreements in high-demand majors. In return, the county college provides the TAC advisor designated space, permission to communicate with their students, and support for the promotion of Ramapo College.

After successive years of decline in applications and enrollment from key partner institutions, in AY 2018-2019 Ramapo College increased applications and enrollment from these partners, suggesting the TAC initiative has been a success. In fall 2018, Ramapo formalized partnerships with Bergen Community College, County College of Morris, Sussex County Community College, and Warren County Community College. Aggregate applications and deposits from these four schools with a Ramapo advisor on-campus provided further evidence of success in that Ramapo was up 11 percent in applications from these partners and up 26 percent in deposits from accepted students. This contributed to our overall 12 percent increase in transfer enrollment compared to the previous fall.

Throughout AY 2018-2019, partnerships were also established with Rockland County Community College, Hudson County Community College, Raritan Valley Community College, and Passaic County Community College. An existing staff member in EMSA spends one day per week on the partner campus building brand, formalizing articulation agreements between academic programs, and exploring opportunities for future partnerships (S4.C2: Transfer Agreements Undergraduate; S4.C2: Press Release Ramapo College Enters into Transfer Partnership with Hudson Community College).

Ramapo College has publicly disclosed policies (S4.C2: Transfer Applicants Transfer Policies - Catalog 2018-2019) and procedures (S4.C2: Transferring Academic Credit Procedure) to allow for credits earned outside the College to be applied to its degree programs. While the Office of Admissions reviews transfer student applications and transcripts, course equivalencies are established statewide by NJTransfer.org and internally, as necessary, by the Transfer Advisor in coordination with faculty (S4.C2: Transfer Webpage).

The Office of Financial Aid provides detailed information regarding undergraduate and graduate tuition, expenses, and financial assistance on the Financial Aid & Tuition website (S4.C1 Financial Aid & Tuition - Admissions & Aid). Costs associated with attending the College are prominently displayed for undergraduate (in-state and out-of-state rates) and graduate programs. The Office of Financial Aid reviews all Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) applications filed by accepted students and awards federal and state aid in the form of grants and loans based on eligibility and need (S4.C1: Verification Policies and Procedures Manual 2018-2019 (draft).doc). The College website has a net price calculator to estimate the cost of attendance, as well as a consumer information page (S4.C1: Consumer Information Webpage) that contains links to further details regarding expenses, financial aid, and loans. Financial aid resources, calendars, and video tutorials are available to help students navigate options. Every student who accepts federal student loans is required to complete a master promissory note and a loan entrance counseling session that explains his/her rights

and responsibilities in regards to taking out federal student loans. All students who graduate or withdraw from Ramapo College are directed to complete the exit counseling session online in order to understand their rights and responsibilities regarding repayment of federal student loans. The success of this program and institutional commitment is evidenced by a lower than national average cohort loan default rate (S4.C6: Cohort Default Rate).

### **c. Non-Traditional Students and Graduate Enrollment**

Launched in 2012, the Accelerated Degree Completion Program (DCP) (S4.C1: Adult Students Degree) allows those who are working, raising children, or changing professional pursuits to complete an accelerated Bachelor's degree program in Social Science (SSHS) or Communication Arts: Professional Communication (CA) in as little as two years through a combination of online and classroom study (S4.C1: DCP Accelerated Social Science Major Curriculum; S4.C1: DCP Accelerated Contemporary Art Major Curriculum). Two eight-week sessions are offered in the fall, spring, and summer terms. The Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) allows students to earn college credit for learning gained through work and volunteer activities (S4.C2: PLA Application). Enrollment in DCP has grown from 66 in 2014 to 101 in 2018 (S4.C1: Enrollment in Nontraditional Programs Chart).

The 2014 -2018 Strategic Plan identified enrollment in graduate programs as a key institutional priority and set a target of 8 percent of total Ramapo student enrollment by fall 2018 (S4.C1: Strategic Plan 2014-2018 Page 8). To that end, EMSA worked closely with Academic Affairs to launch graduate programs that aligned with key criteria established by the President's Cabinet. Specifically, the program must build on an existing undergraduate strength, respond to a societal/demographic need, must not detract from the undergraduate program, and be net revenue positive in three years.

From 2013 to 2017, the College launched one new graduate program per year resulting in significant growth in graduate student enrollment. With the addition of the Master of Arts in Special Education, the Master of Social Work, the Master of Science in Accounting, and two new tracks in the Master of Science in Nursing (Family Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Administrator), the College met its established targets in fall 2018 (S4.C1: Graduate Student Enrollment Chart).

## **Dimension 2: Engagement**

The College seeks to increase students' academic, social, civic, and personal engagement through enhanced curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programming by EMSA and Academic Affairs.

### **a. Academic Engagement**

Academic engagement is measured through the academic performance of student members of particular clubs, organizations, or programs, as well as through partnerships between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Each semester GPA reports are produced for students affiliated with the Office of Specialized Services, Greek Life, and Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation to determine if high levels of mentorship and engagement yield increased academic engagement and performance in the classroom (S4.C1: Athletic GPA to College GPA 2016-2019; S4.C1: Fraternity and Sorority Life Grade Report).

One noteworthy example of fostering academic engagement is the Platinum Fund, a joint effort of Academic Affairs (where faculty create activities and programs for students that enhance the classroom curriculum) and Student Affairs (where financial and assessment responsibilities are housed). The Center for Student Involvement (CSI) provides Student Activities Revenue Management (SARM) funding to faculty to develop and implement co-curricular activities connected to their courses in order to connect theory to practice and provide opportunities for enhanced experiential learning. Faculty members are invited to submit applications that are reviewed and approved by their school Dean. Under current criteria, funding requires that proposals be initiated by a faculty member, have a direct link to measurable student learning outcomes or support activities intended to further student learning, and identify at least one learning outcomes assessment measure (S4.C6: CA Application Form; S4.C6: Assessment CA 1; S4.C6: Assessment CA 2; S4.C6: Assessment HGS; S4.C6: Assessment SSHS 1 ; S4.C6: Assessment TAS; S4.C6: Assessment CA 3; S4.C6: Assessment SSHS 2; S4.C6: Assessment CA 4; S4.C6: Assessment ASB 1; S4.C6: Assessment ASB 2).

### **b. Social Engagement**

EMSA regularly creates opportunities for students to meet and interact with each other outside of class through more than 160 on-campus clubs and organizations (S4.C1: Club List). Students also benefit from a myriad of other sponsored programs such as Residence Life community building events, wellness activities sponsored by the Wellness Coalition (S4.C1: Wellness Coalition Events 2018-2019), and athletic events designed to build school spirit and pride.

Much of the significant work of the College in recent years has focused on the social responsibility of students to prevent

sexual assault, be aware of and educated about alcohol issues, and take active roles as bystanders and Good Samaritans. In 2014, the College contracted D. Stafford and Associates to assess its procedures relevant to sexual assault prevention, alcohol awareness and education, and bystander intervention. A resulting comprehensive report helped shape the development of Ramapo: Advance as well as subsequent planning documents to inform programming aimed at improving the campus climate (S4.C1: Stafford Final Report Phase Two 5.27.2015). Units from across EMSA partnered to respond to the findings of the report and adopt best practices. A progress report of efforts made across the Division and the College is posted on the College's website (S4.C1: Standing Together to Advance Campus Safety 8.22.17).

Two examples of successful efforts are as follows:

1. SCREAM™ Theater is a sexual assault and bystander intervention training that is mandatory and conducted for all first-year students during welcome week. The effectiveness of SCREAM™ Theater is assessed via the first-semester survey. The student learning for SCREAM™ Theater was assessed and showed stable results between 2016 (97.7 percent) and 2017 (97.6 percent) for students who either strongly agree or agree that they are able to “step up” as a bystander after seeing SCREAM™ Theater (S4.C6: First Semester Survey SCREAM™).
2. Zero Shades of Grey is another sexual assault, bystander intervention, and affirmative consent training that is mandatory for first-year students. The effectiveness of Zero Shades of Grey is assessed via the first-semester survey. The student learning for Zero Shades of Grey was assessed and showed stable results between 2016 (97.6 percent) and 2017 (97.1 percent) for students who strongly agree or agree that they are able to tell a friend the definition of affirmative consent (S4.C6: First Semester Survey Zero Shades of Grey). The Center for Student Success shares the first-semester survey results with the staff from the Office of Violence Prevention on an annual basis so that, if necessary, the staff can revise the presentations to have a more meaningful impact on students.

Finally, through a partnership between the Center for Health & Counseling, Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation, and Social Work, the College secured an NCAA CHOICES Alcohol Education Grant. The overall goal of the NCAA CHOICES program is to implement and evaluate alcohol-related education and prevent programs and to increase collaboration between campus athletic departments and other campus organizations involved in alcohol education and awareness initiatives. NCAA CHOICES projects must partner Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation with other campus Units in the development and implementation of effective campus-wide alcohol education programming. Student athletes and Greek students, along with other student groups, were involved in each of the eight After Dark events. Survey data from AY 2017-2018 demonstrate that 94 percent of students self-reported not consuming alcohol before an After Dark event, and 95 percent had no intention to use alcohol after the event (S4.C6: NCAA Year 2 Annual Report). The College's 2019 Clery Report documents declining on-campus liquor law violations and disciplinary actions/referrals following program implementation (S4.C6: Clery Report 2019 pages 42-44).

Additional examples of Ramapo's efforts to inculcate and reinforce a sense of social responsibility among students may be found in the Evidence Inventory (S4.C1: Additional Efforts to Reduce Violence).

### c. Civic Engagement

The Civic and Community Engagement Center (CCEC) sponsors programs in leadership development and provides opportunities for students to identify their leadership paths. Evaluations of these programs receive very positive student feedback (S4.C6: CCEC Evaluations of Leadership Programs). Specific programs to highlight include:

- **Leaders in Service (LIS)** allows students to become involved in civic and community engagement, get involved at Ramapo College, become familiar with the democratic process, and make a commitment to service. Participation has exceeded the target of 40 students per year with 44 students participating in AY 2017-2018.
- **Sophomores Advancing in Leadership (SAIL)** is a structured co-curricular leadership development certificate program. Sophomore students attend monthly seminars, participate in community events, and give back through community service. Participants completing the program are recognized at an end-of-year leadership reception and receive a SAIL certificate and honor cord that may be worn at commencement. Target participation is 30 to 35 students per year with actual participation exceeding the target every year since AY 2016-2017. At the completion of the program, students must create and upload videos to explain leadership in their own terms (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fm2Kit1C-ZA>).

CECC also sponsors “alternative breaks” during which participating students spend winter break or spring break week abroad or in the United States engaging in community service focused on social issues such as poverty, education

reform, or conservation. In addition to community service, students learn about the culture, customs, and socio-economic conditions of the locale. These activities support Strategic Plan Objective 1.10: To increase students' academic, personal, social, and civic engagement through enhanced curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programming; Objective 3.2: the College will strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships with alumni, parents, friends, business, professional organizations, as well as community and government agencies; and 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 (S4.C1: StrategicPlan 2018-2021).

Over the past three years, CCEC has begun sponsoring alternative breaks with specialized populations including fraternity and sorority students, commuter students, Student Government Association students, Honors Program students, and Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) students. In AY 2018-1019, alternative break trips occurred as follows:

- Winter Break - India - nine students attended Ramapo's first trip to India
- Spring Break - Nepal - fifteen students attended Ramapo's first trip to Nepal
- Spring Break - Ghana - seven students attended the Ghana Student Leader trip
- Spring Break - Costa Rica - nine students attended the Costa Rica trip
- Spring Break - New Orleans - six students attended the New Orleans trip

Further, as the College identified diversity as a strategic priority in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, the Center for Student Involvement reorganized its allocation of resources in order to support and demonstrate a shift in institutional priorities at the student programming level. In fall 2013, SARM funding dedicated to equity and diversity programming was not available. In fall 2017, however, almost 7 percent of the SARM budget supported equity and diversity programming.

#### **d. Personal Engagement Counseling**

The Center for Health & Counseling Services (CHCS) provides free medical treatment and basic mental health counseling to students. The Mission of the Center for Health & Counseling Services is to support the educational mission of Ramapo through the provision of health and psychological services (S4.C6: Counseling Satisfaction Survey Spring 2018). Through healthcare and psychological counseling, students are empowered to make healthy lifestyle choices that promote overall health and psychological well-being. Two new programs to support students have recently been implemented at Ramapo. Enhance, a support program for students on the Autism Spectrum that goes beyond the requirements of current disability law, focuses on social, emotional, and organizational growth in order to help participants adapt and flourish in college and beyond (S4.C1: ENHANCE Webpage). The Roadrunner Collegiate Recovery Program (RCRP) provides recovery housing and a support program for students who are in recovery from substance use disorders. The RCRP seeks to help students have an authentic college experience while maintaining their recovery by offering a supportive environment and peer group along with opportunities for personal and professional growth and development (S4.C1: Recovery Program Webpage).

There has been an increase in demand for mental health services at institutions of higher education across the country. National data between fall 2009 and spring 2015 demonstrate that counseling center utilization increased by an average of 30-40 percent while enrollment increased only by five percent (Center for Collegiate Mental Health 2018 Annual Report). At Ramapo, the number of students seeking treatment increased by 17 percent from AY 2016-2017 to AY 2017-2018. Comparing fall 2007 and fall 2017, the Center saw a 91 percent increase in Ramapo students seeking therapy services (S4.C6: CS Presentation to EMSA).

In order to address the wait list that resulted from this increased demand, in fall 2018 Counseling Services implemented a stepped-care model affording students options including group therapy, online therapy (Therapy Assistance Online TAO) both with and without counselor check-ins, self-enrolled self-help (SESH), and referrals to outside community providers. Through assessment, it became clear that a small number of students followed through with group therapy, and a limited number of students engaged in the online therapy program. Moreover, students expressed dissatisfaction at not being able to speak directly to a counselor about their concerns. These students reported that going through the modules in TAO felt like attending another class, and they just wanted to talk face-to-face with a counselor. Based on this feedback, TAO was discontinued as a standalone treatment option but has been utilized adjunctively with individual counseling. Students can continue to utilize the self-help component on their own without having to be clients of the Center. This allows for a larger number of students to receive support (S4.C6: CS Presentation to EMSA).

Through anecdotal reports, CHCS staff became aware that some students from traditionally underrepresented and

marginalized groups were expressing that they experienced barriers to accessing CHCS services. In response, and as a first step, CHCS interviewed faculty and staff regarding potential service barriers. These interviews lead CHCS to conduct focus groups with students. A faculty member facilitated the focus groups and completed a report of findings (S4.C6: CHSC Diversity Plan Focus Group Report). Using the information from the report, the CHSC Diversity Plan, which included a variety of initiatives and actions to foster inclusiveness (S4.C6: CHSC Diversity Plan), was developed. One of the outcomes resulting from this process was the creation of a position for a Multicultural Specialist Counselor (S4.C1: Multicultural Specialist Job Description). This position was filled in December 2018.

### **Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation**

Ramapo College Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation strives to maintain a highly competitive and viable athletic program consistent with the overall mission of the College. Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation provides ongoing support for nearly 400 student athletes called “Roadrunners” participating in 20 intercollegiate sports.

In 2015, Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation underwent both a structural and leadership change. A new Director was hired and the Department was reorganized from reporting to the Provost and Academic Affairs to currently reporting directly to the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

Within the first year of its inclusion in EMSA, Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation was charged with developing a five-year strategic plan to guide its work in advancing the philosophy of Division III Athletics that focuses on the success of students both academically and athletically (S4.C4: Athletics Strategic Plan 2017-2022). An initial plan was developed that centered on four overarching goals for the Unit that aligned with the overall EMSA division goals: academic and student success, student health and wellness, competitiveness and recruitment, and marketing, branding, and facility development. With regard to academic and student success, a target was set for the athletic GPA to remain above 3.0 every semester and above the College average GPA. That target has been reached seven out of the eight last semesters (S4.C6: Student-Athlete Academic Success - GPA).

Further, emphasis and priority was placed on full athletic adoption of the Connect Early Alert System with a commitment to closing the loop on flags raised on student athletes. To that end, Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation has improved from a 29.3 percent closing-the-loop rate in 2015 to now leading the College with a rate exceeding 90 percent every semester, including most semesters at 100 percent (S4.C6: Student-Athlete Academic Success - Connect).

In support of student health and wellness, Ramapo became the first institution in New Jersey to implement randomized drug testing. To this end, a substance abuse education and testing policy was developed and implemented by Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation as well as a separate Student Athlete Handbook to accompany and elevate expectations for student athletes (S4.C4: 2019-2020 Substance Abuse Education and Testing Policy) (S4.C4: Student-Athlete Handbook 2019-2020). Further, in partnership with the Center for Health and Counseling Services as well as the Social Work faculty, Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation received an NCAA Alcohol Education CHOICES Grant from 2016-2019. The NCAA Alcohol Education CHOICES Grant Program provides funding for NCAA member institutions and conferences to integrate athletics departments into campus-wide efforts to reduce alcohol abuse. Lastly, in support of student health and wellness as well as institutional diversity efforts, Ramapo was awarded an NCAA Division III Ethnic Minority and Women’s Internship Grant for 2016-2018 based on NCAA recognizing the need for institutions to increase opportunities for gender and ethnic minorities in intercollegiate athletics. An Assistant to the Athletic Director/Sports Performance Coordinator position was created which coordinated the drug testing program as well as established performance and conditioning programs for each of the College’s varsity teams.

In 2018, the Director of Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation and VPEMSA retained an outside consultant to complete a Title IX audit of Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation to develop a set of recommendations to guide the Unit moving forward. That report was submitted in March 2019 (S4.C4: Title IX and Athletic Gender Equity Review Summary), and an implementation plan is in the development stage by Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation.

In support of the goal to increase competition and recruitment, Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation utilized SPIF funding to purchase Frontrush to move the recruitment of student athletes to an electronic platform. As of 2019, 100 percent of coaches now use Frontrush for recruitment. The commitment to competitiveness and accountability has resulted in the College making 26 Division III NCAA Tournament appearances since 2015 and the achievement of Ramapo’s highest Learfield Cup Ranking in history (S4.C6: Learfield Directors’ Cup).

Ramapo College has a Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), which serves as the voice of the student athletes. The Committee assists in recommending policies and procedures for the operation of the intercollegiate athletics program and consists of one to two student athlete representatives from each athletic team. In addition, the SAAC promotes community service, builds a sense of community among all of the athletic teams, and promotes a positive student athlete image (S4.C4: SAAC Mission).

### **Dimension 3: Retention and Completion**

Ramapo's strategic enrollment management (SEM) philosophy is exemplified by the College's commitment not only to increasing access but to retaining and graduating the students the College enrolls. Ramapo provides an integrated and intentional student-centered experience that guides students to advance from initial deposit through graduation, ultimately delivering on the promise of individualized attention made during the recruitment process (S4.C1: Student Success's Web of Connection).

**Placement, Testing, and Preparation** – Ramapo College uses multiple methods to determine the appropriate placement of new students into foundational courses for reading, writing, and mathematics. These methods can include SAT scores, ACT scores, Accuplacer placement test scores, prior academic work, and the curriculum requirements of a student's major (S4.C1: Math Course Sequence Flow Chart; S4.C1: Writing Course Sequence Flow Chart).

**Reclaim My Math** – The Center for Student Success has offered Reclaim My Math (RMM) (S4.C1: Reclaim My Math), a voluntary, non-credit review course originally implemented in AY 2012-2013. RMM provides incoming students placed into developmental mathematics an opportunity to advance their placement through a hybrid-format course, which may lead to successful re-testing in mathematics. Eligible incoming students learn about RMM at the conclusion of the mathematics placement testing session through academic advisement and through orientation presentations. Additionally, information about RMM is shared with the Office of Specialized Services and the Adult Degree Completion Program. RMM has proven to be a path to success for many students. In AY 2017-2018, 21 of 37 students who began RMM placed into higher level math when retested, and 90 percent of these students successfully completed their math course (S4.C6: RMM Fall 2017 Executive Summary Review).

**Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF)** – Ramapo College seeks in-state students to participate in its state-funded EOF program, which is now also receiving support from a \$1 million endowment secured by the Ramapo College Foundation. Participants are financially challenged students who are academically capable and motivated, but who do not fulfill all criteria for general admission. The program provides such students with the support needed to maintain continued enrollment and continued success through graduation, including additional funding via the EOF State grant to minimize the financial burden of pursuing a post-secondary education. EOF students receive support services such as counseling, tutoring, and developmental coursework and participate in a summer bridge program prior to their first year (S4.C6: Educational Opportunity Fund Program). Students in the EOF program participate in activities and events designed to foster academic success and social responsibility with the assistance of a Student Development Specialist (S4.C6: EOF Annual Report Narrative AY 2016-2017; S4.C6: Four, Five, and Six-Year Graduation Rates and 7th Year Continuation Rate of EOF Students). These programs have demonstrated successful outcomes including first-to-second-year retention rates increasing from 79 percent in 2011 to 88 percent in 2017 and first-to-third-year retention rates increasing from 71 percent in 2011 to 75 percent in 2016 (S4.C6: First and Second Year Retention Chart).

