

Student Life



Rensselaer helps educate “leaders of tomorrow” by providing a robust set of student life programs and services designed to:

- facilitate academic success
- offer education and practice in leadership and followership
- encourage fitness for a lifetime of growth
- connect students to careers and the world of work
- build maturity, an appreciation of cultural diversity and expression, and a set of personal and professional goals and values.

Details on student life and services are offered in *The Rensselaer Planner and Guide to Student Life*, a publication of the Office of the First Year Experience.

Dean of Students Office

Dean of Students: Mark Smith

The mission of the Dean of Students Office (DOSO) is to support and assist students in the achievement of personal and academic success with an emphasis on student development, advocacy, rights and responsibilities, safety, and liability. The services and initiatives of this office include counseling, advising, and referral information; policy development and implementation; the approval and processing of excused absences, leaves of absence, and withdrawals and readmission for undergraduate students; and managing the Institute judicial system.

Greek Life Greek Life provides counseling, advising, and program development for individual social fraternities and sororities, as well as advising the Interfraternity and Panhellenic Councils. In addition, this office coordinates educational programming, reviews and approves applications for recognition, is involved in policy development and implementation, and is committed to positive alumni and community relations.

Office of Minority Student Affairs The Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA) provides support services — academic, personal, financial, and career — to underrepresented groups in the sciences, technology, and engineering professions. Underrepresented groups, as defined by Rensselaer, include African American, Latino, Native American, and Higher Education Opportunity Program students. Support services focus on facilitating with recruitment, enrollment, retention, graduation, graduate school, and entry into professional careers. The initiatives of this office include programs and services for pre-college, undergraduate, and graduate students.

International Services for Students and Scholars International Services for Students and Scholars (ISSS) provides educational programs and consulting, arrival information, orientation programs, counseling and advising, and immigration information for Rensselaer’s international community. ISSS also serves as liaison to government agencies, sponsors, and other campus offices. All Rensselaer students and exchange visitors who are not United States citizens or permanent residents must register with ISSS.

Disability Services for Students Disability Services for Students (DSS) provides support services and referral information to current or potential Rensselaer students with disabilities. This service assists students in achieving access to the academic, social, and cultural programs offered on campus. Services are available to students whose disabilities may be physical/orthopedic, psychiatric, sensory (hearing, vision), or learning-related (including dyslexia, attention deficit, traumatic brain injury).

Student Conduct Regulations governing student conduct and a statement of student rights and responsibilities are contained in *The Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities*. These policies are intended to help maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning and personal growth and to make the process of education positive and successful for all members of the community. Each student is expected to obtain a copy of the current handbook and to know its contents. For more information, visit www.rpi.edu/dept/doso/handbook.html.

First-Year Experience

Dean: Lisa Trahan

The Office of the First-Year Experience

The Office of the First-Year Experience (FYE) provides first-year students and their support networks the tools needed to be successful at Rensselaer throughout a student's first year and beyond. Throughout the year, FYE continues to provide support to first-year students and their families through a comprehensive offering of programs and services. FYE reaches out to students through a variety of means ranging from an integrated academic first year studies program to an early warning system designed to encourage students who may be experiencing academic difficulties to utilize campus support services. An in-depth website provides students with important dates to remember and information about upcoming programs of interest, including community service activities, affinity-group building activities and important academic deadlines. FYE also provides support to students and their support networks on a walk-in, e-mail, and phone basis.

Student Orientation (SO) and Navigating Rensselaer & Beyond (NRB)

First-year students and their support networks are invited to attend a two-day orientation program during the summer months designed to provide an introduction to academic and student life at Rensselaer. As a continuation of this program, first-year students participate in Navigating Rensselaer and Beyond, a weeklong immersion experience designed for students to experience first-hand what Rensselaer and the surrounding community have to offer. Both programs are designed to facilitate a smooth transition to life at Rensselaer, while building relationships between new and upper-class students, faculty and staff, and the surrounding community.

Parent and Family Programs

Parents and families play an integral role in the lives of Rensselaer students. FYE coordinates parents and family programming, including the Parents of Rensselaer Association, the Parents Council and a rich Rensselaer tradition. Parents and families of ALL Rensselaer students, not only first-year, are encouraged to take part in the programs and services that FYE offers. In addition, parents and family members are invited to join bi-weekly listservs, participate in discount programs, and contact the FYE staff at anytime if a question or concern arises.

