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Ramapo College of New Jersey

Known as “New Jersey’s Public Liberal Arts College” and served by direct bus service to New York City, Ramapo College of New Jersey has approximately 5,600 full-time undergraduates. The college is subdivided into five schools: the Anisfield School of Business, The Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, the School of Contemporary Arts, School of Social Science and Human Services and the School of Theoretical and Applied Sciences.

Ramapo attracts primarily a B/B+ student, most likely from a New Jersey high school, who would prefer a small or mid-sized school. The middle 50 percent of the freshmen who arrived this past fall had SAT scores than ranged from 1050 to 1230, with an average of 1150. For those who applied regular admission, the average was 1200. For those who took the ACT this range was between 21 and 26.

The college accepted 57 percent of all applicants who entered last fall, and offered nearly 900 more a place on the wait list. Among the nearly 400 who accepted the offer, just over 220 were later admitted. Interestingly, according to the college’s most recent Fact Book, [the size of the freshman class has become smaller, from 978 in 2014 to 919 three years later.](#)

In addition, according to the same source, nearly two-thirds of students in the incoming classes from the past two years indicated that Ramapo was their first-choice school. This college has strong appeal within Northern New Jersey. [Over half of the most recent class came from Bergen County, where the college is located as well as neighboring Morris and Passaic Counties.](#) It is possible that this leads between 25 and 30 percent of a freshman class as well as approximately half of the full undergraduate student body to be commuters, although Ramapo is one of the more residential public colleges in the Garden State.

Depending on their academic interests, students who apply to Ramapo consider several schools, mostly in New Jersey including Rowan University, Rutgers-New Brunswick, Seton Hall University, New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), Montclair State University and The College of New Jersey (TCNJ). Ramapo is also similar in student body size and academic offerings to Monmouth University and Stockton University, located in Central and Southern New Jersey respectively.

Ramapo offers students the opportunity to apply Early Decision as well as Early Action, strongly recommended for students who are interested in either scholarships or the college’s extremely competitive Nursing program. The college also makes immediate decisions at high schools that have presented the admissions team with several promising applicants.



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Ramapo has retained at least 86 percent of its freshman class each year since 2002, and graduated no less than 59 percent of the incoming classes that entered from 2003 through 2013, according to the college's [2017 Fact Book](#). Among New Jersey's public colleges only TCNJ has done consistently better at guiding its freshmen to graduation over the same time period, and TCNJ is a more selective school.

Costs

During the current academic year, [direct charges \(tuition and fees, room and board\)](#) were approximately \$25,800 for New Jersey residents, and \$34,900 for non residents.

Ramapo students might also qualify, based on their high school achievements, for [merit scholarships](#). The college reviews priority applications submitted by early December to consider applicants for merit-based awards. The most likely recipients would probably rank in the upper third of the admitted pool at NJIT or Rutgers, and in the middle of the pool at the College of New Jersey.

The Project on Student Debt reported that Ramapo graduates in 2016 who took out loans borrowed, on average \$33,300. This includes students who opted for accelerated programs towards an advanced degree as well as those who finished in four years. The maximum that students may borrow over four years through the Federal Direct Student Loan program is \$27,000, and \$31,000 for five.

Curriculum

[Ramapo offers over 50 majors as well as more than 30 concentrations and over 40 minors](#). There are also 10 joint programs that lead to advanced degrees as well as post-baccalaureate opportunities in [teacher education](#) and the [health sciences](#). According to the college's most recent [Fact Book](#), the School of Theoretical and Applied Science enrolls slightly more than a quarter of the undergraduate student body; the Anisfield School of Business is next with slightly less. The most popular majors are Business, Nursing, Biology, Psychology and Communication Arts.

With the exception of the Nursing program, Ramapo does not force freshmen to commit to a particular school or major when they arrive on campus. Using the college's [Recommended Four-Year Plans](#) as a guide, combined with help from their assigned academic and career advisors, students are put in a good position to declare a major in a liberal arts or business program by the second semester of their sophomore year. It is also quite easy to "double dip" with the general education requirements to carry a second major or minor(s). However, while a Business major can also minor or double major in most of the liberal arts subjects, a liberal arts major can minor in only Accounting or International Business, or seek a professor's permission to enroll in the other 300 or 400-level business courses.



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You won't see large lecture classes at Ramapo. During the 2016-17 academic year *only two* undergraduate courses had more than 40 students, and *none* had more than 50. However, 61 percent had between 20 and 39 students. But combine this with a student/faculty ratio of 18 to 1 and a faculty that is 56 percent part time, and you might see a smaller selection of 300 and 400-level courses in your major than you would find at a larger school such as Rutgers-New Brunswick or TCNJ.