**The Center for Student Success (CSS)** – CSS, through collaboration with numerous Ramapo units, provides a comprehensive introduction to the academic and social environment of the Ramapo College community with a focus on the success and retention of all students. CSS provides a wide range of services including new student orientation for first-year students/transfers/readmits/adult learners and families, Welcome Week programming, Family Day, academic advisement, and retention programs. All new first-year and transfer students are required to attend a new student orientation. Each year, CSS hosts nine first-year, one-day orientations and six transfer, one-day orientations (S4.C1: Student Schedule - FY; S4.C1: Student Schedule - TR; S4.C1: Family Schedule - FY). In addition, CSS delivers more customized orientations for adult students, readmit students, and others. CSS administers a survey at the end of each orientation, shares those results at an annual EMSA meeting, and uses the information to make changes to its program for the coming year (S4.C6: 2018 Orientation Executive Summary).

CSS serves as the primary resource for academic advisement for all community members and works collaboratively with faculty and staff to advance a vision that includes mandatory advisement during key touch points in a student's career. A hand-off model helps students transition from CSS professional staff advisors in their first year to faculty advisors in their

second year and beyond. Mandatory advisement is enforced by registration holds, and weekly reports are reviewed by appropriate administrators during registration windows.

Since fall 2006, the Banner CAPP Degree Audit software has been the staple for tracking degree/curricular change and students' progress towards degree completion (S4.C1: Academic Advisement Plan 2019). However, through funding made available by the iPASS2 grant, the College had an opportunity to evaluate CAPP and consider the advisement and degree planning needs of today's student. A committee of faculty and staff, guided by the results of a survey administered to identify academic planning needs, was charged with evaluating and selecting a new degree advisement tool. In AY 2017-2018, a new degree audit system, College Source's uAchieve Degree Evaluation/Planning Tool, was selected because of its ability to easily track a student's progress toward degree completion and its semester enrollment planning feature. A phased implementation plan, approved by Deans' Council, was implemented on campus to complete the transition to uAchieve (S4.C1: uAchieve Faculty Training; S4.C1: uAchieve Faculty Information and Training).

Arguably one of the most significant student success initiatives since 2012 has been the College's use of technology to facilitate student success. Identifying a need for early alert software, a task force comprised of faculty and staff sought and selected Starfish Retention Solutions' case management and early alert systems, referred to on campus as Connect. The implementation of this system allowed the College to eliminate surveys distributed by individual departments (OSS, EOF, and Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation), while increasing the percentage of students who received mid-term alerts. Data reported by students in the first-semester survey show that they are not only motivated by receiving feedback from faculty through Connect, but inasmuch as Connect offers faculty the ability to refer students to tutoring, advisement, and other institutional support services (S4.C6: Connect Master Slides), it also encourages students to take specific actions. The use of Connect has expanded across the campus and annual reports enable the College to determine participation rates and resolution of academic early alerts. Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation currently leads the College in closing the loop with a rate of 97 percent (S4.C6: Connect Story).

A further point of pride and an example of collaboration between Academic Affairs and EMSA has been the creation of the position of Faculty Fellow for Enrollment Data Analytics. Ramapo has leveraged faculty expertise to work with Enrollment Management to incorporate predictive modeling into advisement and student success efforts. The Faculty Fellow has worked closely with the Vice President of EMSA to develop and utilize a predictive model, built on student demographic data, to develop estimation of retention scores for all first-year students. These are shared with CSS, where student outreach is organized with a focus on students whose scores identify them as at-risk (S4.C1: Predictive Model Executive Summary).

To encourage and cultivate a culture of advisement at Ramapo College, the Academic Advisement Council continues to promote the Advisee/Advisor Role and Responsibilities and the Definition of Academic Advisement at Ramapo College to all faculty/staff advisors. Faculty are meeting or exceeding targets, releasing student holds at a rate of 88-93 percent (S4.C1: Academic Advisement Plan 2019; S4.C6: Holds Released by School).

Transfer students make up approximately 35- 40 percent of the student population at Ramapo College of New Jersey. They are a diverse group of students with a wide variety of experiences, needs, and interests (S4.C1: Transfer Student Initiatives Executive Summary). The transfer population is increasingly important to the College (Strategic Planning Goal 1 Objective 1.3: To increase the number of students transferring from partner institutions) (S4.C1: Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Objective 1.3; S4.C1: Fact Book 2018 Page 20). Transfer students are also part of Ramapo's focus on achieving the goals set with the iPASS grant (S4.C6: IPASS Progress 2018). Since fall 2012, CSS has taken significant steps to add to programming designed to increase the engagement and retention of transfer students. This involved creating tailored welcome and initial advisement activities to facilitate a smooth transition for transfer students into the Ramapo community and increase their engagement with campus life, the assignment of a faculty advisor for declared transfer students, and the use of registration holds to stimulate participation in Ramapo's academic advisement process. As noted earlier, Transfer Advisors have been located at partner county colleges. In addition, a chapter of *Tau Sigma*, the National Honor Society for Transfer Students, has been established at Ramapo. Further detail about these initiatives may be found in the Transfer Student Initiatives Executive Summary (S4.C1: Transfer Student Initiatives Executive Summary; S4.C1: Transfer Student Success Story).

Peer facilitators, serving as upper-class mentors, work with First-Year Experience (FYE) faculty to forge bonds with and among students in their classes. Each peer facilitator is assigned to a specific FYE class. Through their presence and weekly class facilitation they help new students feel comfortable and provide them with tools to help them excel

at Ramapo. Through exercises in self-reflection, team building, trust, and acceptance, peers pass on their knowledge to facilitate the transition to college life, enhance the first-year experience, and immerse students in the college community. The program provides new students with direction, a sense of what to expect during their first few months, and a network of support that extends beyond the classroom (S4.C1: Sample Curriculum). Consistently over the past four years, Ramapo first-year students rate their peer facilitators at 94 percent or higher in terms of their ability to help students adapt to college life, affording easy accessibility, helping to learn about campus resources, covering appropriate topics, and enabling students to be comfortable asking advice (S4.C6: Master Slides Final Peer Facilitators).

The Office of Specialized Services (OSS) carries out a variety of activities that promote the recruitment and retention of students with disabilities and ensure differently-abled students have equal, effective, and meaningful access to programs, resources, and services (S4.C6: OSS Example). OSS uses services and accommodations to promote self-determination, academic advancement, and personal growth. OSS administers a federal TRIO Student Support Services grant that provides funding for additional tutoring, academic counseling, and career advising for students with disabilities.

OSS learning outcomes are linked to Strategic Planning Goal 2, Objective 2.2: To close the achievement gap by increasing retention and graduation rates of students by student type and race/ethnicity (S4.C1: Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Objective 2.2). Six-year graduation rates, good academic standing, and fall-to-fall persistence of TRIO Support Services for students have exceeded set targets for the last three years. Satisfaction with adaptive testing services provided to meet the needs of students with disabilities surpassed the target the last three years, and satisfaction with disability accommodations provided for students have exceeded targets the last two years (S4.C6: OSS Outcomes Table).

#### **Dimension 4: Employment**

The Cahill Career Development Center consists of a central office that serves four schools (Contemporary Arts, Humanities and Global Studies, Social Science and Human Services, and Theoretical and Applied Science) and a satellite office in the Anisfield School of Business. The Career Center provides a range of services, programs, and advisement to help students explore career interests, understand the value of their education in relation to work, and take appropriate and effective action to achieve short- and long-term career goals. An outside review of the Cahill Center in 2016 informed the development of a new strategic plan and a reorganization of the Unit that included the creation of a position for an Assistant Director of Employer Engagement, the use of a more established technological solution for career management, and a stronger emphasis on metrics (S4.C6: Trumann Report Executive Summary; S4.C6: Trumann Timeline). Student resources include the Handshake career management system to connect students to a wide range of internship and employment opportunities (S4.C6: Handshake Student Engagement Totals; S4.C1: Handshake Employer Insights 2019; S4.C6: Employer Interactions 2019), a variety of assessments, recruiting events and informational sessions to assist students with major selection and researching of career options, on-demand résumé and interview assistance via sessions with career advisors, the VMock Smart Resume Platform (S4.C1: VMock Dashboard), and InterviewStream (S4.C1: InterviewStream).

The Cahill Center provides administrative support services to students working on campus through the Student Assistant Program as well as to those seeking internships and co-operative education. The Student Assistant Program employed 991 students in spring 2018 and piloted an on-campus internship program in FY 2019 in 11 offices across campus. The Co-operative Education Program has enrolled more than 300 students annually in the past three years, with Contemporary Arts students making up the majority of participants completing co-ops for their majors (S4.C6: FY18 Initial Data for Cahill).

The Center is introduced to students through First-Year Seminar outreach and is embedded in the student experience through the Pathways Program. The Pathways Program is designed to help students develop a rich understanding of the career development process, foster self-awareness and promote experiential learning to become better prepared to navigate the labor market before entering the workforce. The Pathways Program assists students through web-based career assessments, hands-on activities, and direct interaction with a career advisor, and also includes self-reflection and career assessment; communication of attributes, skills, and experiences through résumés, cover letters or LinkedIn profiles; and interview practice to prepare students to speak about their goals, education, skills, work interests, and values with industry professionals or graduate school admissions (S4.C6: Career Center Pathways Program).

Three of the five schools at Ramapo have the Pathways Program as a graduation requirement, with the Anisfield School of Business implementing the program in fall 2015, Social Science and Human Services in fall 2016, and Theoretical and Applied Science in fall 2018. Since Pathways' inception, 97 percent of participants have successfully completed



the program (S4.C1: ASB Unit Council Cahill). A proposal is currently in development to make Pathways a graduation requirement for the School of Contemporary Arts beginning in AY 2020-2021. Monthly reports are provided to schools so they can monitor student completion rates. (S4.C6: Career Courses and Pathway Assessment Final; S4.C6: February 2019 Pathways Status Report).

The College maintains a success-stories website (S4.C1: Success Stories Webpage) that captures the experiences of alumni who speak to the value of the Ramapo experience and a Ramapo degree. These stories are used in the recruitment process to set the expectation for what that experience will look like for incoming students. Ultimately, the success of students informs the conversation around return on investment in a Ramapo education, a key proposition for enrollment and recruitment.

As a state college, Ramapo is affordable compared to many other institutions of higher education, particularly given its private-like attributes (small classes, scenic campus, modern residence halls). Ramapo College is ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* among the “Best Regional Universities North” (S4.C1: US News Best Colleges). While many schools discuss price, Ramapo proudly reframes the conversation around value. Ramapo College is the smallest state school in New Jersey with less than 6,000 undergraduates, a 16:1 student-to-faculty ratio, and an average class size of 21 (S4.C1: About Ramapo College Webpage). Incoming students have several opportunities for mentorship beginning in the first semester and First-Year Seminar and extending throughout the four-year (or two-year for transfer students) experience in mandatory academic advisement, undergraduate faculty-student research, and co-op/internship and other experiential learning opportunities that build on Ramapo’s core value of mentoring. As a result of that high level of engagement with faculty and staff, Ramapo College boasts graduation and retention rates that exceed national and state averages. Further, our students are prepared for a lifetime of success upon graduation as evidenced by alumni success stories (S4.C1: Success Stories Webpage) and data showing job placement and graduate school enrollment. The institutional value as a public college, coupled with the administration’s commitment to affordability, has resulted in Ramapo having the lowest average tuition increase over the last five years while our default loan rate remains well below the national average (S4.C6: Cohort Default Rate).

### **Student Records**

Ramapo College recognizes the importance of maintaining the privacy of student educational records as dictated under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). To protect the rights of students regarding these records, the College has established policies and guidelines that describe the records maintained, provisions for releasing information, provisions for student inspection and review of records, and provisions for changes in records when warranted. These policies are supervised by the Office of the Registrar (S4.C3: FERPA Policy).

With the student’s written consent, any confidential information on file may be disclosed to any individual or agency named by the student. Disclosure to others at the student’s request will not be made if any payments due the College by the student are outstanding.

Students may grant permission for members of the Ramapo staff and faculty to discuss the information contained in their educational records. Such permission must be given in writing using Ramapo’s FERPA Waiver Form (S4.C3: FERPA Waiver).

In order for new users to gain access to the Banner system that contains student records, they must review and sign the “Statement of Confidentiality.” The Statement lays out the expectation for proper confidentiality of College information and explicitly describes what Ramapo defines as unauthorized access (S4.C3: Confidentiality Statement).

### **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

Based on this process of assessment and reflection on Ramapo College’s fulfillment of Standard IV, the following opportunity for improvement and innovation has been generated:

1. In coordination with Standard VI, continue to support the professional development of administrators regarding administrative assessment processes and practices incorporating a balance of direct and indirect assessment measures. Also utilize assessment forums to discuss and share administrative assessment outcomes, making sure that they are used for continuous improvement. Further the development and adoption of an effective overall assessment structure for the College.

## STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

### Ramapo College Meets the Requirements of Standard V

A full description and illustration of the ways in which Ramapo College meets the five criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard V, as well as *Requirements of Affiliation 8 through 10*, are presented here. *Requirements of Affiliation 8 through 10* will be addressed throughout the Standard. In line with *Requirement of Affiliation 8*, programs in all five schools at the College are regularly and systematically assessed. Results of program assessment are shared with internal constituents as needed. All externally accredited programs publish the results of their program assessments on the College website. Ramapo College does not use third-party providers; therefore, criterion 4 does not apply.

This Standard begins with a description of the College's institutional learning goals as represented by the GE program and program learning goals and demonstrates that these goals are interrelated as well as connected to the Mission of the College. Next, the Standard details the institutional structures for assessment and proceeds with examples of assessment of student learning outcomes at the program- and college-wide levels, including the GE curriculum. Evidence of clearly articulated statements of student learning outcomes across all programs and a systematic process of assessment data collection, analysis, and utilization will be presented.

### Educational Goals Linked Across Program Levels

Ramapo College has clearly stated educational goals at the institutional (S5.C1: GE Goals, S5.C1: GE Catalog), program (S5.C1: Sample Program Outcomes), and course levels. Academic program outcomes are linked to appropriate aspects of the College's Mission (S5.C1: Mission Maps) and institutional learning outcomes (S5.C1: GE Program Map Sample). Program outcomes are, in turn, linked to appropriate courses (S5.C1: Program Maps). Course syllabi, in accordance with the ARC Manual, include mappings or other indications of the relationship between program outcomes, course outcomes, and course assignments. A sample of GE and non-GE syllabi are available in the evidence inventory (S5.C1: Syllabus Sample).

### Assessment Structures and Processes at Ramapo College: An Overview

The College uses an interlocking committee structure to support and sustain the assessment of student learning as well as structures, policies, and procedures that prioritize faculty participation and engagement. There are approximately 50 faculty members serving on assessment committees at the All-College or Unit level including the College-Wide Academic Assessment Committee (CWAAC), School Assessment Committees (SACs), and the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECCo) (S5.C2: Assessment Committees).

Academic programs create their own learning goals and outcomes with assistance from the SACs, the Vice Provost, the Director of Assessment, and ARC (for new programs or courses) to ensure ownership of organically developed assessment activity. This includes providing group discretion over certain decisions, such as whether to have a progressive curriculum map (e.g., IPM: Introduce, Practice, Master) or check-offs to link program outcomes and courses. Reviews of assessment plans and reports are conducted by the SACs that provide group feedback and support. These are composed exclusively of faculty and are supported by the Vice Provost and the Director of Assessment. The school Deans now supervise some important elements of the assessment data collection process, including the auditing of syllabi prior to the start of each semester to ensure that learning outcomes are consistent throughout academic programs. Assessment is sustainable, as evidenced by the typical 86 to 100 percent report submission rate for major programs (S5.C2: Report Submissions; S5.C2: Assessment Tracking), expanding to new programs, and meaningful in that it routinely leads to tangible improvements in teaching and learning.

## **The College-Wide Academic Assessment Committee**

The College-Wide Academic Assessment Committee (CWAAC) is currently chaired by a faculty member who serves as the Director of Assessment and who is compensated and given reassigned time to perform these duties. The Committee includes representatives from each school who serve as School Assessment Coordinators, the GECCo Chair, a Library representative, and the Director of Institutional Research (S5.C2: CWAAC Membership). Each school representative for CWAAC serves as the Chair of his/her respective SAC and is compensated with a stipend. CWAAC has met approximately once per month since fall 2010 (S5.C2: CWAAC Topics; S5.C2: CWAAC Agenda Minutes Links). The flow chart and description of college-wide assessment processes demonstrate the way that assessment is embedded into the College's structure (S5.C2: Assessment Flow Chart).

Members of CWAAC perform a wide variety of specific duties for which the Director of Assessment and the five school representatives are compensated with stipends (S5.C2: CWAAC Responsibilities). CWAAC reviews the academic assessment process on campus as well as assessment plans and reports that fall outside the five schools (i.e., those from the Library, the College Honors Program, and GECCo) to provide peer feedback, promote collaboration, and review overall progress made towards the achievement of institutional goals (S5.C2: GE Library CHP Feedback). CWAAC then makes recommendations for changes in processes and policies, from college-wide academic programs such as general education to academic majors or freestanding minors.

To assist faculty in carrying out assessment, the Vice Provost and the Director of Assessment, in coordination with CWAAC, prepare a planning packet (S5.C2: Assessment Introduction, S5.C2: Assessment Template) that outlines the Ramapo assessment process along with templates covering vocabulary, examples, deadlines, loop-closing (S5.C2: Assessment Closing the Loop), and other resources including the checklist used for review (S5.C2: Assessment Checklist). These materials are emailed to Convening Groups in early fall and are also available on the CWAAC website (S5.C2: Process Website). To facilitate loop-closing, the planning documents stress multiple times that programs "provide a specific action for each unmet target" (e.g., S5.C5: Assessment Template Page 2; S5.C2: Assessment Checklist Page 2).

CWAAC reviews the assessment process on a regular basis, implementing changes when necessary. For example, in fall 2018, a new assessment template was developed to enhance efficiency by combining planning and reporting into one document. CWAAC also revised the template to give more explicit attention to reassessment to facilitate trend analysis by groups as part of loop closing (S5.C5: CWAC Agenda 10.3.19; S5.C5: Assessment Template). This template also offered an easy means of visualizing whether all essential assessment information had been provided, thereby reducing the number of revisions required. In fall 2019, discussions with externally accredited programs revealed that some of these programs created two sets of assessment documents (i.e., one for their external accrediting body and one for the College's internal process), which is an inefficient use of program resources. As a result, CWAAC now encourages externally accredited programs to use a format that suits their needs rather than the college-wide assessment template (S5.C5: External Accreditation).

In addition, CWAAC:

- administers the assessment website which, along with the Assessment Briefs, has improved communication and the transparency of assessment processes across campus and has provided a venue for academic assessment activities to be shared (S5.C2: CWAAC Webpage; S5.C2: Assessment Briefs; S5.C2: Brief Email and Posting).
- coordinates assessment workshops with the FRC (S5.C2: FRC Assessment Sessions; S5.C2: FRC Assessing Freestanding Minors Workshop). Assessment of student learning is built into the FRC teaching circles for new and established faculty (S5.C2: FRC Teaching Circles). The FRC incorporates assessment and assessment-related material into its workshops, such as student learning outcomes and experiential learning (S5.C2: FRC Experiential). The FRC's new faculty orientation also includes an assessment overview provided by the Director of Assessment and Vice Provost (S5.C2: New Faculty Assessment).

GE assessments and loop-closing sessions are shared with staff and faculty who teach the course (S5.C2: FYS Loop Closing) and Faculty Assembly (S5.C2: FA GECCo), and they are also included in the previously-mentioned Assessment Briefs. Assessment updates are integrated into the once-per-semester meeting of all major and minor Conveners (S5.C3: Fall 2019 Conveners Meeting).