Information and Personal Assistance Center (IPAC)

IPAC is a resource to the campus community, providing directory and general information for any student, or faculty or staff member seeking information or referrals to other campus resources. In addition, IPAC offers several campus service programs each year designed to enhance the student experience at Rensselaer. IPAC also provides the means to connect to a resource known as the "Ride Board Forum" where students communicate and connect with other students to find a ride on a weekend or break.

Career Development Center

Director: Thomas L. Tarantelli

Career Development Center Home Page: <http://www.cdc.rpi.edu>

The Career Development Center (CDC) helps students take charge of and manage their career development. The CDC offers a comprehensive program of career development, co-op, internship, and job placement activities to both undergraduate and graduate students. Rensselaer students have 24-hour access to many career services and resources via the World Wide Web.

Graduating Student Services In 2004–2005, 2300 students registered with the CDC for on-campus recruiting, resume drops, and open jobs. Top employers of May 2005 graduates include: Accenture, BAE Systems, CGI-AMS, GE, General Dynamics, Goldman Sachs, IBM, INTEL, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, and United Technologies, Corp.

Co-op Program Rensselaer's optional co-op program, which is open to both undergraduate and graduate students, provides an excellent vehicle for students to gain critically needed work experience while still in college. More than 475 students were enrolled in the co-op program in 2004-2005, working for leading employers in 20 states such as GE, IBM, NASA, Stryker Orthopaedics, Los Alamos National Labs, and General Motors, in addition to small, entrepreneurial companies. The vast majority of students locate their co-op positions through the Career Development Center. Undergraduate students normally work during a January to August or June to December rotation; graduate students may work during one of the same rotations or for only one academic term.

Athletics

Director: Ken Ralph

Athletics are an integral part of Rensselaer life. Varsity sports, intramurals, and athletic clubs provide students with an opportunity for instruction in sports for physical fitness, recreation, and development of leadership/followership skills.

Intercollegiate Sports Rensselaer fields intercollegiate teams in 23 sports:

- **Baseball** Karl Steffen, head coach
- **Men's Basketball** Mike Griffin, head coach
- **Women's Basketball** John Greene, head coach
- **Men's and Women's Cross-Country** Colin Tory, head coach
- **Field Hockey** Bridget LaNoir, head coach
- **Football** Joe King, head coach
- **Golf** Miles Nolan, head coach
- **Men's Ice Hockey** Seth Appert, head coach
- **Women's Ice Hockey** John Burke, head coach
- **Men's Lacrosse** (vacant), head coach
- **Women's Lacrosse** Leslie Khachadourian, head coach
- **Men's Soccer** Adam Clinton, head coach
- **Softball** Erica Lewis, head coach
- **Men's and Women's Swimming** Shannon O'Brien, head coach
- **Men's and Women's Tennis** Carol Pillsworth, head coach
- **Men's Indoor and Outdoor Track** Colin Tory, head coach
- **Women's Indoor and Outdoor Track** Colin Tory, head coach
- **Women's Soccer** Eric Miller, head coach

The men's and women's hockey teams compete at the Division I level and in the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) hockey league. The remaining teams play in Division III. In three sports, Rensselaer also fields junior varsity teams. Rensselaer is a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the ECAC, NYSWCAA, and the Liberty League.

The department trains and employs student trainers, lifeguards, and equipment room attendants. Several varsity teams sponsor student managers that assist in all matters of team operations.

Athletic Clubs Club sports sponsored by the Rensselaer Union include offerings such as Aikido Karate, Archery, Badminton, Ballroom Dance, Bowling, Cheerleading, Chung Do Kwan, Crew, Cricket, Cycling, Equestrian, Fencing, Gymnastics, Isshinyu Karate, Judo, Juggling and Unicycling, Outing Club, Racquetball, Rugby, Sailing, Scuba, Ski Club and Team, Squash, Table Tennis, Tae Kwon Do, Tennis, Ultimate Frisbee, Volleyball, Water Polo, Weightlifting, and Wrestling.

Intramural and Recreational Program An extensive intramural athletic program offers competition in 23 sports: basketball, billiards, bowling, golf, gym hockey, ice hockey, indoor soccer, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, flag football, track, badminton, aerobics, baseball, wallyball, wiffleball, dodgeball, and volleyball. Two intramural leagues are subdivided into as many divisions as necessary to accommodate all who are interested and to provide a level of competition commensurate with abilities. Recreational opportunities of all descriptions, either planned or unstructured, are available to all students.

