





predictions in the direction of the developments I just cited would have been dismissed as naivete and feckless optimism

- want the College to intensify its sense of community
- want better communication and transparency between faculty and administration and across the schools
- want to prepare students to be responsible citizens in this remarkable democracy and we want them to be financially well off and to live meaningful lives
- endorse Nobel Laureate economist Amartya Sen's observation that human development is inseparable from values and imagination and that human creativity depends on how broadly we have been educated
- resonate with the 2010 Middle States Report on Ramapo College that, in its words, "there is a tension between the college's stated commitment to a liberal arts-based curriculum and the recent development of professional programs. The College needs to understand and then articulate how the professional programs are 'based' in the liberal arts. ...the college community should...define its commitment to the liberal arts and 'assess all programs in the light of this vision.' "

assessment helps us to achieve and measure outcomes but, out of balance, can undermine shared governance and creative thinking.

The new drive toward professionalism can be more productive if it finds a connection with abstraction, theory and cultural depth. We do not want students so trained in abstraction that their careers are undermined. N

Henry David Thoreau went to Walden to address the deepest dimension of himself. He told us he did not want to reach the end of his life only to realize he had missed it.

#### **IV. A Note From History**

The discussion about what education is supposed to accomplish reaches through the millennia. The past, indeed, is not past.

Aristotle writes in the *Politics*:

...what is the proper way to be educated... [it is not clear]whether...studies should be regulated more with regard to character [or] whether pupils should practice pursuits that are practically useful...

Quadrivium moved more easily in the world of measurement and the shape of the cosmos.

The United States built its educational system around the oldest and deepest stratum of the liberal arts, giving the liberal arts a place in higher education that European universities had not emphasized for centuries. A reference for this observation is the American Council of Learned Societies report on “Liberal Arts in American Higher Education.”

I would suggest that the founding of this nation gave us the rhetoric of the







that has evolved from its founding to the present day

We have, my friends, crafted a rich legacy together. A tradition is never something to keep but always something to give away. The Latin root of the word is “to hand down.”

It is time to take this inheritance, this brave vision we once had to new levels. A half century later, we have endured and evolved and done so with grace and decency and admirable accomplishment. We stayed the course by changing it. Despite the mistakes and misdeeds, the pettiness to which we are all liable, the paranoia we manage on occasion and the provincialism that makes us tone deaf to one another, we did not substantially betray what we came here to realize.

The greatest monument we shall leave is not carved in stone but