At the spring 2019 Convener Meeting (S5.C2: Spring 2019 Convener Meeting), the Director of Assessment presented Conveners with a comprehensive view of written and oral communication by aggregating three years of assessment

data from major programs, GE, and institutional assessments (e.g., Collegiate Learning Assessment, National Survey of Student Engagement, Higher Education Research Institute). The results indicated that 87 percent and 85 percent of program-defined targets for written communication and oral communication, respectively, were met. The analysis also indicates that, while 88 percent of majors have at least one writing student learning outcome (SLO), 53 percent have at least one oral communication SLO. As a result of this comprehensive look at written and oral communication in student performance, the College is increasing attention to oral communication-learning opportunities by implementing the Senior Presentation across all majors (S5.C2: Senior Presentation).

The Board of Trustees is briefed regularly by the CWAAC Chair on the assessment of educational effectiveness (e.g., S5.C2: Assessment BoT).

### **School Assessment Committees and Convening Groups**

While CWAAC is charged with general oversight of academic assessment, schools and academic programs oversee and conduct the assessment of individual programs. The number and diversity of academic programs throughout the schools require a more complex support system. The School Assessment Coordinators, who sit on CWAAC, chair their respective SACs (S5.C2: SAC Members, S5.C2: School Assessment Coordinator Responsibilities). As part of its duties, each SAC reviews all assessment plans and reports in the school and provides written feedback directly to the Convening Groups usually in the form of memos (S5.C2: Report Feedback). This review process assures faculty that their peers have read their plans and reports while providing the faculty with assessment support and input on the use of assessment results.

Faculty actively manage program assessment through their Convening Groups. Programs plan and review assessments in Convening Group meetings and discuss assessment during Unit Council meetings. Each Convening Group has an assessment coordinator and is responsible for assessing its own learning outcomes on a three-year cycle. Programs typically have five to eight outcomes and normally assess about two per year, thereby assessing all outcomes within three years. Each outcome has two measures and one of these measures must be direct. As noted earlier, program-specific outcomes are published in the College Catalog along with other important information including program descriptions and requirements (S5.C1: Sample Program Outcomes). The College also has a regular academic assessment schedule. In the fall, academic programs submit plans indicating the outcomes they plan to assess that year, along with the measures to be used to assess those outcomes and the targets set to define acceptable student achievement levels. The SACs provide feedback and offer any needed support. In June, programs submit assessment reports that detail specific actions to be taken for unmet targets, and examine trends over time when appropriate.

### **Improved Student Learning: The Goal of Assessment**

The ongoing processes of assessment described above demonstrate that Ramapo College systematically and extensively conducts assessment, the results of which ultimately are used to improve student learning. Major academic and curricular changes have emerged from rigorous assessment processes. Important examples of Ramapo's culture of assessment include the creation and implementation of a new GE program in 2018 and abundant evidence that faculty regularly use assessment data in order to improve pedagogy and curriculum.

### **A New General Education Program**

GECCo is responsible for facilitating assessment of the general education program at the College. In 2010, GECCo began a multi-year assessment cycle of the now-discontinued old GE program, which continued through 2018 (S5.C2: GE 2013-2015 Assessment Cycle). All GE outcomes were linked to specific GE categories, which included College English, Business Perspectives, Social Issues, History, International Issues, Mathematics, Intercultural North America, Readings in the Humanities, Science with Experiential, Topics in Arts and Humanities, and Topics in Social Science (S5.C2: GE 2010-2018 SLOs and Map). Assessment occurred in three steps: designing assessment, implementing assessment, and closing the loop. In 2014, a Handbook for Assessment was published in-house to describe assessment practices in general education at Ramapo (S5.C2: GECCo Handbook 2015).

The 2010-2018 assessment process for general education was designed by a sub-committee made up of a few GECCo members with the Vice Provost of Curriculum and Assessment and led by a representative of one of the GE categories. The sub-committee reported its findings to GECCo, and the report was forwarded to CWAAC. Closing-the-loop sessions were held once the analysis was complete. This occurred in FA meetings or in open meetings, which faculty members teaching in the categories were invited to attend (S5.C3: GECCO Loop Closing FA 2013). Reassessment was discussed in reports where data from previous reports could be compared (S5.C3: GE CI 2017; S5 C3: GE QR 2016-2017; S5.C3: GE Way World Works 2016-17; S5.C3: GE DAR 2011 to 2015). The assessment results were also published on GECCo's website.

Written communication is an example of successfully using GE assessments to improve student learning over time. After assessment data was analyzed in 2010, two changes were made to the GE writing program. First, a more nuanced placement of students into either CRWT 101 or CRWT 102 based on their Accuplacer score occurred rather than placing all students with passing scores into College English. Second, the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee (WAC) was reinvigorated resulting in the designation of certain GE courses as writing intensive. As indicated in the 2017-2018 report, writing improved upon reassessment in 2013 on four measures: style, grammar, organization, and content. By 2018 students improved organization and thesis writing (S5.C2: Written Comm 2017-2018). As also summarized in the 2017-2018 Written Communication report, 88 percent and 96 percent of Ramapo Students scored a three or better on the CLA+'s Writing Effectiveness and Writing Mechanics measures. This is similar to scores in 2013 and exceed our internal targets.

As previously noted, Ramapo College implemented a new GE program in fall 2018. Changes to the GE program were a direct result of the assessment studies. The first assessment cycle of GE (2010-2013) revealed below-target student achievement, unclear learning outcomes, and inconsistent delivery of outcomes (S5.C3: GECCO Loop Closing FA 2013). Based on these assessment results, the College called for a thorough review of the GE program. The Provost charged the General Education Task Force II (GETFII) with revising the GE curriculum. This charge included reviewing best practices, national trends, and GECCo-led assessment results (S5.C3: GE Task Force Charge).

The GE review process began with an examination of GECCo-led GE assessment study results (S5.C3: Sample General Education Task Force II Meeting). Based on this review, GETFII noted, among other issues, inadequate communication of the program's purpose to students, unclear learning outcomes, haphazard curricular design, and course categories populated with too many options. In response, the Task Force developed a conceptual framework to communicate clearly to students and other constituents the value of general education and began a four-year process that led to the creation and implementation of a new GE program. The final task force report included the implementation of directors for GE Keystone courses (FYE, SSI, SIAH, CRWT) and GE category coordinators to improve course management and encourage consistent assessments.

In 2017, GECCo began developing an assessment plan for the new GE, while simultaneously continuing assessment of the old GE program. An agreement between school Deans and the Provost created additional policies and requirements for the GE program (S5.C2: GECCo Criteria). GECCo held sessions to aid faculty in developing courses that would fit well in the new GE program (S5.C2: GE Syllabus Workshop). Course syllabus templates and checklists ensured that required objectives and SLOs mapped to mandatory assignments in the courses, as well as faculty commitment to participate in GE program assessment (S5.C2: HP Checklist). GECCo reviewed each course proposed for GE inclusion; 147 courses were ultimately accepted into the new GE program.

Based on recommendations of previous GE assessment reports, GECCo now assesses courses by category instead of by student learning outcomes (S5.C2: GECCo Minutes 9.13.17). The development of GE category-specific assessment plans is underway with collaboration between categories that share common objectives and outcomes. Curriculum Assessment Teams (CATs) are responsible for developing plans and conducting assessment (S5.C2: Sample GE Assessment Plans). In spring 2019, the Director of Assessment, the GECCo Chair, and GECCo CATs met by category for planning sessions for AY 2019-2020. In AY 2019-2020, all GE Categories will assess one or two objectives, so that each category will be able to assess all of its objectives within three years. The assessment schedule will be staggered to allow newer categories more time to be populated with courses (S5.C2: GECCo Minutes Assessment Schedule). Assessment planning has been moved to the semester prior to implementation of the plan. This is a departure from the procedure of planning and implementation in the same semester, one that often resulted in unforeseen delays.

In AY 2018-2019, GECCo implemented a new assessment template to conduct the first assessment of the current GE program starting with two categories (S5.C2: GECCo Template), First-Year Seminar and Critical Reading and Writing, and a pilot assessment for Values and Ethics to evaluate a signature assignment. The First-Year Seminar information literacy assessment indicated, for example, that 88 percent of students could identify appropriate search strategies (S5.C3: FYS Report 2018-2019). The report also indicated that the "current iteration of the Experiential Component, linked to the Diverse Communities Objective, was seen to be unworkable." The directors of First-Year Seminar, Social Science Inquiry, and Studies in Arts and Humanities along with the GECCo Chair and the Director of Assessment developed a new experiential learning objective (participate in an engaged, experiential activity that connects the course to real-world settings). This was approved by Faculty Assembly in December 2018 (S5.C3: GE FA Experiential Vote).

## **Assessment Drives Improvements to Teaching and Learning Across the Schools**

Some examples of assessment taken from each school are provided below, along with school-specific processes. These examples, along with aggregated assessment data, indicate that programs consistently meet achievement targets, include actions for unmet targets, and use trend data when available for reassessment. By AY 2018-2019, 71 percent of assessments by majors, GE, Honors, and the Library compared current results to previous assessment findings, which is up from 37 percent in 2014-2015. Approximately 11 to 26 percent of assessments during this time cannot be compared to previous results due to new learning outcomes or other program changes, but programs will use trend data when available (S5.C2: Action Trend Data). In addition, 97 percent of programs either meet their targets or developed actions for unmet targets in 2018-2019 (S5.C2: 2018-2019 Target Action Data).

### **Anisfield School of Business (ASB)**

Assessment in the Anisfield School of Business is divided into two processes: core and program. All ASB majors are required to complete a common core of 14 business courses that share the following learning goals and outcomes: Communication (both oral and written), Ethics, Foundation, Perspectives, and Reasoning. ASB programs have one to three major-specific outcomes (e.g., S5.C1: Finance Outcomes) as well. Learning outcomes are assessed systematically using a faculty-driven process led by the School Assessment Committee, which is composed of the Assistant to the Dean, MBA Director, Graduate Program Coordinator, and six faculty from a variety of ASB programs. At a minimum, two core-learning outcomes are directly assessed each academic year and two indirect measures (course syllabi review and student perception of learning) are conducted annually. In addition to the core, each of the seven ASB programs directly assesses a major-specific outcome every other year. The continuous assessment process has kept ASB compliant with the requirements of AACSB accreditation (S5.C3: ASB Accreditation; S5.C3 AACSB Peer Review Team Report).

The School Assessment Committee approaches each learning outcome with a three-semester cycle: preparation, implementation, and closing the loop (S5.C2: ASB Assessment Calendar and S5.C2: ASB Assessment Roles). Preparation includes communicating with the faculty who teach the course where assessment takes place in order to prepare assessment tools and timelines and to ensure the faculty teaching the course collect appropriate assessment products. Implementation involves conducting the assessment. The SAC holds ongoing inter-rater reliability sessions, and the rubric used to assess each learning outcome is refined in response to faculty suggestions. ASB holds a faculty assessment retreat every semester to compare results of previous assessment cycles and generate loop-closing ideas. To further enhance the process, these retreats often include education workshops prepared by ASB faculty who have done research on effective teaching methods to achieve specific learning outcomes (S5.C3: ASB Retreat 2017). In fall 2016, results were slightly below expectations for one assessed writing trait: style. Faculty determined that the chosen assignment was not ideal to assess written communication and agreed to change the course, student product, and rubric. Reassessment of this outcome indicates that the percentage of students with acceptable and excellent rating for style increased from 78 percent to 91 percent. In 2019, the assessment also revealed that students were slightly below expectations for logic and organization of ideas as well as mechanics, so program actions include sharing templates or writing samples with students and going over bad examples as a class (S5.C3: ASB Written Comm 2016-2017; S5.C3: ASB Core Assessment Written Comm 2018-2019).

Each ASB program also directly assesses a program-specific outcome every other year. Economics, for example, assesses Economic Reasoning in the intermediate courses (Intermediate Microeconomics or Intermediate Macroeconomics). Assessment using an embedded exam question in AY 2015-2016 took place in Intermediate Microeconomics. It was decided that this tool was not ideal due to time constraints on the students who may be focused solely on producing the correct answer and not elaborating on the process of arriving at the answer. The Economics faculty decided instead to assess in Intermediate Macroeconomics by using a take-home assignment in order to permit students time to fully develop their answers. The percentage of students who can draw implications and insights from analysis, for example, rose from 55 percent to 90 percent (S5.C3: Economics Report 2015-2016; S5.C3: Economics 2017-2018).

### **School of Contemporary Arts (CA)**

CA Convening Groups discuss assessment study findings and recommended actions either in a scheduled Convening Group meeting or assessment retreat that takes place at the end of the academic year or during the following fall. Assessment in CA has resulted in course-, program-, and advisement-related actions including the following: adding topics or assignments (S5.C3: Comm Report 2017-2018); aligning and standardizing sections of the same course taught by different instructors (S5.C3 Music Report 2017-2018); revising program requirements; initiating new faculty hires; creating new courses (S5.C3: Music Report 2016-2017); building a new music classroom; and providing extra-curricular

activities such as master classes (S5.C3 Music Report 2017-2018).

Assessment in CA presents some unique challenges. Students' original art works need to be evaluated appropriately according to their discipline or concentration, so evaluating two courses using a single set of criteria can be difficult. Likewise, the expectations of some outcomes vary depending on the chosen concentration (e.g., Theater Program's Outcome 3 is to develop artistic and/or practical skills in students' particular disciplines). As a result, assessment of many outcomes in CA benefits from evaluating a large number of different courses and sometimes using a separate set of criteria for each discipline (S5.C3: ARTS Report 2014-2015). Additionally, some outcomes are broad and thus require assessment of different aspects or applications through several courses (S5.C3: Music Report 2016-2017). Also challenging is the small class size of studio courses, which can result in small sample sizes as well as large variability among sections of the same course and across different semesters. CA programs address this challenge by assessing multiple sections of the same course, which has the added benefit of standardizing the curriculum (S5.C3: COMM Report 2017-2018; S5.C3 Music Report 2017-2018).

In spring 2019, CA assessed its new school core and found, for example, that 85 percent of students could describe and analyze the contexts in which creative work is produced, but some course syllabi lacked core-related information, so CA will ensure that all upper-division courses have required information (S5.C3: CA Core Assessment). These initial results will serve as a baseline for future reassessment of the CA school core.

### **School of Social Science and Human Services (SSHS)**

Five SSHS programs coordinate with outside agencies to receive external accreditation. These programs are the BSW and MSW in Social Work, the MA in Educational Leadership (MAEL), the MA in Special Education (MASE), and the Elementary Education certification program (S5.C3: Teacher Ed Sample). The MAEL has begun to streamline the assessment process by using many of the same measures for external accreditation and internal program review. In addition, some programs use measures for outside accreditation in the SSHS assessment. For example, the Elementary Education program utilizes students' scores on Praxis core and Praxis Subject Assessment exams as assessment measures (S5.C3: Teacher Ed Report 2016-2017).

The results of previous assessments in the Psychology program (S5.C3: Psychology Report 2013-2014) indicated that students were struggling to meet many of the learning outcomes. Faculty held discussions on pedagogy, student writing, and improving competence in APA style in the assessed courses. Two faculty members also published a paper on best practices of APA style in undergraduate writing (S5.C3 Ishak & Salter, 2017) and shared their findings with the Psychology faculty. Ultimately, the post-assessment changes implemented went beyond the courses themselves, as the Psychology faculty adjusted learning outcomes, changed course requirements, and redesigned the overall program to better meet the revised learning outcomes of the American Psychological Association (APA). Faculty also added a student research project requirement in social psychology courses. The new Psychology program was implemented in fall 2014, and student learning outcome assessment results have shown great improvement. Specifically, results of AY 2014-2015 direct assessment (S5.C3: Psychology Report 2014-2015), which consisted of students who were part of the old program, showed that the achievement target was met for only one of seven learning outcomes assessed that year. The most recent direct assessment, using the same courses, the same raters, and the same assessment measure, shows that the achievement target was met for six of seven of the same learning outcomes (S5.C3: Psychology Report 2017-2018). Furthermore, whereas only 32 percent to 80 percent of students' papers were scored as meeting the expectations across different learning outcomes in AY 2014-2015, 75 percent to 100 percent of the students' papers were scored as meeting the expectations of the learning outcome in AY 2017-2018. Students have clearly benefited from assessment-driven changes made in the Psychology program.

### **School of Theoretical and Applied Science (TAS)**

The Bioinformatics program provides an example of loop-closing and improving student learning in TAS. Although one round of outcome assessment (S5.C3: Bioinformatics 2012-2013) in AY 2012-2013 indicated that students met expectations for making scientific observations and testing hypotheses, it was recognized that there was still room for improvement, particularly for better preparing the students to analyze results of statistical tests. To address this finding, Bioinformatics majors were encouraged by program faculty to take a required statistics course earlier in their academic program. This program-level change seems to have been fruitful, as 90 percent of submitted student reports were found to exceed expectations related to analyzing the results of statistical tests in AY 2016-2017 cycle compared to only 70 percent in AY 2012-2013 (S5.C3: Bioinformatics 2016-2017).

## **School of Humanities and Global Studies (HGS)**

HGS programs have consistently used assessment study results to make curricular changes. For example, the Political Science program began requiring both Comparative Politics and International Politics after two assessments indicated subpar knowledge of politics within and between nations. After implementing this change, student proficiency on this outcome increased from 50 percent to 77 percent. While below the 80 percent achievement target, the increase in student performance indicates a successful educational intervention (S5.C3: Political Science). In addition, the History program developed more targeted historiographic assignments for all courses in fall 2018 after failing to meet its achievement target the previous year, (S5.C3: History) and will reassess to determine whether students' demonstrated awareness of historiography relevant to course content improves over the next three years.

In AY 2018-2019, HGS began assessing its school core, which is foreign language competency. Based on the STAMP computer adaptive test, French and Italian sections could adequately use knowledge of language to understand main ideas and explicit detail in everyday language, but Spanish sections fell below the 75 percent achievement target for both reading and listening comprehension. The Spanish program will "incorporate more reading and listening comprehension practice and strategies in all introductory level courses" (S5.C3: HGS Core Assessment). HGS will reassess its school core in AY 2019-2020.

## **The College Honors Program**

Faculty who teach Honors courses assess student learning in the College Honors Program. Annually, these faculty develop signature assignments and rubrics, an ad-hoc faculty committee assesses student work, and the Program Director coordinates loop-closing activities. In recent years, the Honors Program assessed two outcomes per year, each via two measures (at least one of them a direct measure), just as academic majors do. Assessment plans and reports are developed by the Honors Director and then discussed and approved by the Honors Advisory Board, a group of faculty members who weigh in on important decisions regarding the Program. The Honors Program consistently meets its achievement targets. In 2015, for example, 87 percent of students met all rubric criteria for awareness of "the role of cultural contexts and perspectives in the assessment of communication and the dissemination of knowledge and meaning." In 2019, 95 percent of students met the same criteria (S5.C3: Honors Report Spring 2019). In fall 2019, the Honors Program implemented new program outcomes with a mixture of GE program outcomes (e.g., write effectively in scholarly and creative contexts) and Honors-specific outcomes (e.g., conceive, plan, and execute a professional quality academic/research or creative project from the perspective of one's own discipline) after discussing the similarities of the two programs and consistently meeting previous outcome targets (S5.C3: Honors Fall 2019; S5.C3: Honors 2019 Feedback).

## **Library/Information Literacy**

The George T. Potter Library assesses information literacy in courses that use library services. A team of Library faculty analyzes the results and shares them with the information literacy faculty at an annual meeting dedicated to discussing assessment results, developing actions, closing the loop, and, if necessary, revising assessment instruments. In AY 2017-2018, 83 percent of 100-level students were able to determine a manageable idea/paper topic based on a LibWizard quiz. This held steady in AY 2018-2019 (84 percent) when reassessed (S5.C3: Library 2017-2018; S5.C3: Library Report 2018-2019). The Library has three information literacy goals and three student learning outcomes, adopted from the Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Standards. While librarians assess all sessions requested by faculty for internal review and discussion, information literacy is assessed as a student learning outcome for three GE courses: First-Year Seminar, Critical Reading and Writing, and Studies in the Arts and Humanities. Library assessments from these courses are shared with GECCo. Since information literacy is taught developmentally, achievement targets are progressive (i.e., Introduce, Reinforce, Master).

All three information literacy outcomes are assessed each year by the librarians teaching the sessions. The assessment is administered via a web-based service called LibWizard, which provides students with their results for the session and corrective information if necessary. LibWizard also allows comparisons across cohorts and demographic groups. Aggregated results are evaluated by the Assessment and Instruction Librarian, who then shares the findings with the information literacy librarians and the College-Wide Academic Assessment Committee (CWAAC).