Facilities Rensselaer's athletic fields include five illuminated for practice after dark and the Ned Harkness Field and Track, a synthetic turf field and track, was opened in 1994, and resurfaced in 2004.

The '87 Gymnasium contains two general-purpose gymnasiums, a swimming pool, seven four-wall combination handball and squash courts, a weight room, an indoor track, and a wrestling room. The Rensselaer Alumni Sports and Recreation Center houses the Robison Gymnasium, which has an indoor track; a physiotherapy room; basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts on a resilient surface; and locker facilities. The Robison Pool has eight lanes for competitive swimming as well as three-meter and one-meter diving boards. The Houston Field House has an ice rink, locker and team rooms, and permanent seating for 5,300 spectators. The Mueller Center, housing cardiovascular, weights, aerobics, and other fitness activities, opened in 2000.

The Rensselaer Union

Director: Richard M. Hartt

Every enrolled activity fee-paying student is a member of the Rensselaer Union, a self-supporting and a self-governing body that controls, finances, and organizes student activities.

The Union recognizes 130 service, media, religious, performing and visual arts, multicultural, athletic, and extracurricular clubs and organizations. The Union serves as a partner in intramurals and intercollegiate athletics, providing operating budgets for all varsity programs. Students are also responsible for the business operations of the Union, including the University Bookstore, a convenience food store, Post Office substation, a full-service bank, and a number of other retail operations. The Union also works with student organizations to identify and carry out projects that benefit the greater Troy community.

Student leaders at Rensselaer are elected in an all-campus student election each spring. The offices of Grand Marshal, established in 1866, and President of the Union, established in 1891, are the two most responsible positions. An Executive Board of students makes major budget decisions for the Union. The Student Senate is the chief legislative body for student government and draws representation from the entire student body.

The Archer Center for Student Leadership Development

Director: Linda McCloskey

The Archer Center for Student Leadership Development provides leadership education for the Rensselaer students and community both in and outside of the classroom. The Center enhances students' leadership skills through a variety of cutting-edge, interactive learning experiences that include adventure-based initiatives, corporate training techniques, and other methods. Archer Center programs provide every student with the opportunity to gain key leadership skills in areas such as team development, visioning, effective communication, ethical decisionmaking, and multiculturalism.

The Archer Center offers custom-designed workshops for student organizations, manages the Professional Leadership Program for juniors, the Professional Leadership Series for graduate students, and facilitates other co-curricular programs. It also works with faculty across campus to develop interactive formats for classes and laboratories, and coordinates many other special events. Additionally, the Archer Center teaches a required course sequence in the Lally School of Management and Technology and a required Professional Development course sequence in the School of Engineering. Student groups, faculty, staff, administrators, and local communities benefit from Archer Center programs. Corporate representatives work with the Archer Center by funding some of its programs and/or speaking in leadership classes, at workshops, conferences, and at the recognition banquet.

The Archer Center for Student Leadership Development, with help from its colleagues and corporate partners, is dedicated to promoting practices that foster teamwork and integrity in the professional and personal lives of tomorrow's leaders.

Religious Affairs

Coordinator: Edward Kacerguis

Rensselaer has a combination of resident and part-time chaplains who represent major faiths and work with the appropriate student organizations: the Rensselaer Christian Association, B.A.S.I.C., the Rensselaer Newman Student Fellowship, Hillel, and the Islamic Student Organization. All chaplains are available for personal counseling regardless of the beliefs of the individual.

The Rensselaer Newman Foundation and the Catholic Chaplaincy offer all the services of the usual parish and operate the Chapel and Cultural Center (C+CC). The Protestant Chaplain (who works with the Troy Area United Ministries), the local rabbis, and an imam on campus seek to involve students in the life of the local churches, synagogues, and mosques.

The Catholic Chaplains conduct mass daily and four times on weekends when classes are in session, and the Protestant Chaplain holds services on nights chosen by the students. The Rensselaer Christian Association gathers each Friday for song, prayer, and sharing, and in small groups daily. The Rensselaer Newman Student Fellowship organizes varied activities and speakers. Hillel is a focal point for the Jewish student community, gathering for their activities throughout the year. The Islamic students meet throughout the day for prayer as well as on each Friday for Sabbath. A number of churches, synagogues, and mosques in the area welcome students to their communities.

Residence Life

Director: Peter G. Snyder

Approximately 55 percent of the undergraduate student body lives in campus housing. Options vary from apartments to traditional double and triple rooms in residence halls.