Ramapo students gave their faculty a rating of 3.65 (out of a possible 5) on RateMyProfessor.com, lower than students at Montclair State (3.79), Rowan (3.72), Rutgers-New Brunswick (3.74), Seton Hall (3.74), TCNJ (3.70), but higher than students at NJIT (3.55).

Community

Set in a picturesque valley on the hilltop grounds of a former estate, Ramapo's campus was originally designed in the late 1960s. The academic buildings, from the Potter Library (now undergoing major renovations) to the Anisfield School of Business are connected together with the Scott Student Center joined near the middle. It is quite possible to go to classes and meals without going outside for students in most majors aside from the visual and performing arts. The [arts, athletic and spiritual facilities](#) are as modern as you will find at better-endowed colleges. Parking is pushed out to the edges of the campus.

While the college is less than 50 years old, its designers restored the Birch Mansion, first constructed in the late 1890s, to host major events, a former guest house to be the admissions office, a second house on the property to be the president's residence, and a red sandstone welcome arch to be the symbol for the college's convocation and graduation ceremonies as well as its corporate identity. The contrasts between the older and newer buildings, combined with the landscaping, make Ramapo appear to be an older school than it really is.

Because the campus is not located immediately next to a college-oriented downtown, students and staff need to bring activities such as movies and shows to campus on weekday evenings and weekends, and all students, including freshmen in the residence halls, are allowed to have cars. While nearly 2,700 students live on campus, the community is not as bonded through spirit and sports or Greek life as Monmouth, Rowan, Rutgers-New Brunswick or TCNJ. Unlike these schools, Ramapo does not play football, nor does it place as much emphasis on social fraternities and sororities within campus life.

Alcohol-related arrests and disciplinary referrals on campus dropped by more than 50 percent from 2016 to 2017, according to the college's [2017 Clery Report](#), although reported incidents of drug abuse went up. The report also included reported incidents of



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weapons possession, and there were 11 reported incidents of rape on campus in 2017, nine taking place in the residence halls.

Bergen County, the [most populous county in the Garden State](#), is home to the college and it is quite suburban and well-to-do. But it also the only county in New Jersey where shopping centers are closed on Sunday, in observance with local blue laws. There are plenty of [shopping and dining options](#), especially along Route 17, to satisfy college students, even though students cannot shop on Sunday.

The campus entrance is served by [shuttles](#) that take students to the [Main-Bergen Line train to New York City](#) during the weekdays, but less frequently on weekends. However, travel to New York requires passengers to change trains in Hoboken. The fare is \$24.50 round trip for a morning commute to work, reducing to \$11.40 off peak (after 9:30 AM). But there are student discounts available through the college.

Comforts

Ramapo has some of the nicer suite-style, apartment and townhouse living options that you will find in a college campus, although one residence hall (Linden) will soon be taken offline to be converted for temporary use as the college's library, then later for college offices. Apartment rentals in the area will have higher costs, and longer lease obligations, than on campus housing.

Connections

Three of Ramapo's academic schools: the [Anisfield School of Business](#), the [Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies](#), and the [School of Social Science and Human Services](#) have Career Pathways programs where new students are encouraged and guided towards career options beginning in the freshman year working with an assigned academic advisor as well as a career advisor.

Ramapo also offers students the opportunity to choose between internships or cooperative education, aka 'co-op,' to gain work experience, paid or unpaid, while pursuing their degrees. Co-op students may earn two credits working 120 hours during a semester or four credits by working 240. They may earn up to eight degree credits through co-op. Internships do not need to be for credit, unless required within a major.

Among the nearly 27,000 Ramapo alumni registered on [LinkedIn.com](#), nearly 21,000 live and work in or around New York City. The Philadelphia metro area is a very distant second with fewer than 900.



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Conclusions

Ramapo is the best value for the money among New Jersey's public colleges, presuming that there is an academic fit. This school is not quite a 'Public Ivy,' but it is closer to deserving such recognition than most small and mid-sized public colleges in our country. The college also has a growing and maturing alumni base in the New York area as well as a growing number of employer connections that will become more capable of supporting its mission. But Ramapo also has more of a commuter and "North Jersey" vibe than some other colleges that prospective students will also consider.

Report Card: Ramapo College of New Jersey

- Four-Year/Six-Year Graduation Rates: A/B+
- Freshman Retention: B+
- Costs: A
- Curriculum: A
- Community: B+
- Comforts: A
- Connections: B+ (New Jersey/New York Metro Area)/C (Elsewhere)