## **A More Comprehensive Approach to Assessment**

Assessment now includes areas of the curriculum that were initially omitted or only partially addressed by previous initiatives because they were not part of majors. In addition to majors and traditional minors, the College offers "freestanding minors," or minors that are not housed within a traditional major. Prior to 2018, it was the practice that only freestanding minors with more than ten declared students conducted assessment. For example, the Women's, Gender,



and Sexuality Studies minor used their assessment to “evaluate our program goals and outcomes and determined that we included too many outcomes for our minor. There were so many outcomes that we were unable to re-assess outcomes in a timely manner” (S5.C3: WAGES Assessment). In fall 2018, all freestanding minors were asked to develop assessment plans (S5.C2: Email FSM), and a workshop was offered to assist them (S5.C2: Assessing Freestanding Minors PPT). The workshop focused on assessing small and/or interdisciplinary programs through portfolios and Qualtrics-based direct and indirect measures to increase assessment efficiency while generating useful data. All freestanding minors were asked to develop at least one learning goal, two learning outcomes, and curriculum maps, and to assess one outcome per year. By spring 2019, 17 out of 19 freestanding minors submitted appropriate plans and reports (S5.C3: Freestanding Minors Reports).

Also as of fall 2018, assessment plans are in place for courses that do not directly contribute to academic degree programs such as exercise/sports science and conditioning courses and career preparation courses (S5.C3: COND and EXSS Assessment Report 2018-2019; S5.C3: Pathways Plan). The Roukema Center for International Education has assessed student learning resulting from faculty-led and provider study abroad programs since 2016, but focused mostly on indirect assessment data. Starting in fall 2019, the Roukema Center is fully integrating direct measures into its assessment plans. The Center has also revised and reduced the number of its outcomes to facilitate manageable assessment including both direct and indirect measures (S5.C3: Roukema Center Plan).

Ramapo College has some small and/or interdisciplinary majors and minors, which are sometimes challenging to assess because of limited enrollment (i.e., small sample sizes). Some small programs, particularly freestanding minors as discussed above, have found success using either Qualtrics or Google Forms for direct and indirect assessment with reasonable response rates to efficiently manage the process. For example, the Human Rights and Genocide Studies minor uses Qualtrics to conduct direct and indirect assessments of student learning (S5.C3: HRGS Report).

### **CLA, NSSE and FSSE**

As noted elsewhere, the College administers the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and other surveys that collectively provide a direct and indirect picture of student learning. In addition to posting the results on the College’s website and sharing results at appropriate venues (S5.C3: Sample CLA NSSE FSSE Meeting Minutes), standardized and institutional results were shared with all Conveners (e.g., S5.C3: IR Conveners Meeting Spring 2017). These institutional data also factored into evaluating written and oral communication and the push to implement the Senior Presentation. In an effort to promote efficient assessment practices, GECCo has used the CLA as a direct measure in assessing both written communication and critical inquiry (S5.C3: GE Critical Inquiry Report 2017-2018; S5.C2: FA GECCo). The spring 2018 Critical Inquiry report revealed irregularities in administering the CLA test to students in their senior year. As a result, CWAAC, GECCo, the Director of First-Year Seminar, and the Director of Institutional Research collaborated on a solution to reduce the chances of a similar issue reoccurring (S5.C3: Critical Inquiry Feedback). The new GE program’s quantitative reasoning category as well as learning objectives including applying mathematical concepts effectively and demonstrate logic and reasoning skills are meant to address these issues. In 2014, seniors were, for example, slightly less likely to report reaching conclusions based on their own numerical information (S5.C3: GE Revision Minutes Institutional Data; S5.C3: NSSE QR 2014). Last, the NSSE and FSSE are used for 11 Dashboard 2021 indicators; the College meets its achievement targets, even when compared to peer institutions, on 10 of these. For example, first-year and senior students were more likely to report being informed and active citizens than peer institutions (Indicator #17). One indicator, faculty-student research, has been assessed at 58 percent in 2016 and 59 percent in 2018, nearing the 2021 target of 65 percent.

### **Career and Graduate School Readiness: Pathways and Institutional Data**

Ramapo College uses assessment to enhance student preparation for future careers. Three schools, ASB, SSHS, and TAS, require their students to complete three modules of the Pathways Program offered through the Cahill Center. This accounts for approximately 70 percent of all undergraduates at the College. The two remaining units, CA and HGS, are close to adding similar graduation requirements. Both CA and HGS considered assessment data in their deliberations over adding their own Pathways requirements. The Pathways presentation to HGS, for example, highlighted program effectiveness by sharing that 95 percent of Interview-pa-looza attendees in January 2019 met expectations and 66 percent of students received a score of 85 or better on VMock résumé assessments (S5.C2: Pathways HGS). HGS approved the Pathways school graduation requirement in fall 2019 and will move to submit ARC paperwork. CA has submitted a proposal to ARC for fall 2020 implementation (S5.C2: CA Pathways ARC). The HGS Pathways presentation was based in part on Cahill Center assessments (S5.C2: Cahill Resume Report). While the results will serve as a baseline for future assessments, the

Cahill Center implemented actions including the ASB satellite office offering VMock Open Hours three days weekly in which the graduate assistant and student aides assisted students having trouble interpreting VMock feedback. In addition, future assessments will measure the number of attempts it takes for students to meet the relevant résumé criteria.

Institutional Research tracks both student employment outcomes and plans to attend graduate school. For example, Institutional Research presented school Deans with alumni data for one, three, and five years out past graduation (S5.C2: Tracking Alumni) and also presented alumni data to Cabinet (S5.C2: 10 Year Alumni Survey 2013). The Graduating Senior Survey, which includes graduate school and employment plans, is also made available to the College community (S5.C2: Graduating Senior Survey 2017-2018). In an effort to improve employment data collection, the College now tracks through HEP, Inc. self-reported social media data to gain information on graduate employment. This change has improved the response rate from 18-20 percent to 50-60 percent. Various academic and administrative Departments, Deans, and Conveners use these data sources, among others, for their self-studies and accreditation. The Cahill Center also uses these data for their “First Destination Survey.” As students make meaningful professional links and networks, the College uses that data to track the employment endeavors of graduates.

### **Archiving Assessment Data**

From 2010 to 2017, the research analyst in the Office of Institutional Research, a Unit that reports to the Provost, input all assessment plans, reports, and related documents into WEAVEonline, Ramapo College’s assessment software at the time. Ramapo College is transitioning to a new strategic planning and assessment software, Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), and CWAAC adjusted its assessment templates for plans and reports to make data collection and analysis more efficient as of fall 2018. SPOL will allow the College to improve the impact of assessments and to identify common issues more readily so that they can be addressed.

### **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

Based on this process of assessment and self-reflection on Ramapo College’s fulfillment of Standard V, the following opportunity for improvement and innovation has been generated:

1. In an effort to increase assessment efficiency and sustainability, develop further the use of technological resources such as SPOL and the College’s learning management system with a view toward integrating student learning assessment throughout courses to easily provide aggregate data.

# REAFFIRMING

*Our Promise*

## STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

### STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

#### Ramapo College Meets the Requirements of Standard VI

A full description and illustration of the ways in which Ramapo College meets the nine criteria of Standard VI, as well as *Requirements of Affiliation 8, 10, and 11*, are presented here.

#### Mission Driven Planning at Ramapo College

The College engages in a cycle of continuous improvement in which planning and assessment, coupled with resource allocation, lead to institutional renewal. With the institutional strategic plan as the roadmap, the College fulfills its Mission by deploying fiscal, human, technical, and physical resources to accomplish institutional goals and priorities. This is achieved by the development of Division- and Unit-/school-level plans that drive institutional renewal and revitalization. The Strategic Priority Incentive Fund (SPIF) and Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), our new planning and assessment software, are tools used by Unit Managers to accomplish this goal. They will be discussed in this Standard.

At Ramapo College, the fulfillment of the Mission means that the College allocates existing resources and attempts to secure new resources (human, financial, physical, technological, etc.) in a way that prioritizes those initiatives and functions most directly related to the goals and objectives of the Mission and strategic plan. This is achieved by using assessment results to inform budget and planning processes.

As an example, the College's ability to secure the iPASS grant further advanced efforts to enhance student achievement of educational goals across three key areas identified by iPASS: education planning, coaching and counseling, and targeting risk and intervention (S6.C1: iPASS Final Report). These areas are connected to Ramapo's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan goals (S6.C1: Strategic Plan 2014-2018) to improve retention and graduation rates, particularly for more at-risk student populations.

Student success initiatives, such as those funded through the iPASS grant, strengthen the College's ability to deliver on its brand promises (e.g., faculty and staff who teach and mentor) and are reflected in the numerous accolades the College has received (S6.C1: Accolades). Student success remains our driving force and, as such, it is the first goal of *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* (S6.C1: Strategic Plan 2018-2021).

#### Funding in Support of Strategic Priorities: Planning and Assessment

Ramapo has intentionally tied funding to strategic priorities since 2006. In spring 2017, the Strategic Resource Advisory Board (SRAB) was created to ensure alignment of institutional and academic priorities with resource allocations (S6.C3: SRAB Charge). SRAB flowed from an integrated planning model, the purpose of which was to consider both academic and administrative assessment outcomes and also to increase the participation of community members in the review of requests for SPIF and Capital funding. SRAB recommends to Cabinet the SPIF or Capital funding initiatives most closely tied to the Mission and strategic plan goals/objectives. The enhancement of the integrated planning model further evolved in fall 2018 with the update of the 2012 Institutional Effectiveness Plan (S6. C8: AAC Primer) and the creation of the Administrative Assessment Committee (AAC). Through SPIF, which has awarded over \$25 million since its inception in 2006, individual Units can request a small percentage of the approximately 1-2 percent of the annual operating budget set aside each year to encourage innovation and goal achievement (S6.C8: SPIF and Capital Requests).

Units have used SPIF funds to advance academic excellence through efforts such as providing initial funding for the Anisfield School of Business Trading Lab; funding software initiatives such as Adaptive Insights, Slate, Argos and uAchieve; creating a Bloomberg Certification program; purchasing software for the Language Lab; and providing the initial funding to launch the MBA program. The College annually reviews SPIF initiatives through assessment to

determine progress as well as viability for continuation. This often requires the College to provide necessary future funding through its operational budget.

For example, Athletics was given \$12,000 to institute a comprehensive Wellness and Substance Abuse Prevention program that included the costs for random drug testing and follow-up. SPIF funding gave Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation the opportunity to deter the usage of banned or controlled substances by using random tests to maintain the safety and well-being of student-athletes. The target of 90 percent of the number of students who passed the test was exceeded.

With respect to planning, *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* will guide Ramapo until a new strategic planning committee convenes utilizing the recommendations of the Self-Study and the assessment of the strategic plan (S6.C1: Strategic Plan 2018-2021) to inform their work. The current strategic plan enables the College to focus its efforts and resources in a planned, integrated way to respond to critical issues and opportunities and to advance its Mission, Vision, and goals. Given the rapidly changing higher education environment, anchoring proposed initiatives to the plan in this way provides a clear guide for resource allocation decisions.

### **Technology Driven Solutions for Planning and Improvement**

At Ramapo, budgeting and planning are aligned with a constant view toward accomplishing institutional goals. In a number of important instances, this has been facilitated by the use of technology. For example:

- Adaptive Insights, a comprehensive budgeting and planning tool, was implemented in 2015 by the Office of Budget & Fiscal Planning with the main goal of linking budgeting and planning. Additionally, it streamlined the budget cycle, improved the resource allocation process, and offers an easy way for non-financial Unit Directors to view current Unit budgets and historical trends. After the first year of use, the budget cycle time was reduced by 25 percent; from six months to three months. This allowed more time to focus on data analysis rather than the overall process.
- Adaptive Insights dashboard capability allows Unit Directors to view budget availability and a breakdown of expense categories and historical spending patterns in an easy-to-view graphical format. Graduate Program Directors can view headcount, credit hours, and tuition revenue in addition to expenses in the same easy-to-read format (S6.C2: Adaptive Insights Dashboard samples). Overall, two of the main benefits of Adaptive include the ability to view multiple years and accounts at once and to create financial projections for future years, both of which could not be done before.
- The purchase and implementation of uAchieve degree planning software from College Source is another such example (S6.C2: Degree Planning Task Force Summary). A 2015 needs assessment survey of the campus resulted in selection of the uAchieve planning software. Launched in fall 2017 for graduate students and fall 2018 for undergraduates, this tool allows each student at Ramapo to build a customized four-year degree plan and positions Ramapo as a forerunner in higher education for advancing student success through investing in people and technology. Also, uAchieve supplements Ramapo's primary student success enterprise system (Connect) and the student information system (Banner).
- With the College's former planning software (WEAVE), Units annually assessed how their objectives furthered the strategic plan. In AY 2017-2018, Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) replaced WEAVE. The greatly expanded capabilities of SPOL allowed for integration of the budget process with assessment and planning (S6.C2: Planning Software Selection Matrix). Additionally, SPOL integrated faculty credentialing, facilitating faculty teaching and extra-curricular assignments as well as accreditation efforts. This process has supported the continual assessment of progress towards strategic plan goals and objectives.

### **Assessing our Planning, Processes and Resources**

In addition to linking planning and budgeting functions, and in line with *Requirements of Affiliation 8 and 10*, the College has improved communication and the transparency of assessment processes across the campus. Examples include the enhancement of the College Fact Book produced by the Office of Institutional Research, the publication of Academic Assessment Briefs (S6.C9: Fact Book 2018; S6.C9: Assessment Brief Sample), and the use of college-wide survey results.

A 10-year survey calendar, which was approved by the President's Cabinet, lists all of the surveys that have been and will be administered through Institutional Research. These surveys assess such topics as student engagement, student learning

and alumni outcomes. For example, data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) has been used by a variety of committees on campus to improve students' engagement. EMSA makes extensive use of NSSE results for the purpose of increasing student engagement on campus. The leadership of the 17 EMSA Units reviewed the 2016 NSSE results and identified a number of items on which Ramapo scored lower than its COPLAC, Carnegie, and 2015-2016 peers (S6.C9: 2016 NSSE EMSA Metrics). From this set of items, Division leadership identified those most likely to improve student engagement and developed action items and strategies aimed at achieving this goal (S6.C9: 2017 NSSE Responses; S6.C9: NSSE Action Steps). This project is ongoing and has resulted in such actions as the implementation of a second residential shuttle and the creation of an EMSA pledge that is visible in all 17 EMSA offices.

Similarly, results from the Graduating Senior Survey and the Alumni Survey have been used in academic program reviews. Data from Institutional Research surveys are posted on the Institutional Research website (S6.C9: IR Webpage).

Institutional Research sits on the College-Wide Academic Assessment Committee (CWAAC) and provides data reports for other areas of the campus to support continuous improvement. The Semester Enrollment Report provides the sum of credit hours for full- and part-time students, so the data can be reviewed for trends within these groups and guide enrollment planning (S6.C9: Spring 2018 Enrollment Report). The One-Year-Out Alumni Survey includes data for students who went to graduate school and/or attained employment. This occupational outcomes information is also now gathered as part of the National Association of Careers and Employers (NACE) First-Destination Survey to provide benchmarking (S6.C9: NACE First-Destination Survey December 2018). This kind of information has contributed, for example, to the Cahill Center for Career Development's enhanced focus on employer engagement and relations and the drive to foster greater connections between students and employers. This resulted in the hiring of an Assistant Director of Employer Engagement in 2018 and, subsequently, the largest Career Fair in the history of Ramapo College with more than 90 employers and 500 students participating. Utilization of the Cahill Center has increased and is projected to continue on this trajectory (S5.C9: Cahill Career Center Outcomes).

Sustaining planning, accountability, and assessment within individual Units and broader College Divisions requires campus-wide support. The College has identified, established, and regularly monitors performance indicators linked to strategic goals and objectives, as reflected in Dashboard 2021 (S6.C9: Dashboard 2021). Housed on the College webpage, Dashboard 2021 is part of the effort to engage the entire Ramapo community in understanding the College's progress with respect to its strategic goals and objectives. Updates are given to the Board of Trustees and the Divisional Vice Presidents who discuss the analyzed data with their Unit leaders in order to inform decision-making.

As a result of the self-study process, Ramapo developed an administrative assessment structure to support assessment in administrative departments of the College. A look at the Integrated Planning Model shows an integrated planning and assessment process, begun in spring 2019, that incorporates both academic and administrative assessment (S6.C9: Integrated Planning Model). In this model, academic assessment committees (GECCo and CWAAC) join two administrative committees (Administrative Assessment Committee (AAC) and SRAB) on the new Institutional Effectiveness Council (IEC) (S6.C8: AAC Primer) in order to fully support and integrate assessment efforts across the institution. The IEC includes the Chairs of GECCo, CWAAC, AAC, and SRAB and provides an overarching analysis and synthesis of the College's annual activities to demonstrate institutional effectiveness as well as alignment with the Mission and strategic goals of the College (S6.C8: AAC Primer).

The Administrative Assessment Committee (AAC) was established in the spring of 2019 to assist administrative units in identifying and implementing meaningful, streamlined, and sustainable assessment practices that are intended to promote continuous improvement and firmly establish a campus-wide culture of assessment. The AAC includes members from various Divisions whose functions lend themselves to enterprise-wide perspectives, systems knowledge, assessment, and/or data analysis. Somewhat mirroring the successful CWAAC model, each AAC member convenes a Division Effectiveness Committee (DEC), which in turn coordinates the planning and assessment that is conducted by Departments and other Units (S6.C8: AAC Primer).

Within its first year of existence, the AAC developed and endorsed the Administrative Unit Rubric that was used to retroactively assess 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 Unit plans, consolidated the number of reporting Units, and created an AAC website inclusive of meeting minutes and informative resources (S6.C8: AAC Website). Among the AAC's first successes was the development and implementation of a checklist for administrative assessment (S6.C8: AAC Checklist). The checklist, designed to demystify the planning and assessment process, was used to inform the design and content of the Administrative Unit Rubric (S6.C8: Administrative Rubric; S6.C8: AAC Meeting Minutes 9.17.19 ). All AY 2017-

2018 and AY 2018-2019 Unit plans, tasks, measures, targets, results, and findings were assessed according to the rubric.

As a result of AY 2017-2018 rubric findings, AAC focused its energies on working with DEC's to strengthen their Unit purposes and outcomes as well as their tasks/measures/targets. The year-over-year comparison of AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 plans revealed significant improvements (S6.C8: YOY Analysis of Rubrics) in these areas. For example, across Unit plans, the quality of purpose statements and Unit-level outcomes improved from 1.89 (developing) to 2.28 (competent). In addition, across Unit plans, the quality of tasks/measures/targets improved from 1.66 to 1.89.

As a result of AY 2018-2019 findings, AAC advanced a number of recommendations, which were later endorsed by the Cabinet:

- to consolidate Unit Plan Reports for AY 2019-2020, moving from 70 to 46
- to assess Units' strategic objectives and discontinue the practice of capturing Units' operational/individual performance in SPOL
- to ensure consistent terminology use across all platforms (i.e., planning software to checklist and rubrics)
- to foster integrated planning through the creation of intra-divisional collaboration opportunities (S6.C8: Cabinet Minutes 5.21.19; S6.C8: AAC Memo to Cabinet).

The AAC will also focus its AY 2019-2020 energies on working with DEC's to continue to improve in all areas with special attention given to ensuring that tasks, measures, and targets are appropriate and clearly written and that results are used to inform decisions and close the loop in a manner that firmly establishes a culture of assessment.

### **Financial Planning and Budgeting**

In keeping with *Requirements of Affiliation 8 and 11*, planning and budgeting are central to ensuring the long-term stability and sustainability of Ramapo College (S6.C3: Budget FY20; S6.C3: Principles of Budget Development). All planning is driven by the College's strategic plan (S6.C3: Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021) which advances four key strategic goals that shape Unit-level plans and priorities. Ramapo College continues to enhance the processes and tools necessary to address and ensure attainment of key strategic and financial goals. For example, Adaptive Insights budgeting software works hand-in-hand with the SPOL budget model and has allowed for a more transparent and accountable process across the College (S6.C3: Capital 2019 Adaptive Upload; S6.C3: Planning Objective Report). This system is updated daily and provides a user-friendly interface including detailed categories of expenses and comparisons to prior periods. These features allow Unit Directors to access and monitor both year-to-date and trend-style budget information and current-year expenditures in a nearly simultaneous manner (S6.C3: Adaptive Insights Reports for Unit Directors; S6.C3: Unit Specific Dashboards Snapshot). Unit Directors are responsible for monitoring their expenditures and must verify monthly that all budget information has been updated thereby ensuring that spending is reconciled on a monthly basis (S6.C3: Monthly Email To Unit Directors).