Institute policy requires that all non-commuting single first year students live on campus and participate in a Platinum, Diamond, or Gold dining plan. Single upper-class and graduate students may choose to live either on or off campus, to join a dining plan, or to cook for themselves.

Rensselaer's Family Student Housing community is home to 93 families who reside in two individually styled apartment complexes. A closely knit and culturally diverse community, the family housing area offers ample green space and play areas, a community center, and access to campus and community resources.

Residence Life is the focus for student housing programs related to living and dining at Rensselaer. In addition to providing clean, comfortable, and well-maintained residence halls and apartments, Residence Life strives to build a community that values the potential of each individual and encourages students to broaden their perspectives, enhance personal growth, and prepare for life beyond Rensselaer. A student staff of resident assistants, resident directors, apartment managers, teaching learning assistants, and learning assistants complements the professionals in the Residence Life office.

Rensselaer Dining Services

General Manager: John Fusco

Rensselaer Dining Services, managed by the Sodexo Campus Services, offers an innovative dining program designed to meet the diverse dining needs of the Rensselaer community. Meal plans range from unlimited meals anytime, in any resident dining hall, to those with unlimited meals within specified hours or days. Students may also use Mealplan Advantage Dollars (MAD) at all resident dining halls and other Sodexo Campus Services managed facilities on campus as well as Rensselaer Advantage Dollars (RAD), which can also be used at nondining services food outlets such as Father's, Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, and on-campus laundry machines.

Students with special dietary concerns for religious, health, or personal reasons may make arrangements to meet with the dining services to see how their needs can be met. Rensselaer does not operate a kosher kitchen but can offer frozen kosher dinners to any resident student who requests them. Dining services also offers packaged kosher foods daily. Bag lunches are available for any meal plan participant who cannot attend a regularly scheduled meal due to class schedule conflicts by bringing his or her class schedule to the general manager or dining hall manager.

For more information, refer to our web site at www.rpi.edu/dept/dining.

Student Health Center

Director: Leslie Lawrence, M.D.

The Student Health Center is a comprehensive, nationally accredited, physician-directed program providing outpatient ambulatory health care. Services include medical, gynecology, and allergy clinics, a counseling center, and health education and wellness programs. Specialty consultation referral and a prescription delivery program are also available.

The Student Health Center is fully certified by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). The AAAHC is an independent national organization that evaluates the quality of care at ambulatory centers such as outpatient surgery centers, clinics, and college health centers. Rensselaer's commitment to seek and maintain AAAHC certification provides assurance of the quality of patient care and the appropriate organizational framework for providing care.

The Counseling Center offers individual counseling sessions and group workshops for personal and academic adjustment problems. Confidentiality is strictly maintained except when a student's behavior presents a clear and present danger to the student or to others.

Located on the Troy campus, the Gallagher Student Health Center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends during the academic semesters. Summer session and vacation hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A 160-bed community hospital with a 24-hour emergency department is located two blocks from the campus.

All matriculated students pay a Health Center Fee that provides access to the Student Health Center during each regular semester (see Tuition and Fees section). This is a mandatory fee that is not waivable. Coverage for summer sessions is included in the spring semester fee.

Rensselaer students are required to have adequate health insurance. The Rensselaer Student Health Insurance Plan provides a low-cost plan that includes nationwide year-round coverage at a very reasonable cost (see Tuition and Fees section). This insurance plan, together with the services of the Student Health Center, provides seamless coverage for students while at school. The plan also meets J-1 visa requirements. Dependent coverage is available at reasonable cost. A student, who has equivalent health insurance that provides non-urgent coverage in Troy, may request a waiver of the insurance fee.

All students, including part-time students, must submit a medical history and record of physical examination on a form provided by Rensselaer. No other form can be accepted. Students must show adequate evidence of meeting Rensselaer and New York prematriculation immunization and tuberculosis screening requirements.

Student Records and Financial Services

Director: Sharon L. Kunkel

This office combines the activities of the registrar and the financial aid office to provide seamless services to students, families, alumni, and Institute faculty and staff.

Student Records and Financial Services registers, provides advising support, awards and administers financial aid resources, including Institutional, state, and federal aid for all Rensselaer students. This office maintains accurate student academic and financial records and preserves the confidentiality, security, and ethical handling of these records. It implements academic policy guidelines developed by the faculty as well as financial policies set forth by federal, state, and Institute guidelines.