### **The Budgeting Process**

The budgeting process at Ramapo College is comprehensive and collaborative. At its core, it is based on senior administration expectations about prospective enrollment, revenues, and other determinants of operational and financial results. However, all academic and operational areas are ultimately engaged in the budget process. Thus, in an effort to provide Unit Directors adequate time and information to evaluate and prioritize budget requests, they are notified well in advance of any upcoming fiscal year deadlines and procedures (S6.C3: Budget FY20 Request Memo). This process begins each year when the Office of Budget & Fiscal Planning (S6.C3: Office of Budget & Fiscal Planning Webpage) sends the Budget Request Memo to all Unit Directors delineating the procedures and documentation necessary to make budget requests and changes. With the implementation of Adaptive Insights, the College has enabled each planning Unit to document its requests for budget changes. In addition, by providing the Unit Directors with a clearer picture of both historical and anticipated spending for each Unit, managers are better able to see trends.

The budget process also prompts Units to assess their needs for the subsequent year and adjust resource allocations to meet their assessment-related goals and objectives. Any modifications required in the course of the fiscal year are discussed with the Vice President who oversees the Unit in question. If changes involve personnel, the Position Review Committee (PRC) reviews the proposed position in light of the goals of the Unit and the resources needed to accomplish them.

### **Two Main Components**

The budget process has two main components, both of which are driven by the strategic goals and priorities of the

College. The first addresses the operational budget of each Unit while the second addresses Strategic Priority Incentive Fund (SPIF) and Capital requests (S6.C3: SPIF & Capital Request Policies/Procedure).

### **Prior Year Operational Budgets**

Prior year operational budgets, following input by the Budget Office related to any anticipated operational changes, serve as the baseline for budget projections for the upcoming year. During the budgeting process, Unit Directors are invited to request budget changes, which are entered into Adaptive Insights by the Unit Director or a designated proxy. After all requests have been accumulated, the President's Cabinet reviews and approves the consolidated budget based on the College's strategic priorities (S6.C3: Budget FY19 Change Requests and Approvals) and available assessment results.

### **SPIF and Capital Requests**

The second component of the budgeting process addresses the Unit Directors' SPIF and Capital requests as submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning (S6.C3: SPIF & Capital Request Policies/Procedures). SPIF requests must be tied to specific activities or projects that advance and/or impact an institutional goal, objective, or outcome (S6.C3: ASB FY19 SPIF Request; S6.C3: SPIF Rubric). Metrics for measuring results are required at the time of the request. SPIF and Capital requests are reviewed by the Strategic Resource Advisory Board (SRAB), which makes recommendations to Cabinet based on the College's strategic goals and outcomes, institutional priorities, and Division targets (S6.C3: SRAB Description ; S6.C3: SRAB FY19 Executive Summary; S6.C3: SRAB Minutes from 4.11.18). Approved requests for funds are included in the annual budget using both SPOL and Adaptive Insights (S6.C3: Budget FY20 Planning Calendar).

The Budget Office summarizes and formulates the final comprehensive fiscal year budget for the College and evaluates its assumptions against alternative scenarios (e.g., weaker vs. stronger enrollment) to determine the potential financial and operational impact on key strategic goals and priorities. The Budget Office then presents the budget to the Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF) who evaluates it with respect to the overall financial health and sustainability of the College (S6.C3: Open Forum FY19 Presentation; S6.C3: Budget FY19 Presentation BOT).

The VPAF presents the finalized budget to the President's Cabinet for evaluation and approval (S6.C3: Cabinet Minutes 4.26.18). A draft of the budget is then communicated by the VPAF to the entire Ramapo College community in an open forum meeting (S6.C3: Open Forum FY19 Presentation; S6.C3: Budget FY20 Planning Calendar) and presented to the Board of Trustees for approval (S6.C3: BOT Minutes 6.25.18). The final budget is then published to the Budget & Fiscal Planning webpage (S6.C3: Budget FY19 Book), and Unit Directors are advised that the budget has been approved by the BOT (S6.C3: FY19 Approved Budget Memo).

Throughout the fiscal year, the Budget Office prepares and analyzes monthly financial statements and comparative financial information. By doing so, the Budget Office routinely monitors the College's finances and is responsible for the initial preparation and updating of both year-to-date and year-end projected revenue and expense results (S6.C4: Internal Financial Statement). The Budget Office reviews the financial information with the VPAF monthly and, in turn, the VPAF shares the information with members of the Board of Trustees at all Human, Capital, and Financial Resources Committee and Board of Trustees meetings (S6.C4: BOT Financial Report October 2018) to ensure that the Trustees, as financial stewards of the College, are well informed.

### **Transparency and Effectiveness: The Role of Auditing**

In order to improve transparency of College operations and to monitor the effectiveness of internal controls, Ramapo College established the Office of Internal Audit in October 1986. The mission of Internal Audit is to provide independent and objective reviews and assessments of the business activities, operations, financial systems, and internal accounting controls of the College. Internal Audit accomplishes its mission by conducting operational, financial, regulatory, and performance audits, selected as a result of a comprehensive risk analysis and assessment process. The audit plan is reviewed and approved by the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees and the President of Ramapo College on an annual basis (S6.C7: Internal Audit Plan 2019). The Internal Audit Charter (S6.C7: IAD Charter) and Policies and Procedures (S6.C7: IAD Policies and Procedures) govern the Internal Audit function. Audits conducted are reviewed with appropriate management, and audit issues are managed until resolution and closure by the Auditor. The status of audit issues is reported quarterly to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees (S6.C7: Audit Issue Follow Up September 2019). Internal Audit assists the College and the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees in accomplishing their objectives by bringing a systematic and disciplined approach to the evaluation and improvement of the effectiveness of the College's operations, internal controls, and governance processes.

In line with *Requirement of Affiliation 11*, the College undergoes a financial audit each year. This includes an audit of the Ramapo Foundation. In FY 2018 and FY 2017, the accounting firm of PKF O'Connor Davies audited and issued an opinion regarding the Ramapo College financial statements. The auditors' reports indicates that the financial statements fairly present the financial position of the College (S6.C7: Independent Auditors Report 2016; S6.C7: Independent Auditors Report 2017). In addition, PKF O'Connor Davies also prepared "management letters" dated June 30, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Both sets of reports attest to and document the veracity of Ramapo College's financial statements. Notably, the 2016 and 2017 management letters "did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses." Management responses to address and correct specific observations by the auditors are also delineated in the reports (S6.C7: Management Letter 6.30.16; S6.C7: Management Letter 6.30.17).

The latest Standard and Poors' (S&P) evaluation of Ramapo College's "Credit Profile" affirmed an "A/stable" long-term rating and underlying rating on the New Jersey Educational Facilities Authorities series 2006I, 2011A, 2012B, 2015, and 2017A revenue bonds issued for Ramapo College (S6.C7: S&P Credit Profile Report). S&P cited the following factors supporting their rating of the College's long-term debt:

1. "good student quality and historically stable enrollment, which we expect to continue"
2. "consistent, although softening, full accrual operating surpluses, reflective of the college's conservative budgeting and financial practices"
3. "excellent adjusted unrestricted net assets (UNA) as a percentage of adjusted operating expenses at 35.9 percent as of June 20, 2018"

The College was also reviewed by Moody's Investors Service in July 2019. At that time, Moody's revised the outlook for Ramapo to stable from negative and affirmed the A2 rating on the related bonds. Moody's cited that the revision reflects their "expectation of continued strong operating cash flows and debt service coverage and manageable future capital plans, which will continue to improve the liquidity cushion relative to debt and operations" (S6.C8: Core Financial Ratios and Composite Financial Index; S6.C8: Moody's Press Release 7.24.19).

### **Human Resources at Ramapo College**

The human resources functions at Ramapo College are performed by two integrated areas, which were previously standalone. Through strategic partnerships and collaboration with the Ramapo College community, the Human Resources Department (HR) supports the College's financial strength and sustainability by recruiting, developing, and retaining a high performing and diverse workforce. HR is committed to providing and fostering a healthy, safe, and productive work environment by promoting teamwork, communication, leadership development, integrity, and trust.

#### **Human Resources**

The Human Resources (HR) (S6.C5: HR Webpage) Department at Ramapo College consists of an Assistant Vice President (AVP) for Human Resources and 11.5 full-time staff members. This staff, including the AVP, oversees approximately 688 full-time employees and 425 part-time employees (including adjunct instructors) and, in conjunction with the Cahill Career Development Center, jointly oversees approximately 1,000 on-campus student employees. The functional areas that fall within HR encompass recruitment/selection, discipline, classification and compensation, labor relations, learning, development and performance (LDP), employee benefits, payroll, and employee relations (as described below). HR is structured with one manager per area who is generally responsible for the overall function of each area (S6.C5: HR Organization Chart).

#### **Employee Relations**

Employee Relations (ER) is now incorporated within HR and is responsible for the administration of faculty tenure, promotions, career development, and the collective negotiations agreement between the College and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) (S6.C4: AFT Contract 2015-2019). ER is responsible for the disciplinary, reappointment, and performance appraisal processes for professional staff. ER also monitors the College's policies related to Conflict of Interest, Intellectual Property, and Code of Professional Responsibility along with compliance with all federal and state policies, statutes, regulations, and procedures. In addition, ER provides assistance to the General Counsel regarding the College's Ethics Compliance Program to ensure agreement with ethical standards and behavior as set forth in federal, state and local statutes, regulations, codes, and guidelines. ER is now also responsible for the administration of the Communication Workers of American (CWA) contract (S6.C4: CWA Contract 2011-2015 and updated MOA) and the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) agreement (S6.C4: IFPTE Contract 2015-2019).



## **Cultivating and Supporting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

One of the HR Department's main goals is to support the College in Goal 2 of the strategic plan, To Cultivate and Support Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. To this end, the Department promotes initiatives that foster an inclusive, diverse, and supportive environment for work, study, and social interaction.

HR works in conjunction with the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Compliance (EDIC) to optimize advertisement of faculty and staff job postings in order to further the College's efforts of attracting a more diverse pool of applicants. One of the objectives in the College's strategic plan is to "recruit employees who reflect the growing demographics of the county and state in which we operate and are committed to diversity and inclusiveness." These efforts are being monitored (e.g., compared to the previous year's data), and the development of an assessment-based action plan is currently underway. In addition, a diversity dashboard has been created, which will enable on-time, on-demand access to current demographic data (S6.C4: Message from the Chief Equity & Diversity Officer, S6.C4: Faculty Job Posting - INSIGHT Into Diversity, S6.C4: Diversity Ad in The Chronicle of Higher Education's "Diversity in Academe Special Issue 9.28.18", S6.C4: Job Posting for Director of Employment Equity and Affirmative Action in the Professional Women of Color Network, S6.C4: Job Ads Sent via Higher Ed Jobs Diversity & Inclusion Email List).

## **Technology-Driven Human Resource Solutions**

HR uses Banner 9.0, the College's enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, as its main information system. The HR Department has implemented an applicant tracking system, HireTouch, which enables an instant view of each candidate and monitors progress at every step of the recruitment and selection process. HR-related metrics for the new strategic plan have been established in fall 2019 with annual reports to be made available in January 2020 and January 2021. These metrics will include cost per hire, time to fill vacancies, employee turnover ratio, demographic data, training courses, LDP, recruitment and search data, absenteeism, safety, health and wellness, and performance management and training. Any metric that is not meeting its established target will be investigated, and appropriate action plans will be developed and implemented in a timely manner to achieve continuous improvement in operations.

## **Leadership and Development for Organizational Effectiveness**

In order to fulfill its commitment to enhancing the current and future organizational effectiveness of the College, and in line with *Requirement of Affiliation 8*, over the past two years, Human Resources has implemented the two major programs described below, a formal program for professional development and a new leadership model.

### **Formal Professional Development Training Program**

A formal program for professional development was put in place in fall 2017. Since the program's inception, 57 training sessions attended by approximately 400 employees have been held, and 92 percent of attendees rated these sessions satisfactory or better (S6.C4: LDP Statistics). These training sessions have covered a variety of topics in multiple formats. Courses aim to promote diversity and inclusion, help employees develop interpersonal and leadership skills, foster team building and productivity, and more in order to improve the level of work, life, and job satisfaction. Some of the courses offered by LDP include Time Management, Understanding Your Personality Style at Work, Emergency Preparedness, and Mindful Leadership. An assortment of articles and videos on topics such as Excelling as a Manager or Supervisor, Managing and Motivating the Most Challenging Employee Behavior, and Empathy at Work is posted on the LDP webpage (S6.C4: LDP Webpage), which can be accessed by all employees. Additional learning opportunities are offered via a membership with Academic Impressions, which provides consultation and hands-on experience and partners with Ramapo in delivering complex professional development programs to the campus. Employees may expand their knowledge on issues such as student housing, student success, health/wellness, enrollment services, and orientation. LDP uses surveys (S6.C8: LDP Workshop Evaluation) to assess the effectiveness of the training sessions and uses participant feedback to make improvements to delivery methods, as well as to elicit suggestions for new training topics. For example, as a result of survey feedback, LDP held Learning Day in June 2019. The day offered faculty and staff 10 one-hour learning sessions on a variety of topics including mindfulness, supervision skills, communication, and performance reviews (S6.C8: Learning Day 2019). Since the program was begun, LDP has offered 54 workshops, and 100 percent of Ramapo managers attended at least one LDP workshop.

### **A New Leadership Model**

The second new program facilitated by LDP is the new leadership model that was launched in July 2018 to develop highly effective leaders and to address the swift pace of change and the complexity of the challenges facing higher education in general and Ramapo College in particular (S6.C8: New Leadership Model). This model will be used to support leaders' personal and professional growth in order to create Ramapo managers who are resilient, anticipatory thinkers, risk

tolerant, supportive of creativity, effective facilitators, courageous decision-makers, and able to bounce back after a crisis or when faced with an obstacle.

### **Manager Competencies Review**

Within the new leadership model, the Manager Competencies Review (S6.C8: Manager Competencies Overview) is an ongoing process of communication, feedback, and evaluation that provides an opportunity to:

- develop a clear definition of the competencies needed to succeed in the role of a leader at each level
- establish employee outcomes and assess progress toward achievement targets, as well as personal and professional development
- encourage dialogue between the supervisor and employee
- provide a means of identifying and addressing job-related learning opportunities
- foster morale

Conducted two times per year, the Manager Competencies Review uses a Manager's Scorecard to measure performance and success along five areas of competency: organizational, position-specific, analytic, personal, and communication. Performance improvement plans and coaching follow when necessary. Additionally, a 360 review by peers and subordinates will be completed every three years with the first round being launched in January 2020 (S6.C8: Manager Competencies Scorecard). The initial round of scorecard assessments resulted in 100 percent of managers participating in the process and completing the interim scorecard. To date, 98 percent of managers have completed the final scorecard. Data collected indicated that most managers and supervisors agreed on what the skills gaps were (S6.C8: Interim Score Card Results). For example, in the Analytic Competencies section, Stakeholder Analysis scores were lowest at 3.7 and 3.8 on a five-point scale for managers and employees, respectively. Driven by these findings, the Learning Day that was held in June 2019 offered sessions aimed at helping managers further develop their analytic competencies skills to over 70 employees who attended them (S6.C8: Learning Day 2019).

### **Performance Appraisal for all Employees**

In addition, performance appraisal for all other employees at Ramapo College is used to assess performance to date, facilitate communication between employees and their supervisors, and to clarify job expectations (S6.C8: Performance Appraisal). Classified employees in the CWA and IFPTE unions are evaluated using the State of New Jersey Performance Assessment Review (PAR) (S6.C8: PAR 2018-2019 Form For Employees; S6.C8: PAR 2018-2019 Form For Supervisors; S6.C8: PAR Overview & Instructions). This rating cycle starts in September by setting up job expectations and individual objectives and goals that are tied to the departmental/Unit goals. Supervisors meet with their employees in March for an interim assessment and in August for a final assessment.

AFT Professional Staff are evaluated with the Annual Performance Assessment System (APAS) in a yearly review process (S6.C8: AFT Prof Staff PBP Procedures; S6.C8: AFT Prof Staff PBP 2018-2019 Calendar; S6.C8: AFT Assessment Only Calendar; S6.C8: Staff 2nd and 3rd and Part-Time Reappointment Calendar; S6.C8: Staff 4th and 5th and 1st Multi-Year Reappointment Calendar; S6.C8: Staff Multi Year Reappointment Calendar; S6.C8: AFT APAS Instructions, S6.C8: AFT APAS Form). The APAS cycle starts in July (for 12-month AFT Professional Staff) and September (for 10-month AFT Professional Staff) when employees and supervisors meet to assess and close out the prior year and to prepare the APAS for the upcoming year. Supervisors/employees follow the respective reappointment calendar (for those in single year contracts) or the assessment-only calendar (for those in multi-year contracts not going through the reappointment process) to complete the APAS, which is then submitted either as part of the reappointment application or by itself through the assessment-only process.

### **Faculty Review for Reappointment**

Faculty are reviewed annually for reappointment until they have attained tenure, which usually occurs in their seventh year of employment. After being tenured, each faculty member engages in an in-depth career development self-study every five years "to determine the manner in which he/she may best advance his/her own professional growth" (S6.C8: Career Development Procedures; S6.C8: Career Development Calendar; S6.C8: Career Development Checklist).

### **Support for Employee Morale**

Fun, social events have been added to the college-wide calendar beginning with the President's Welcome Back Reception held at his on-campus residence, the Havemeyer House. Additional events include an annual summer picnic, a support staff breakfast, and a holiday luncheon. The College has great success hosting its annual Take Your Child to Work Day, which began in 2017. This program was developed so that employees could give their children a glimpse of the working

world and expose them to their work environment. Informal feedback has been positive in that employees reported that the program enhanced the “community of Ramapo through welcoming our children.” A service awards program celebrates employees’ anniversaries of employment (S6.C4: List of Events for Employees, S6.C4: Emails from Parents of Participants, S6.C4: Evaluations TYCTWD). The College promotes work-life balance by following flexible hours during the summer when employees work extended hours Mondays through Thursdays and enjoy Fridays off. The week of spring break in March will also follow the flex work schedule and offer an additional Friday off for employees (S6.C4: 2019 College Office Hours Calendar).

### **Information Technology Services at Ramapo**

Information Technology Services (ITS) is comprised of four separate, but highly integrated operating areas: Applications Development, Client Services, Infrastructure/Media/Telecom, and Instructional Design. Decisions that affect other ITS areas or the campus at large follow a hierarchical process from ITS Unit Directors to the CIO and, if necessary, to the Vice President of Administration and Finance (S6.C5: ITS Org Chart).

Within ITS, each Director is responsible for their respective operations and is accountable for the performance and productivity of the associated staff. There is excellent cross-area collaboration and communications among the ITS managerial staff as well as clear direction and support from the CIO and the Vice President of Administration and Finance, as is formally documented in ITS-related policies and procedures (S6.C1: ITS Strategic Plan) (S6.C1: IT Handbook).

### **Technology Planning and the Strategic Plan**

All technology planning is driven at the highest level by the College’s strategic plan and is aligned with the College’s strategic goals. ITS works together with other Units on campus to investigate, assess, manage, and/or implement technology across the campus. ITS’s mission is to enable the College to enhance its overall quality of data, extend access to its programs and services, and improve operational effectiveness and efficiency. Plans are presented to various individuals, including the Provost, Deans, faculty, students, and staff, for their feedback. ITS then incorporates relevant feedback to formulate a final plan to be followed each year (S6.C1: ITS Strategic Plan).

One of the strategic goals is to utilize information technology to enrich the educational experience by enhancing access to and the quality of student learning, student services, and student engagement in the College community (S6.C1: ITS Strategic Plan). For example, the SPIF-funded adoption of Canvas as the College’s new learning management system (LMS) in AY 2019-2020, will improve delivery of the online and hybrid learning experience and also help with the assessment of student learning outcomes. This decision resulted from a faculty survey that revealed dissatisfaction with using Moodle, the College’s most recent LMS. In response, the Task Force for Online and Hybrid Learning and the Learning Management System Task Force investigated options and ultimately recommended the adoption of Canvas (S6.C9: Task Force for Online Learning Report and Recommendations; S6.C9: Canvas at Ramapo). In an effort to consolidate all technology, in AY 2018-2019 the College moved all software under the management of ITS. In addition to managing budgets, ITS will also be regularly assessing the products and their usage, with a focus on eliminating redundancy.

### **Banner 9**

In spring 2019, the campus completed an upgrade to Banner 9, which continues to serve as the operational backbone of the College’s technology infrastructure by supporting and interfacing with several cloud and on-premise applications spread throughout the campus. Banner 9 is cloud-ready and can be accessed via a smartphone, tablet, or traditional workstation. Greater functionality was added to its Self Service module. This implementation took two years and utilized resources from across campus. A rigorous training calendar was implemented and a training room was set up to enable small groups of end users to participate in hands-on learning (S6.C1: Ramapo College Mail – Important news about Banner 9 Rollout). The staff of all offices using Banner 9 Admin Pages (formerly Banner INB Forms) have been trained. While daily training sessions were offered from August 2018 through December 2018, ongoing support is still available through the Web Help Desk Application and through Banner User Group meetings. Banner 9 Self Service improvements will impact several areas including those used by students and faculty. The Registration module has new features that seamlessly integrate with another new product the campus has implemented (i.e., uAchieve).

### **uAchieve**

uAchieve consists of degree audit and planning tools that aid students to more accurately plan their course load so they may meet their educational objectives and graduate on time. The implementation was a team effort between the Center for Student Success, the Office of the Registrar, and ITS. As of April 2019, the Center for Student Success has worked with all first-year students to create customized graduation plans in uAchieve, which will further Ramapo’s strategic plan

efforts to increase four- and six-year graduation rates (S6.C6: What's New in Banner 9; S6.C6: Degree Planning Task Force Summary).

### **Slate**

In 2016, the Office of Admissions implemented a new SPIF-funded recruiting and admissions cloud-based tool, Slate from Technolutions. Slate is a customer relationship management online tool that has eliminated the majority of hard copy applications and transcripts, thereby making the process more efficient and reducing the need for paper storage. For instance, Ramapo College received 8,044 total applications in fall 2017. Since the average number of pages per application before Slate was 20, this resulted in an estimated 160,880 total document pages in 2017. In 2018, Ramapo College received 9,034 total graduate and undergraduate applications, an estimated 180,680 total pages. The total amount saved over two years (fall applicants only) through the implementation of the Slate system is, thus, 341,560 pieces of paper (S6.C6: Peter Rice Email Slate Paper Savings 1.17.19).

As a further effort to improve efficiency, applications to Ramapo College, registration for events, and other necessary communications have all been moved online. Communication has further been enhanced with the ability to text as well as email recruits and applicants (S6.C6: Slate Peter Rice Analysis).

### **Schedule 25**

As a result of feedback from the community, another SPIF-funded application that was introduced in summer 2019 is a robust room scheduler. Schedule 25 from CollegeNet replaced the previous room scheduler that was found to be ineffective. Selection of the Schedule 25 product resulted from a collaborative effort of several stakeholder Units on campus, including ITS, to ensure compatibility with other software platforms. It will be used mainly by the Office of the Registrar as well as Events and Conferences. The Registrar is now able to schedule classrooms automatically for upcoming semesters, which will allow Events and Conferences to set up events more efficiently without needing to coordinate with the Registrar. Schedule 25 offers an extensive choice of reports, including a report on campus-wide room usage. This will allow for optimal allocation/utilization of space resources at the College (S6.C6: Scheduling Software Task Force and Review; S6.C6: Ramapo Series25 Cost Proposal; S6.C6: ITS New Software Evaluation Worksheet).

### **Optimizing Technology to Address the Needs of the Community**

In AY2018-2019, ITS consolidated the previously decentralized campus software infrastructure. This was driven by several factors, the foremost of which was the need to identify areas of overlap for effective resource management. One of the results of this process was the implementation of a new help desk ticketing system for both Facilities and ITS. In addition, several different mass email services were being used and, as ITS rolled out greater cybersecurity controls, having these catalogued was instrumental in a smooth rollout without email service interruptions. This also serves as a data collection mechanism for future evaluation and having the list in place has already prevented duplicative software purchases. Lastly, the access ITS now has to all the campus software facilitates enhanced support for all campus constituencies and allows for the capturing of overall software costs in one place (S6.C6: Master Software List).

Another collaborative effort among Enrollment Management, the Center for Student Success, Cahill Career Development Center, Admissions, Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation, and ITS, focused on examining students' technology needs and determining if current applications could be used to address them. Given that research has shown students prefer communication via text rather than email, the College is presently assessing the best tool to use for text communications with students, in addition to evaluating the applications currently being utilized. This will be completed in spring 2020 with a recommendation to be implemented in fall 2020 (S6.C8: Email Charge to Form EMSA Technology; S6.C8: EMSA Tech Group Summary; S6.C8: ACUHO-I Institutional Questions 2015-2016; S6.C8: ACUHO-I Institutional Questions 2016-2017; S6.C8: ACUHO-I Institutional Questions 2017-2018).

ITS solicits feedback from campus by meeting with Units, analyzing Help Desk reports, and occasionally attending campus Units' regularly-scheduled meetings. Each Unit Director also meets frequently with the Chief Information Officer (CIO), sharing feedback from across campus. An example of informal feedback comes from the Banner 9 orientation sessions, as these one-on-one sessions allow ITS to understand the end-users' requirements and challenges in executing their business processes. From these sessions it was discovered that one-to-one and/or one-to-few contact is essential, and that even very brief individual meetings were more impactful than informational emails sent to the campus community.

### **Improving the Technology Infrastructure**

The College continues to improve its technology infrastructure to carry out the College's Mission most effectively. For

example, resources were allocated to move from a Unix to a Linux environment, which will result in a more flexible operating environment as well as reduced costs. This project is underway and has two phases (final verification of the system that controls all logins and the migration of the Banner Oracle databases off of Sun UNIX and onto RedHat Linux) that will be completed in fall 2019. Moreover, the migration to a Virtual Machine (VM) environment has allowed the elimination of several stand-alone servers. The plan is to continue to reduce the footprint of the server pool and gradually move, as appropriate, to a cloud-based environment (S6.C1: ITS Strategic Plan).

All staff and faculty have transitioned to Google's Gmail as of January 2017. This followed the student email, which was migrated in September 2010. All Ramapo College email is now housed on a Google server in the cloud. Along with aiding in disaster recovery, Gmail offers better security, larger storage capacity, and access to Google's collection of online applications such as Google Groups, Google Docs, and Google Sheets. It also provides extra storage space for the end-user with its application, Google Drive, as well as a more collaborative work environment. One such example of campus-wide information sharing that is now possible with this new platform is the routine use of the Deans' Council and Provost's Council discussion boards (S6.C1: ITS Strategic Plan; S6.C8: Email Stefan Becker to Faculty).

Client Services, Infrastructure, Telecom, and Media are all lending their services to the completion of the new Learning Commons, which began in spring 2019. These Units are working in concert with the Capital Planning Unit as well as with the architects and engineers of the Learning Commons to complete the entire project by fall 2021 (S6.C1: ITS Strategic Plan).

In August 2017, based on feedback from the community, the College significantly increased its bandwidth to improve internet access and allow for future expansion. The completion of the residence hall WIFI upgrade was followed by a full upgrade of the entire campus, which was finalized in spring 2019. While the voicemail system was upgraded in FY 2019 in order to keep pace with current technology, a campus-wide telephone system upgrade is currently set to take place over the next few years (S6.C1: ITS Strategic Plan).

### **The Offices of Facilities Management and Capital Planning**

Ramapo College of New Jersey engages in comprehensive planning for facilities, infrastructure, and technology that includes consideration of sustainability and deferred maintenance and is linked to the institution's strategic and financial planning processes. The physical infrastructure is adequate to support the institution's operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Over the past ten years, the College has undergone significant growth, which is reflected clearly in the physical appearance of the campus. Six buildings have been constructed since 2005, and most other buildings have seen marked improvements or upgrades. As the campus has expanded, so too has the College's commitment to maintain the facilities and grounds at the highest level. The College's Maintenance and Housekeeping Departments provide superior support and care, as evidenced by the beauty of the campus and the excellent condition of the residence halls and academic and administrative buildings (S6.C6: Campus Facilities Master Plan). In 2018, Niche ranked Ramapo College as having the best dorms in New Jersey (S6.C6: Residence Halls Rated by Niche).

The Offices of Facilities Management and Capital Planning (OFM & CP) are responsible for the development of Ramapo College's facilities master plan, space planning, and space management on a daily basis for 300 acres, 43 buildings and approximately 2,000,000 square feet of space. It is the primary function of these offices to support Ramapo College's strategic plan for improving and/or supporting campus learning, living, and recreational spaces and programs.

OFM & CP maintains a Capital Project Status Report that provides a summary of the past, present, and future projects that align with the strategic plan and the Mission of the College (S6.C6: Strategic Plan 2018-2021; S6.C6: Campus Facilities Master Plan). The OFM & CP Units oversee projects from conception, through planning, implementation, completion, and ongoing future maintenance (S6.C6: Capital Projects). The OFM & CP manage services for the Ramapo College community in a variety of areas: Capital Planning, Project Management, Maintenance & Engineering Trades, Building Services, and Logistical Support Operations of Parking, Transportation, and Fleet Services. The Office lists a Capital Project Status Report and various other Department responsibilities on its website (S6.C6: Capital Projects).

### **Space Management**

Space management is conducted via requests to and initiatives of the Space Management and Allocations Advisory Committee (SMAAC). Space management and allocation is the effective and strategic stewardship of space to optimize use and to reduce the cost of waste. Re-conceptualized in 2017 from a space planning and request model to a space

management and allocation model, the goal of this committee is to ensure space is used optimally in alignment with the strategic plan and in furtherance of the Mission and goals of the College. This transition led to the establishment of principles and a refresh of the Committee's processes (S6.C6: Space Management and Allocation Policy). The Committee, whose members represent constituencies across the College, provides proactive input and feedback on space management and allocation strategies including space requests. The Committee reports to the President's Cabinet through the Chief of Staff, who began serving as its Chair in 2017. Since 2017, the Committee has issued year-in-brief reports via its website (S6.C6: Space Management Website). The reports summarize the Committee's activities and, in 2018, began describing the Committee's work in ways that better reflected the College's *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise* and Dashboard 2021. For example, the AY 2018-2019 SMAAC year-in-brief report notes that, per Dashboard 2021's indicator # 55, the Committee advanced several projects that increased the existing assignable square feet of campus space repurposed or reallocated for student/instructional use.

### **Our Commitment to Sustainability**

Ramapo College has a clear commitment to sustainability as is evidenced in its Mission statement (i.e., "We promote diversity, inclusiveness, sustainability, student engagement, and community involvement."). With the opening of Ramapo College's Sharp Sustainability Education Center and the signing of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, the College continues to dedicate itself to creating a more sustainable campus. For example, the College has entered into a public/private partnership to install a photovoltaic system that will be used to offset electricity/fuel consumption. This will be described in greater detail below.

### **The Facilities Master Plan**

Ramapo College's Campus Facilities Master Plan (S6.C6: Campus Facilities Master Plan) provides a valuable road map for future development and includes an analysis of existing conditions; an analysis of space utilization; development of a prioritized list of future needs for renovations, new construction, and infrastructure; massing diagrams for future new construction; and a project implementation schedule.

The 2013 Campus Facilities Master Plan was designed and adopted to serve the College as a 10-year plan to further the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. The refresh of the Master Plan that is currently underway mirrors well the refresh of the Strategic Plan that resulted in *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*. Developed with sustainability in mind, the 2013 Master Plan prioritized the renovation of existing buildings over new development, ensuring efficient use of existing space and resources while establishing a pattern for future growth. To this end, the following projects were completed in accordance with the Master Plan:

#### **A-Wing & B-Wing**

The Language Laboratory renovation and Honors Lounge renovation were completed.

#### **Birch Mansion**

Accessibility and safety issues have been resolved by the repair of the entry ramp and stairs, as well as office improvements on the second floor.

#### **G-Wing**

G-Wing was completely renovated to house the Schools of Social Science and Human Services and Theoretical and Applied Science. As part of this renovation, a new nanotechnology lab was constructed on the first floor. As a by-product of this renovation, the 36,000-square-foot state-of-the-art Adler Center for Nursing Excellence was also constructed and connected to G-Wing by an overhead walkway.

#### **Learning Commons**

The renovation of the existing George T. Potter Library into a more inclusive space exemplifies Ramapo's commitment to ongoing evolution to fit the 21<sup>st</sup> century climate in higher education (S6.C6: Library Learning Commons Project Webpage). Recognizing that the role of libraries has changed since the construction of the current facility, a more innovative design consistent with best practices in higher education was developed following a highly-engaged process of study and consultation with stakeholders (S6.C6: President's Advisory Council 4.17.17). The renovation of the existing library and addition of approximately 20,000 square feet will result in a state-of-the-art Learning Commons that supports the intellectual growth of our students and community. More specifically, the new space will allow for a mix of quiet and collaborative space with access to special collections and electronic resources, the creation of digital documents and presentations, and consultation with Library faculty and College Learning Specialists.

Newly designed areas will include spaces where students can process data, determine what is relevant, and form their own conclusions. In addition to housing the College's library collection, the Learning Commons will be a place where students can read, reflect, and conduct research in both individual and group settings. Students will also be able to collaborate with their peers and faculty and create and practice presentations, all while using state-of-the-art technologies (S6.C6: Library Learning Commons Project Webpage).

### **Linden Hall**

While the Learning Commons is being constructed, Linden Hall was taken offline as a residence hall and currently houses the library functions. As described fully in Standard I, once the Learning Commons opens in 2021, Linden Hall will be repurposed in a manner consistent with the Facilities Master Plan and the emphasis on the re-utilization of existing space when possible, rather than the construction of new buildings (S6.C6: Swing Space Assessment Memo; S6.C6: Swing Space Assessment Process).

### **The Hub of the Campus: C-Wing**

C-Wing was renovated and additional seating spaces were created to attract students. The Student Center Food Court was fully renovated, and the Carriage House adjacent to Kameron Pond was converted from a print shop to the new Padovano Commons, which hosts a variety of College events including student functions in the evenings.

### **Capital Improvement Project Requests**

The Capital Improvement Project Request system facilitates requests from all departments at Ramapo College. This work order system assists in planning by streamlining two types of Capital project requests: Minor Requests (e.g., renovation, modification) and Major Capital Improvements Project Requests. All Capital requests that are identified outside Capital and Facilities are submitted during the annual budget process. A detailed description and justification that connects the requested project to the College's strategic plan, its priorities, and Capital Master Plan is required (S6.C6: Capital Improvements Request Process).

Requests are reviewed and then prioritized by the SRAB, OFM & CP, and the VPAF. The approval process uses specific criteria relating to issues such as environmental concerns/sustainability, health and safety, compliance, and asset protection. After a project and its associated funding are approved, the OFM & CP create and oversee an appropriate project management plan while consulting the Unit/Division Head, College oversight departments, and any external regulatory agencies.

### **The Office of Environmental Health & Safety**

Under the guidance of the VPAF, the Office of Environmental Health & Safety develops, establishes, and administers the College's policies and procedures for campus environmental compliance, health, and safety (S6.C6: Environmental Issues). This ensures the College's compliance with all federal, state, and local laws, regulatory guidelines, OSHA, and industry standards relating to the environment, health, and safety. The Office works with the campus community to minimize loss exposure and liability and to ensure a safe, healthy environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

### **Ongoing Facilities Assessment and Maintenance**

The OFM & CP conduct a five-year full facilities conditions assessment, which is updated every year (S6.C6: FCA Academic Working Est 2018; S6.C6: FCA Residence Working Est 2018). This audit is conducted by an outside vendor and documents the condition of every square foot on campus, as well as the work order system and repair effectiveness on a real-time basis. The OFM & CP also periodically conduct a thorough needs assessment, where key issues that require attention (e.g., poor communication, lack of accountability) are identified and addressed. Each fiscal year, the OFM & CP Department Heads review business practices and present recommendations, if needed, for service delivery improvements. This practice encourages innovation and constant improvement of the delivery of services to all constituents, internal and external, including mechanisms to review processes and practices to ensure that services provided by the Unit are accessible, seamless, and effective. The Department periodically monitors activities input into a SPOL action plan, which might include modifying processes, operations, or practices of the Unit, as well as modifying intended outcomes or measures.

For FY 2018, out of a total of 16,041 work orders not including preventative maintenance items, 14,729 (i.e., 92 percent) were completed with the remaining 1,312 marked as open, deferred, or cancelled.

### **Web Help Desk by SolarWinds**

In October 2018, it was determined that the current ITS ticketing system was insufficient for Ramapo's needs.

Additionally, Facilities Management was utilizing a system that did not fully meet their goals. Working together, ITS and Facilities Management evaluated several products and jointly procured and installed the SolarWinds Web Help Desk to solve both issues. The system greatly improves communication with constituents by emailing them whenever work is performed and providing both a client portal and mobile app so clients can view status or open a new ticket at any time. Web Help Desk also provides flexible reporting options because it uses a Microsoft SQL-based database, which was lacking in prior systems. Lastly, it provides survey tools so ITS and Facilities Management can receive useful feedback to help improve future service.

### **Deferred Maintenance**

Most major maintenance, repair, and building renewal projects are funded as deferred maintenance. These projects include roofing replacement, correction of structural defects, repair or replacement of installed utility and distribution systems, and other high-cost projects, which cannot be funded by the Facilities Management operating budget. If not an emergency, these projects, ranging in cost from several hundred to several million dollars, are placed in the Capital Renewal maintenance backlog (S6.C6: Facilities Condition Assessment Academic Buildings; S6.C6: Facilities Condition Assessment Residences).

### **Photovoltaic System Public/Private Partnership**

In May 2012, the College entered into a Public/Private Partnership (PPP) with National Energy pursuant to the New Jersey Economic Stimulus Act of 2009. As a result of this PPP, National Energy has constructed and is operating a photovoltaic system on the College campus, which will further Ramapo's commitment to sustainability and protecting the environment and also greatly reduce its ongoing campus electricity costs. Array installations on all academic buildings are complete, as is installation of ground-mounted arrays and carports. This kind of Capital investment funds new and upgraded facilities, more basic facilities and equipment, and ongoing renewal and replacement of systems.

### **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

Based on this process of assessment and reflection on Ramapo College's fulfillment of Standard VI, the following opportunities for improvement and innovation have been generated:

1. As noted in Standard IV, continue to support the professional development of administrators regarding administrative assessment processes and practices including a balance of direct and indirect assessment measures. Also utilize assessment forums to discuss and share administrative assessment outcomes, making sure that they are used for continuous improvement. Further the development and adoption of an effective overall assessment structure for the College.
2. Refresh the Campus Facilities Master Plan to align with current campus needs and the revised strategic plan (i.e., *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*) in order to better utilize our facilities and capital resources.



## STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

### Ramapo College Meets the Requirements of Standard VII

A full description and illustration of the ways in which Ramapo College meets the five criteria and all applicable sub-criteria of Standard VII, as well as *Requirements of Affiliation 12 and 13*, are presented here. The Requirements of Affiliation are addressed throughout the Standard.

### Governance and Administrative Structures at Ramapo: An Overview

#### The Board of Trustees

#### The Makeup and Activities of the Board

Ramapo College is governed by a Board of Trustees (Board) appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the New Jersey State Senate (S7.C1: NJSA 18A:64-3, 2014). Up to eleven Trustees on the Board may be appointed in this manner. A Student Trustee, interviewed and screened by a committee of peers and selected by the Ramapo College Student Government Association, also sits on the Board and has full voting rights with the primary exception of personnel decisions as determined by statute (S7.C1: NJSA 18A:64-3.1, 2014). In addition, an alternate Student Trustee is selected by the Student Government Association and sits on the Board and, in the absence of the Student Trustee, has full voting rights with the aforementioned statutory exceptions.

As a fiduciary body, the Board holds the College in trust and, as such, is vested with the conduct of the business of the College. State law specifies that, among its many powers and duties, a college Board in New Jersey has the authority to determine the institution's curriculum, to borrow money, to direct and control its expenditures, to set policy, to hire and evaluate the college President, and to fix and determine tuition and fee rates (S7.C2: NJSA 18A:64-6, 2014).

The President and Board maintain an open line of communication, and the President meets routinely with members of the Board outside of the regular meeting schedule to discuss College activities and statewide issues. The makeup of the Board has changed significantly in the past decade. Most notably, the Board has been functioning in recent years with a full slate of eleven Trustees (S7.C2: BOT Bylaws 4.30.18). While greater continuity in service has been established, two Board members whose terms have expired continue to serve while awaiting further direction from the state, and five Board members are eligible for reappointment, but confirmation of such has not yet been received (S7.C2: BOT Profiles).

The College has had sporadic influence in getting the state to address the expired terms. In recent years, the College proposed three individuals for consideration by the state. Any of the three individuals, had they been advanced by the legislature and Governor, would have brought cultural, ethnic, and professional diversity to the Board, which is currently comprised of two appointed white/non-Hispanic females and nine appointed white/non-Hispanic men (not including the Student Trustee and the College President who is an ex officio member). Diversifying the Board to better reflect the population the College serves remains a priority of the institution (S7.C2: Trustee Nominations Background 2.14.17; S7.C2: Nominations and Governance Committee Minutes 2.14.17; S7.C2: BOT Minutes 2.27.17 Excerpt, see Section C2; S7.C2 BOT Nominees Redacted 6.26.19).

In addition to regular Board meetings during the year, the Board Chair and the College President, with guidance from the Nominations and Governance Committee of the Board, establish half-or full-day retreats to address specific issues in depth and also devote a portion of the regular meeting day to work/development sessions. The subjects of these retreats and development sessions are driven, in large part, by the Board's generally biannual self-assessments, which focus on the Board's understanding and fulfillment of their fiduciary duties of care, loyalty, and obedience. Retreats and development sessions allow for extensive discussion of specific issues and often involve the participation of senior administrators

and other College personnel. In recent years, the Board retreats and development sessions have been shaped by self-assessment results, as well as national and regional contexts, and have included topics such as: Ramapo College Board Performance Assessment: Identifying our Strengths, Areas for Improvement, and Action Plans (S7.C5: Board Assessment and Outcomes 2018); Trusteeship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (S7.C5: Board Assessment and Outcomes 2014); the Role of the Board in Risk Management (S7.C5: Board Risk Assessment and Outcomes 2016); and Emergency Preparedness (S7.C5: Board Retreat Minutes Emergency Preparedness 2017).

### **Orientation to Board Membership and Responsibilities**

In addition, the Board has implemented a comprehensive Board orientation program with an accompanying manual that includes: a formal orientation to trusteeship, a calendar of engagement activities and opportunities for Trustees, a series of development workshops focused on the range of fiduciary responsibilities, and programming through the Association of Governing Boards and the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities (S7.C2: BOT Orientation Manual Table of Contents). In addition, Section II of the manual, titled *Understanding Trusteeship*, contains resources outlining principles of good governance, a statement of Trustee responsibility, and documents clarifying the role of Trustees in providing oversight of the College and support of the President versus the role of the President in managing the College's day-to-day operations and keeping the Board adequately informed of institutional issues (S7.C2: BOT Orientation Manual Table of Contents; S7.C2: BOT Orientation Manual Section II Understanding Trusteeship).

### **The Charge of the Board and its Committees**

The Board Committees' charges are detailed in the Board's Committee Charter (S7.C2 :BOT Committee Charter) and therein outline the Board's fiduciary responsibilities in policy making, ensuring academic quality, and fiscal management, among others. For example, among the responsibilities of the Audit Committee are ensuring the integrity of the College's financial statements, overseeing the independent auditor's qualifications, independence, and performance, and providing oversight of the Whistle Blower Policy and the Internal Auditing Policy (S7.C2: Whistle Blower Policy; S7.C2: Internal Auditing Policy). Annually, the Audit Committee approves a planner that details the timing and compliance associated with its activities (S7.C2: Audit Committee Planners FY16-18).

In addition, the Human, Capital, and Financial Resources Committee charge notes it is responsible, in part, for overseeing all aspects of the College's fiscal operation and fiscal viability (e.g., financial policies, operating and capital budgets, priority spending plans, tuition and fee schedule) and reviewing matters related to campus infrastructure, technology, and physical environs. At each of its meetings, the Committee is provided with and discusses the College's financial statements and status of reserves, as well as a list of personnel actions and other items (S7.C2: Operating Statement Sample; S7.C2: Status of Reserves Sample; S7.C2: Executive Summary Sample). In addition, the Committee is responsible for the advancement of the budget for approval by the full Board each June and for approval and oversight of Capital projects. The Committee also engages in policy review and, in recent years, has facilitated several policy revisions including Policy 449: Employment of Officers, Senior Administrators, and Managers; Policy 215: Recruitment, Selection, and Employment; Policy 403: Investment; and Policy 401: College Authorized Signatories (S7.C2: Employment of Officers, Senior Administrators, and Managers Policy; S7.C2: Recruitment, Selection, and Employment Policy; S7.C2: Investment Policy; S7: C2: College Authorized Signatories Policy).

The Mission Fulfillment Committee charge notes its responsibility for ensuring the integrity of the College's academic, student affairs, and institutional advancement functions (S7.C2: Committee Charter April 30 2018 Page 10). The Committee has been engaged with a range of academic, student affairs, fundraising, and alumni relations issues over the years including but not limited to review of the annual Delaware Study that is aimed at determining academic program efficiency; progress on Academic Affairs goals; the revision of the GE curriculum; shared governance; faculty development and research; academic rigor; experiential learning; policy review; recruitment strategies and yield outcomes; planning and resource allocation; accreditation; and enrollment and population trends (S7.C2: Provost Report November 2015; S7.C2: Provost Report February 2016; S7.C2: Recruitment and Yield Initiatives; S7.C2: Provost Report June 2016; S7.C2: Provost Report September 2016; S7.C2: Enrollment and Population Trends; S7.C2: Provost Report February 2017; S7.C2: Provost Report April 2017; S7.C2: Provost Report April 2018). In addition, the Committee reviews and advances to the full Board for approval the establishment of new programs, the designation of faculty emeriti, and the authorization of sabbaticals. The Committee also approves policy and procedure for named gift opportunities and gift guidelines.

The Board periodically conducts a comprehensive review of its Bylaws and Committee Charter. This was most recently completed in 2017. The review yielded a strategic consolidation of committees and the refinement of each Committee's

charter, as described further below. The Board Bylaws and Committee Charter were last amended by the Ramapo College Board in April 2018 and, previously, in December 2017, September 2016, and October 2014 (S7.C2: BOT Minutes April 2018, see Sections G2 and H1a; S7.C2: BOT Minutes December 2017, see Sections B, and H4a; S7.C2: BOT Minutes September 2016, see Section H1; S7.C2: BOT Minutes October 2014 Draft).

In 2014, as part of its comprehensive review of the President, the Board approved significant revisions to Policy 208: Presidential Compensation and Evaluation. These revisions formalized the evaluation process by introducing specific procedures so as to provide the President and Board with explicit means to regularly evaluate the performance of the President on mutually agreed upon, measurable criteria. This formal Presidential review process has yielded annual evaluations that are conducted by the Board as well as a comprehensive periodic evaluation that was conducted by a third party and advanced to the Board for action. These evaluations are personnel records and are treated accordingly, but they serve as the impetus for formal Board action on Presidential remuneration and performance. Policy 208 is periodically reviewed by the Board and was most recently revised in April, 2018 (S7.C5: Presidential Compensation and Evaluation Policy).

### **Meetings of the Board**

The Board holds up to six formal regular meetings, including an annual budget hearing, per year as well as Committee meetings focused on particular areas such as academic and student affairs, human, capital and financial resources, audit, and governance. Ad hoc committees created by the Board to serve specific purposes also meet as needed.

Full Board meetings are open to the public, and members of the audience are invited to participate in public comment per the New Jersey's Open Public Meetings Act. In recent years, to foster sustainability efforts as well as meeting effectiveness, the Board transitioned to BoardPaq, a secure portal system featuring paperless operations. Electronic copies of Board meeting materials are provided to campus stakeholders in advance of the meetings via email, and hard copies are available to the public at meetings. Recipients of meeting materials include but are not limited to the senior administration, Faculty Assembly President, Staff Association President, Student Government Association President, internal auditor, union Presidents, Deans, and the general public.

Before decision items are introduced for a full Board vote, matters are discussed at Committee meetings. Board Trustees, the President, the Provost, and other senior officers sit on the majority of the Board committees, along with non-voting representatives from the administration, Faculty Assembly, the Ramapo Staff Association, and the Student Government Association. These representatives, upon appointment by their respective constituency groups, meet with the Chief of Staff & Board Liaison and are provided an orientation to their respective committee(s), as well as to their role as a non-voting representative and their responsibilities therein to share information, as appropriate, with the Board as well as with their constituents (S7.C2: BOT Bylaws 4.30.18, Sections Vc and d). College personnel, such as members of the President's Cabinet, the Faculty Assembly President, the Ramapo Staff Association President, and the Student Government Association President also attend full Board meetings where they are invited to present reports and serve as resources to the Board. Following each Board meeting, the Board update/recap is prepared by the Office of the President and is distributed across campus to all faculty, staff, and students. Each Board update/recap highlights recent Board actions and is archived on the Board's website (S7.C2: Bylaws Committee Charter Calendar Recaps).

### **Avoidance of Conflict of Interest by the Board**

As discussed in Standard II, there are clear and established conflict of interest requirements for the members of the Board of Trustees. These requirements as well as institutional policies and state mandates regarding immunity and ethics are included in the Board of Trustees Manual (S7.C2:BOT Orientation Manual Table of Contents), reviewed with Trustees during their orientation to the Board, and annually assessed in concert with the College's Ethics Liaison Officer who certifies the Board's compliance for the State Ethics Commission. As a New Jersey state public higher education institution, the College follows the New Jersey Conflict of Interest Law (N.J.S.A. 52:13D-12, et seq.), Uniform Ethics Code (S7.C2: Uniform Ethics Code), and New Jersey State Ethics Commission regulations to avoid conflicts of interest (S7.C2: State Ethics Commission Regulations).

### **Administration: The President and Cabinet**

The President is designated the chief executive officer of the College and is responsible for the administration of the College (S7.C3: NJSA 18A: 64-8, 2016). The President, who is presently in his fifteenth year at Ramapo, is also an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Board of Trustees and the College Foundation Board of Governors (S7.C3: President Curriculum Vitae).

Effective in 2015, the members of the Cabinet all report to the President directly (S7.C4: Ramapo Organizational Chart March 2019). These include the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Administration and Finance (VPAF), Vice President of Institutional Advancement (VPIA), Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (VPEMSA), Chief Equity and Diversity Officer (CEDO), Chief of Staff and Board Liaison (COS), and General Counsel (S7.C4: Provost Resume; S7.C4: VPAF Resume; S7.C4: VPIA Resume; S7.C4: VPEMSA Resume; S7.C4: CEDO Resume; S7.C4: COS Resume; S7.C4: General Counsel Resume). In addition, the Government Relations Officer, Ombudsperson, and Director of Internal Audit also report to the President directly, with the latter two positions also authorized as confidential reporters to the Board.

The President's Cabinet, the senior administrative body of the College, aids the President in decision-making. The Cabinet generally meets weekly to discuss campus-wide issues and initiatives, decisions being considered, policies and procedures, and items of importance to the well-being and advancement of the College. Cabinet members provide advice and counsel to the President, assisting him in making decisions that align with the College's strategic plan. Members of the Cabinet are responsible for bringing forth information pertinent to the areas they oversee, fostering horizontal communication and collaboration across Divisions, and relaying institutional decisions vertically through their direct reports.

The Cabinet meets annually with the Faculty Assembly Executive Council (S7.C4: Cabinet and FAEC Agenda 2017; S7.C4: Cabinet and FAEC Agenda 2018). Similarly, the President and Provost are invited to provide reports at every meeting of the Faculty Assembly as part of its general meetings. The President also meets routinely with the leadership of the Ramapo Staff Association and the Faculty Assembly, as well as with student leaders (e.g., the Student Government Association President and Vice President, the Student Trustees). In addition, the President, Chief of Staff, and General Counsel meet monthly with the three union Presidents to discuss a range of issues that do not fall under the purview of collective bargaining such as staff training, recruitment and orientation practices, campus safety, etc. Matters that do fall under the purview of collective bargaining are directed to Human Resources and/or Employee Relations, as appropriate.

### **The Faculty**

As described in Standard I, faculty at Ramapo are hired by discipline and belong to one of five schools: the Anisfield School of Business (ASB), the School of Contemporary Arts (CA), the School of Humanities and Global Studies (HGS), the School of Social Science and Human Services (SSHS), and the School of Theoretical and Applied Science (TAS). In lieu of academic departments, faculty members belong to Convening Groups from which programs such as majors and minors are administered. Convening Groups are led by a Convener, typically selected by the Convening Group and appointed by the Dean, who serves for renewable one-year terms. The Convener facilitates collaborative decision-making within the Convening Group, both informally and formally through regular Convening Group meetings. Conveners coordinate the curricular dynamics of the academic disciplines, ensuring that program requirements are relevant and clear, that regular assessment of student learning outcomes is conducted, and that all proposed new courses are closely reviewed and approved by the Convening Group. Conveners are also responsible for coordinating program reviews, student advisement, textbook order approval, assistance with new faculty orientation (full-time and adjunct), and communicating the Convening Group's resource needs to the Dean.

Each school is headed by a Dean, who is responsible for school-based resource allocation and who reports to the Provost. The Deans from the five schools constitute the Deans' Council, which meets twice monthly to discuss current issues in academic affairs (S7.C4: Deans' Council). In a similar way, the Provost's Council, made up of campus-wide representatives plus faculty from all the schools, meets monthly to discuss academic policies (S7.C4: Provost's Council). Convening Group meetings and Unit Council (all the faculty members of a given school) meetings are held regularly in each school (S7.C4: Faculty Meeting Schedule 2019-2020). Faculty members may belong to multiple Convening Groups. This structure of Units and Convening Groups supports the College's academic mission particularly well in that it facilitates interdisciplinary programs and close collaboration between faculty members from different disciplines. For example, the Bioinformatics Convening Group, which includes faculty from the disciplines of Computer Science, Chemistry, and Biology, spent much of its Convening Group meeting time reviewing assessment across the disciplines and related courses (S7.C4: Ramapo College Schools, Convening Groups and Conveners Fall 2019; S7.C4: Bioinformatics Convening Group Meeting Minutes 2017-2018).

### **Faculty Assembly**

The Faculty representative body in all governance-related matters is the Faculty Assembly (FA), whose voting membership is comprised of all full-time faculty, Library faculty, and professional staff with contractual teaching

obligations (S7.C4: Faculty Assembly Bylaws). The Faculty Assembly elects a President who may serve up to two consecutive two-year terms. In 2007, the bylaws of the Faculty Assembly were updated to establish the Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC). The FAEC has two at-large members who are elected by the full body of the Faculty Assembly, in addition to one representative from each school who is elected by Unit faculty. The FAEC advises the FA President and steers the agendas for all FA meetings. In addition, they regularly meet with leadership of other constituent groups at the College and, in particular, interface with Units at Unit Council meetings. Thus, the FAEC plays a crucial role in facilitating healthy communication of both a vertical and horizontal nature at the College.

### **Faculty Assembly Committees**

Chief among faculty committees' relevant to the Faculty Assembly is ARC. Along with other responsibilities, ARC reviews academic policies and new program proposals, making recommendations to the Faculty Assembly. ARC is also responsible for maintaining an updated ARC Manual of academic and curricular guidelines that standardize course delivery (S7.C4: ARC Manual 2018-2019). For example, the Manual provides a course syllabus template with required content areas. As with the Faculty Assembly Executive Council, each school elects a representative to ARC, and the ARC Chair is chosen by the members. Two additional standing FA committees, the General Education and Curriculum Committee (GECCo) and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), assist ARC by making policy and curriculum recommendations within their respective purview. GECCo oversees assessment of the GE program and new and existing courses from the perspective of appropriateness for inclusion within a particular GE category. Similarly, WAC makes policy and curriculum recommendations related to student writing and evaluates new and existing courses for the writing intensive (WI) designation.

### **Student Leadership**

The Ramapo College Student Government Association (SGA) is the consistent voice of the student body. SGA represents student interests on the Ramapo College Board of Trustees, the Board of Governors, and the President's Advisory Council. The SGA President and Vice President meet monthly with the President of the College, and the SGA President presents a report to the Board of Trustees at each regular public meeting. In addition, upon invitation, the President of the SGA or any SGA member can attend a meeting of the Faculty Assembly Executive Council to collaborate on matters of interest to both students and faculty. In the past year, for example, the SGA, Office of the Provost, and FA have collaborated on an Open Educational Resources initiative.

The SGA President is supported by a Cabinet, similar to that of the President of the College, whose members are focused on specific areas of the College (S7.C4: SGA Org Chart). The Secretary of Academic Affairs' primary focus is issues related to education, student life, and the upholding of Ramapo's degree value. The Secretary of Academic Affairs meets monthly with the Provost and has a seat to represent students' interests on the Provost's Council. The Secretary of Diversity and Inclusion (a new position established in AY 2017-2018) is charged with promoting and advocating inclusion for students at Ramapo College, a goal that is directly in line with Ramapo's strategic plan Goal 2. Among other duties, the Secretary of Diversity and Inclusion works with diversity/multicultural club leaders in order to create a presence among the student body and meets monthly with the College's Chief Equity and Diversity Officer. Although the SGA has more than two Secretary positions, the above examples were given to illustrate how they parallel Cabinet-level administrators at the College.

The SGA Senate is given voting power in the SGA. The Senate runs independently of the SGA President and the SGA Cabinet. SGA Senate leadership is comprised of a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary. The Senate has the ability to pass legislation, allocate budgets for events, and set the direction of the SGA. The Senate President meets with the Dean of Students at least once a month as well. Five SGA Senators represent the five academic schools (i.e., one student per school who has declared a major in that school) and one Senator represents the Library. Each Senator must meet with the Dean of his or her respective school at least once a month. The remaining 15 Senators are assigned to other areas of the College such as Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation, Residence Life, Office of Specialized Services, Student Conduct, the Center for Student Involvement, Facilities, etc. (S7.C4: SGA Constitution; S7.C4: SGA General Meeting Minutes 4.17.19; S7.C4: SGA General Meeting Minutes 4.24.19).

### **Ramapo Staff**

The vast majority of employees at the College are unionized. Master contracts or collective negotiations agreements (CNAs) are negotiated by the State of New Jersey and represent the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Communication Workers of America (CWA), and the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE). Managerial staff are not represented by any CNA and serve at-will.

The Ramapo Staff Association (RSA) bylaws, following the release of the Shared Governance Task Force Report, were revised in May 2018 to expand its membership to now include professional staff (AFT), CWA, and IFPTE members (S7.C4: Ramapo Staff Association Bylaws). The RSA, however, does not engage on matters that fall under the purview of collective bargaining. The RSA Executive Board meets monthly with the President and collaborates on matters primarily pertaining to staff development, recognition, and morale. In recent years, they began publishing a newsletter that highlights the work of their members and brings attention to important topics/trends in higher education (S7.C4: RSA January 2019 Newsletter; S7.C4: RSA May 2019 Newsletter).

### **Strengthening Governance at Ramapo College**

In the past 10 years, a number of steps have been undertaken to strengthen the role of governance at Ramapo.

#### **Reorganization of the Division of Academic Affairs**

In October 2014, the Division of Academic Affairs was significantly reorganized based in part on feedback from MSCHE Evaluation Team Report 2010. This reorganization resulted in the establishment of the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA) and the reduction of the number of offices in the Division of Academic Affairs. The President communicated to the campus at that time, “I wrote in July advising that Enrollment Management and Student Affairs were to be formally combined into one Division and would report to me through a Vice President. This decision acknowledges foremost that recruitment, retention, graduation, and student satisfaction are not divisional focuses but rather ones that are best addressed synergistically. In so doing, it also heeds the Middle States Commission recommendation that the Provost’s portfolio merited rebalancing” (S7.C4: Establishment of EMSA 10.8.14).

A Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (VPEMSA) position was created following two simultaneous vacancies of Associate Vice Presidents of Student Affairs. The position of Dean of Students was also instituted to report to the VPEMSA and to supervise the majority of student development-centered Units.

In conjunction with the appointment of the VPEMSA, several changes took place with the explicit goals of aligning like functions, decreasing the portfolio of the Academic Affairs Division, and facilitating the College’s Strategic Enrollment Management Model. The EMSA Division thus assumed responsibility for the following recruitment- and retention-focused Units, which had previously been housed in the Division of Academic Affairs: the Cahill Career Development Center, Office of Residence Life, Student Conduct, Office of Specialized Services, Educational Opportunity Fund, Center for Student Involvement, Health Counseling, Degree Completion, and Athletics, Intramurals, and Recreation. These new EMSA responsibilities added to those that already fell under its purview: enrollment management, admissions, and academic advisement.

In September 2015, Public Safety was moved from the Division of Administration and Finance (AF) to EMSA to foster synergies and alignment with the student experience, campus safety, and compliance with student-focused legislative directives regarding Title IX and the Clery Act (S7.C4: President’s Post #87 State of the College Address Fall 2015).

Resulting from the transfer of several functions from Academic Affairs was the Provost’s increased capacity to focus on advancing the academic plan by working with the Deans, faculty, and others to promote curricular/program development, assessment, and scholarship (S7.C4: Academic Plan 2017-2018). Not long after the 2015 reorganization, the Provost’s Office, in conjunction with the faculty, launched the Class Schedule Task Force and the GETFII among other initiatives.

Despite the redistribution of responsibilities, connections between Academic Affairs and EMSA were maintained through several strategies including but not limited to: the continued service of the VPEMSA on the Provost’s Council and Deans’ Council, the co-chairmanship of the Student Engagement Project by the Provost, VPEMSA, and Vice Provost, and the range of cross-divisional committees and task forces with broad divisional representation such as the Committee on Student Complaints, Graduate Council, and the First-Year Experience Board.

The membership of the President’s Cabinet was also recalibrated around this time to both reflect the new divisional structures, advance the College’s 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, and reduce the number of divisional representatives at the table (S7.C4: 2014 Org Chart; S7.C4: 2015 Org Chart; S7.C4: 2017 Org Chart).

### **Formal Orientation for New Board of Trustees Members**

In the past several years, the Board of Trustees has developed a formal orientation and Board development program, which has been complemented by routine reviews of its Committees' Charters and Bylaws. The Charter of the Board's Nominations and Governance Committee, for example, was revised to include the specific responsibilities of "developing and implementing an orientation program for Trustees" and "seek(ing) training and development opportunities for Trustees" (S7.C2: BOT Committee Charter).

Following the results of a self-assessment of the Board in 2013, which revealed, for example, that new Trustees would benefit from a systematic orientation, a formal Board of Trustees orientation manual was developed (S7.C5: Board Assessment and Outcomes 2013; S7.C2: BOT Orientation Manual Table of Contents). The manual includes six key sections: Welcome, Understanding Trusteeship, Organization, Immunity and Ethics, Select College Policies, and Board Development. In addition, it contains several guiding documents: Mission & Vision, Strategic Plan, Master Plan, Bylaws, Charter, Statement of Trustee Responsibility, Principles of Good Governance, Managing Expectations, The Board-Management Relationship, and N.J. Statutes Pertaining to Board Governance.

The manual, which is updated periodically, is provided to new Trustees as part of an orientation to the campus, which includes significant time spent with the President, the Chief of Staff and Board Liaison, a tour of the campus, and small group sessions with other campus constituents at the Trustees' request.

### **Self-Assessment of the Board**

The Board generally assesses itself every two years and uses the results to inform retreat agendas, shape its bylaws or committee structures, and/or identify subject areas for work/professional development sessions. Since 2014, the Board retreats have focused on a range of topics including Trusteeship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (S7.C5: Board Assessment and Outcomes 2014), the Role of the Board in Enterprise Risk Management (S7.C5: Board Risk Assessment and Outcomes 2016), Emergency Preparedness (S7.C5: Board Retreat Minutes Emergency Preparedness February 2017), and Trustee Self-Evaluation & Key Performance Indicators and *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Mission* (S7.S5: Board Assessment and Outcomes 2018).

In 2015, the Board began setting aside time prior to each regular meeting for a 45-to 60-minute development session (S7.C5: Board Assessment and Outcomes 2014). Those sessions were used to present information to the full Board on a range of timely topics of interest to Trustees including institutional effectiveness, recruitment and retention, Title IX, ethics reporting and legal obligations, etc.

### **Enhanced Formal Shared Governance**

A significant structural development was the President's establishment in March 2014 of a new all-college body, the President's Advisory Council (PAC) (S7.C4: PAC Membership March 2019). While the PAC does not have formal decision-making purview, it nevertheless serves a vital role in the governance process by providing a forum for communication and deliberation that spans all constituent groups. Aside from this one structural addition, significant advances have also been made in formalizing shared governance principles, expectations, responsibilities, and mechanisms, largely through the work of the Task Force on Shared Governance (TFSG). In what follows, we provide a more detailed account of both the work of the TFSG and the establishment and operation of the PAC.

### **Task Force on Shared Governance**

The origin of the Task Force on Shared Governance (TFSG) can be traced back to the establishment of a Subcommittee on Shared Governance within the FAEC in fall 2013. The goal of the Subcommittee was to propose a set of principles of shared governance, design a rubric for assessing decision events with respect to those principles, and complete a "pilot study" assessing shared governance at the College based on case study analyses. The Subcommittee completed this work and produced two annual assessment reports in spring 2014 and spring 2015. While the work was undertaken by faculty members on the FAEC, the Subcommittee met several times with the President and the Provost in order to hear their perspectives and address their concerns. Both the President and the Provost were supportive of the work done by the Subcommittee, and it was specifically cited in a May 2014 letter to faculty as a guiding factor in the administration's initiative to address various key issues surrounding the College's credit-hour structure (S7.C4: President and Provost Letter to Faculty 5.21.14).

While the work of the FAEC Subcommittee on Shared Governance undeniably moved the dialogue forward and identified several potential areas for improvement, it also was limited by the fact that it was initiated and conducted

by faculty and, hence, primarily driven by faculty perspective. To address this one-sidedness, a truly joint process was undertaken in fall 2016 to assess and improve shared governance at the College. As a launching point for this effort, a delegation of faculty supported by the Provost's Office was sent to the AAUP Conference on Shared Governance in Washington, D.C. Informed by feedback from this delegation, the FA President and the Provost agreed to jointly charge a Task Force on Shared Governance (TFSG) with administrative, faculty, and student representatives. The charge was as follows: The Task Force on Shared Governance at Ramapo College is charged with developing principles of shared governance that are in keeping with the Mission of the College and that will allow the institution to fulfill its vision and strategic goals.

The Task Force on Shared Governance (TFSG) fulfilled its charge in developing principles of shared governance centered on three organizing principles: Respect and Collegiality, Trust and Transparency, and Clarity and Compliance (S7.C4: Report of the Task Force on Shared Governance 12.5.17). The Task Force also went a great deal further in seeking to develop a framework for operationalizing shared governance at the College. In particular, while shared governance was viewed as much more than shared decision-making, significant effort was invested in devising a dynamic protocol for shared decision-making. Recognizing that it was not possible to enumerate and lay out a specific process for every foreseeable type of shared decision at the College, the Task Force instead proposed a general protocol for approaching any shared governance decision of a sufficiently transformative nature. Most importantly, the protocol calls for leadership of the various constituent groups to meet at the outset of a shared decision in order to agree on relative roles and levels of responsibility based on the nature of the decision. Some guidelines for assigning levels of responsibility are also given in the report, and particular attention is paid to the importance of setting an appropriate timeline and identifying the most effective "channels of communication." Overall, the goal of this protocol is not only to ensure optimal shared decision-making from an outcome perspective but also to minimize the likelihood of significant misunderstandings and dissatisfaction with the decision-making process.

One of the most crucial points to understand about the work of the TFSG is that it was truly embraced by the entire campus. With a draft report completed in early fall 2017, the Task Force embarked on a robust cycle of feedback and revision, presenting the draft in numerous venues: Communication Meetings, Unit Councils, Faculty Assembly, SGA, Cabinet, etc. Feedback on the report was further obtained through a Qualtrics survey, and a special open forum for the whole community was held in November 2017. Ultimately, in the final report of the Task Force, an agreed-upon definition of shared governance was articulated (S7.C4: Excerpt from the Task Force of Shared Governance).

Following the issuance of the Task Force's final report in early December, it was formally endorsed via votes by the Faculty Assembly, Student Government Association, and Cabinet. The Board was also kept apprised of the Task Force's work and enthusiastically endorsed the report, asserting only for clarification that the processes and decision-making responsibilities laid out in the TFSG report must never supersede the statutory decision-making authority and responsibility of the Board.

Here, a special note regarding the role of staff in the TFSG process and shared governance at the College in general is warranted. While staff were not formally represented on the TFSG, this oversight was openly regarded by the Task Force and presented to the community partially as an unfortunate consequence of the fact that staff at Ramapo College did not have a mechanism for representation in governance matters analogous to Faculty Assembly, SGA, or Cabinet. As the work of the Task Force carried on, its vision for shared governance at the College became less centered on administration and faculty and clearly evolved to be far more inclusive of staff as well as students. In fact, a prominent recommendation in the report called for the development of such a representative body for staff, a goal that in many ways is being realized with the renewed and reformulated Ramapo Staff Association (RSA). Nevertheless, it is important to note that staff did participate significantly and give valuable feedback throughout the revision process leading to the final report of the TFSG.

Several additional practical recommendations for improving shared governance at the College were also provided in the TFSG final report. Many but not all of these deal with continued improvement in vertical and horizontal communication. While some of the recommendations have yet to be implemented, the work of the TFSG has successfully energized and united the College community around a common vision for improved shared governance. Moreover, the dynamic protocol has already been deliberately employed in significant decision events, including the renewal/revitalization of the Strategic Plan which yielded *Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise*.

The TFSG final report also included recommendations regarding the means of assessing the effectiveness of shared



governance processes at the College. The responsibility for conducting assessment of shared governance has been taken up by the PAC and is in its early stages (S7.C4: PAC Minutes December 2018; S7.C4: PAC Minutes 2.21.19). In Dashboard 2021, the frequency of decisions made in accordance with the shared governance protocol is tracked under Indicator #35 (S7.C4: Dashboard 2021 Indicator 35).

### **President's Advisory Council**

In January 2014, President Mercer wrote to the campus regarding the establishment of a President's Advisory Council (PAC) (S7.C4: Establishment of PAC 1.30.14). His correspondence noted:

“Our activities as a College are becoming more complex and interwoven and internal communication is correspondingly more important than ever. As President... I have many opportunities to communicate with internal constituencies and individuals separately. Up until now, however, there has been no physical forum through which representatives of all College constituencies could offer their comments while asking and answering questions of each other. As its name suggests, the proposed PAC is not intended to be a formal decision-making body, and its establishment would not derogate from the current decision-making structures at the College. However, the fact that the PAC's function would be advisory does not mean that it would not be influential. Given its proposed membership, it is most unlikely that strong recommendations emanating from it would not be considered.”

PAC agenda items are generated by the PAC membership which includes faculty, staff, students, administrators, and others. Members are asked to submit agenda topics, those topics are compiled, and members are then asked to vote on the submitted topics with the most supported to be advanced as agenda items.

Since its inception, the PAC has discussed a range of topics including the Library/Learning Commons, accreditation, shared governance, sexual assault and prevention, and equity, diversity, inclusion, and compliance. The PAC has taken formal action to adopt a set of guidelines and expectations for itself (S7.C4: PAC Guidelines & Expectations Final) and includes the following statements: “PAC members will foster an environment that is committed to learning, mutual respect, and information sharing” and “PAC members will maintain interaction on Moodle and routinely liaise with their respective representative groups to solicit input on PAC proceedings.” The PAC has taken formal actions including adjusting its membership, developing a Values statement for the College and advancing it to the President who accepted their recommendation, and endorsing the report of the TFSG. Moreover, the PAC moved to revise “its purpose statement to include the advancement, implementation, and sustainability of the recommendations of the report of the TFSG” (S7.C4: PAC Draft Minutes 12.20.18). PAC completed its self assessment in the fall of 2019 (S7.C5: PAC Self Assessment).

### **Enhanced Communication Across and Within Constituent Groups**

Contained within the report of the TFSG is a chart summarizing “Current Channels of Communication/Shared Governance” at Ramapo College, i.e., ways that various groups/bodies may interface so as to provide the communication across and within constituent groups that is essential for effective shared governance (S7.C4: Report of the Task Force on Shared Governance 12.5.17 Page 16). For example, if communication regarding some particular issue is needed between the Provost and the faculty, Deans serve as a conduit for information, as they meet regularly with both faculty in Unit Council and the Provost in Deans' Council. For other such issues and depending on the topic, the Provost meets directly with all Conveners along with other members of the administration (e.g., the Director of Institutional Research). In order to improve communication across and within constituent groups more generally, the College has also taken several additional steps, a few of which are listed below.

#### **Communications Meetings**

Communications Meetings were established in 2007 and are held two to four times per year for employees. They include formal agenda items and a question-and-answer period. The Chief of Staff and Board Liaison convenes these meetings, and the President often leads the discussion.

Communications Meetings are designed to provide pertinent and timely information to employees and to answer questions posed at the sessions or submitted anonymously in advance. Topics are solicited from the entire campus, and agendas have addressed budget and planning efforts, staff recognition awards, enrollment trends, accreditation, shared governance, Strategic Planning, etc. Summaries of the meetings are made available to the campus via the President's Post at [www.ramapo.edu/pres-post](http://www.ramapo.edu/pres-post).

### **Daily Digest**

The Daily Digest, a frequent communication of news and happenings on campus, is emailed almost every day to students, faculty, staff, and friends of the College. The Daily Digest is used to send all announcements to students, faculty, staff, and others. In an effort to enhance its utility to all constituents, the Daily Digest was recalibrated in 2016 to customize the announcements and distributions for specific groups (e.g., student-focused announcements could be sent only to students). This recalibration, along with updates to the Digest's aesthetic, improved the rate at which these emails are opened by 9 percent and 33 percent among students and faculty and staff, respectively, from 2016 to 2018 (S7.C4: Daily Digest Readership Report).

### **State of the College Address**

The President delivers semiannual state of the College addresses that seek to provide campus constituents with valuable information regarding the College, the external environment, and trends in higher education. The addresses also often highlight significant achievements by students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Question-and-answer sessions follow each address. Summaries of the addresses are available at [www.ramapo.edu/president](http://www.ramapo.edu/president).

### **President's Post**

The President's Post is routinely updated with messages and news from the President. While there was an average of 10 posts per year from 2009 to 2014, this number increased to 16 posts per year between 2015 and 2019. New posts are commonly announced in the Daily Digest ( S7.C4: President's Post September 2019; S7.C4: Post Archive).

### **Provost's Discussion Board and Lunches**

The Provost's Discussion Board is an outlet administered through Google Groups that is meant to engage faculty in shared discussion of academic issues that are significant to the community (S7.C4: Provost's Discussion Board). The evolving nature of the commentary on the Discussion Board allows for maximum participation of faculty in a constructive and thoughtful dialogue that represents the views of all constituents. Lunches with the Provost provide an ongoing opportunity for all members of the community to gather with the Provost and Vice Provost in the Padovano Commons for an informal exchange of thoughts and views about any matters they feel are important.

### **Board Updates**

In June 2014, the Office of the President formalized the distribution of information following each regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Board updates or Board meeting recaps are distributed via email to the entire campus following each regular meeting of the Board. The recaps highlight formal actions the Board has taken and commemorate any recognition ceremonies (e.g., President's Staff Awards) or presentations (e.g., awarding of emeritus status). The Board recaps are archived on the website of the Board of Trustees (S7.C4: BOT Webpage).

## **Illustrations of Success in Governance, Leadership & Administration**

### **Revisions to the Board of Trustees' Bylaws and Committee Charter**

The Board approved significant revisions to its Bylaws and Committee Charter in December 2017 (S7.C2: BOT Minutes December 2017, Sections B and H4b). Driven by best practices and the results of the Board's self-assessments, as well as by the shifting external environment, the revisions sought to achieve several key outcomes:

- The Committee Structure shifted from seven to five Committees yielding:
  - Fewer regular Board meetings (from seven to five: September, December, February/April, May Budget Hearing, June) with two-hour strategic work sessions in advance of each meeting
  - Fewer but longer Committee meetings
  - Refinement of the Executive/Judicial Committee Charge to focus on strategic planning, issues that transcend Committee jurisdiction, and Presidential compensation/evaluation
  - Robust resource-focused deliberations and decision making by combining the Human Resources, Diversity, and Equity Committee with the Finance and Capital Improvement Committee to create the Human, Capital, and Financial Resources Committee
  - Robust Mission-critical deliberations and decision making by combining the Academic and Student Affairs Committee with the Institutional Advancement and Alumni Relations Committee to create the Mission Fulfillment Committee

At its retreat in summer 2018, the Trustees assessed the effectiveness of the new committee structure and, noting early

positive outcomes (e.g., revisions to the Bylaws and Committee Charter have fostered more strategic and collaborative deliberations among the full Board as well as the Committees), agreed to continue the structure as implemented and reassess in summer 2020 (S7.C5: Board Assessment and Outcomes 2018).

### **Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Fulfilling Our Promise**

In spring 2018, the Cabinet evaluated the progress made by the College in achieving its 2014-2018 Strategic Plan goals and concluded, with the support and input of the Board of Trustees, the President of the Faculty Assembly, and the President of the Student Government Association, that progress should continue under a revitalization of this plan. As a result, in February 2018, following the protocols established by the College's 2017 Task Force on Shared Governance, the President formally engaged the President of the Faculty Assembly and the President of the Student Government Association in a discussion on revitalizing and extending Strategic Plan 2014-2018. Together, the groups advanced the establishment of a Task Force on Extending the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan and partnered to determine its membership, timeline, and deliverables.

The draft report of the Task Force was furnished to the President in summer 2018. Additional decisions were made to strengthen the revitalized plan and largely included recognizing "innovation" as an institutional priority. This led to the articulation of a new goal to advance innovation. The plan was endorsed by the Board in September 2018 (S7.C4: BOT Sept 2018 Minutes Excerpt sections B2 and G3). In addition, a visual mapping of the plan's associated indicators was developed to provide easy monitoring of progress. This mapping, Dashboard 2021, provides the campus with key indicators of institutional progress on the plan (S7.C5: Dashboard 2021).

### **Establishment of Food Pantry and Emergency Student Relief Fund**

This example demonstrates the synergy created by open communication between the SGA, the Center for Civic and Community Engagement, and academic programs. In fall 2016, the SGA in collaboration with the Social Work program and the Center for Civic and Community Engagement began exploring and documenting Ramapo student's health, hunger, and mobility issues as well as homelessness (S7.C4: Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week Presentation). The SGA then created a working group to identify potential stakeholders, contributors, and the most essential form of support. Rutgers, Montclair, George Washington, Temple and Western Michigan universities were identified as institutions with model programs offering food pantries and/or student relief funds/loans. A campaign, modeled after Western Michigan University's "The Invisible Need" project, was launched in fall 2016 to promote awareness of hunger and homelessness.

Following legislative recognition and approval by SGA, the Emergency Student Relief organization (ESR) was established as a subcommittee of the SGA in October 2016. In its first meeting that month, sources of external and additional support were identified. The President of Ramapo's AFT was consulted, and support from the AFT was promised. Support was also quickly provided by the following: the Faculty Assembly Executive Committee, the Dean of Students who proposed meal plan vouchers, Student Activities Revenue Management staff who suggested funding sources, and the Director of Residence Life who began brainstorming food pantry donations and a potential location. Membership of the ESR was also increased to include the Assistant Director of Equity and Diversity, the Director of Financial Aid, and the Director of the Center for Student Involvement. Further support was received from the VPMSA and the College President who then assigned the Chief of Staff to serve as the official liaison to the group.

Synergy continued, with a New Jersey State Assemblyman introducing a bill supplementing chapter 3B of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes that permits students at public institutions of higher education to donate unused meal plan funds for distribution to New Jersey food banks in January 2017. Testimony was provided by Ramapo students to the Senate Higher Education Committee and Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee Joint Hearing to Discuss Hunger among College Students at Trenton in February 2017. The Executive Director of NJASCU (New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities) was consulted to glean ideas and suggestions from colleague institutions.

The Assistant Vice President of Alumni & Development Information was also added to the ESR. The revised ESR then held its first meeting and created their mission statement in February 2017. One SGA Senator held best practice discussions with the Coordinator of Housing at Western Michigan University whose Student Emergency Fund served as a model for Ramapo's program. In March 2017, ESR met with the VPAF to discuss allowing students to donate money when registering and/or donate unused Meal Plan Flex dollars to the ESR. In order to establish a Ramapo Foundation account, the Development Office assisted the group in determining eligibility criteria, an application process, a selection committee, sources of initial funding, and a manner of disbursement. Each year funds are donated to the We Care program from the Foundation's Scholarship Dinner, as well as a "Giving Tree" established to collect gift cards at the Annual

Holiday Luncheon.

In April 2017, the first draft of the bylaws for the ESR was established and added by the SGA to its bylaws (S7.C4: SGA Bylaws Section IV, K), and a formal request to the Ramapo Foundation for the establishment of a special account was approved. In July 2017, ESR was identified as a beneficiary of funds raised at the Annual Alumni Barbecue. Campus space was requested and approved for an October start. A Graduate Social Work Intern assisted with program implementation in September 2017 when the first student request was received. The We Care program (S7.C4: We Care Program Webpage), overseen by the Center for Student Involvement, was thus officially established, incorporating a holistic approach to homelessness and hunger.

### **Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation**

Based on this process of assessment and reflection on Ramapo College's fulfillment of Standard VII, the following opportunities for improvement and innovation have been generated:

1. Continue efforts to diversify the Board.
2. Continue to advance the recommendations of the Shared Governance Task Force Report.