VISITING SCHOLAR HANDBOOK

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Rensselaer admits qualified students without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status, veteran status, or disability.
1. HELPFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

International Services for Students and Scholars (ISSS) (518)276-6266
(Office hours: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

Rensselaer Public Safety: Non-emergency (518)276-6656 (24 hrs)
On-campus Emergency (518)276-6611
University Information (518)276-6000
Police (Troy Police Department) (518)270-4411
Fire (Troy Fire Department) (518)272-3400
Samaritan Hospital (518)271-3300
Off-campus. Emergency 911

2. INTERNATIONAL SERVICES FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS INFORMATION

Our website is http://doso.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=11

Our Facebook is https://www.facebook.com/RPI.International.Services?ref=ts

We also have drop in hours. Drop-In hours are times set aside for scholars and students to come into the ISSS office without an appointment, and for international students and scholars to speak to Jane if they have questions about employment, traveling and other topics.

Those times are

- Monday: 10:00am-11:30am
- Wednesday: 1:30pm-3:00pm
- Thursday: 9:00am-11:00am

3. WHAT THE ISSS OFFICE CAN DO FOR YOU

- Immigration advice and forms
- Travel Information
- Cultural information
- Extend your current DS-2019 form
- Invitation letter for family and friends
- Assist with getting a Rensselaer ID card
4. RENSSELAER IDENTIFICATION CARD

You apply for a Rensselaer Identification Card (ID) at the Rensselaer Union. This is # 35 on the campus map that we will give to you when you check in with ISSS.

To obtain a Rensselaer Identification card you must have an official appointment letter.

- If you are receiving a salary (paycheck) from Rensselaer you will need to obtain a Rensselaer Identification Number (RIN) from the office of Human Resources. You then go to the ID desk in the Rensselaer Union and they will issue you an ID card.

- If you are NOT receiving any salary money from Rensselaer, the ISSS Office will issue you a Rensselaer identification number. ISSS will give you a memo that you will take to the ID desk to obtain an ID card.

When applying for a card the ID desk will take your picture. It usually takes about 10-15 minutes from beginning to end to receive the card.

The first card is free; a replacement card will cost $25.00.

5. HOW TO APPLY FOR A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

If Rensselaer issues you a salary (paycheck), then you must apply for a Social Security number. The Social Security Office is located in Troy, at 500 Federal Street, First Floor (in the medical building near the Green Island Bridge). The office is open Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 3:00pm, except federal holidays.

You should apply for a social security number within the first two weeks after your arrival in the United States.

Please bring with you the following documents:
1. Passport
2. I-94
3. DS-2019
4. Letter from ISSS office
5. Appointment letter from the RPI department

It will take approximately 2-12 weeks for you to receive the Social Security Card in the mail. When you receive this number, you must notify the Payroll Office.

If you are not receiving a salary from Rensselaer, then you cannot get a Social Security number.

If you are on payroll and receiving a salary from Rensselaer, you must take your receipt from the Social Security Office and visit Charlene Richards.

1. Meet with Charlene Richards in the Rice building.
   a. You can email her at richac@rpi.edu and tell her you want to set up an appointment, she will get back to you when you can see her.
   b. You need the receipt from the Social Security office for the appt.
   c. At this appointment she will help you fill out all of your tax forms.
i. It is important because if your country has treaty benefits with the United States, you can only take advantage of this benefit if the Payroll Office has a copy of the receipt or a copy of your social security card.

2. This is a busy time for Social Security; it could take 2-4 weeks to get the Social Security number.

3. When you get the number, you must send an email to Charlene Richards in the payroll office telling her: your name, RIN, your department, and your social security number.

4. You cannot start working until you have met with Charlene in the payroll office.
6. PUBLIC SAFETY

Our campus is generally a safe place. The Office of Public Safety is responsible for maintaining a safe environment for you on the campus and in Rensselaer housing. In the event of an emergency at any hour, call (518)276-6611. However, it is important to remember the following:

**ON CAMPUS**

Call the Rensselaer Public Safety Office (276-6611) immediately about any trouble, even if you only suspect a crime. Except in an extreme emergency or in case of a fire, you should call the Rensselaer Public Safety Office before calling the Troy Police or Fire Department.

You and your dependents should carry your Rensselaer student identification card (ID) with you at all times. A Public Safety Officer may ask you to show him/her your ID, particularly at night.

Our campus safety officers are not policemen. Their job is to help you, but sometimes there is a misunderstanding between an international student and an officer. If you have any problems or complaints, report them to the Office of Public Safety.

If you live in Rensselaer housing and a fire alarm sounds, leave the building immediately, even if you know it to be a false alarm. Public Safety Officers will instruct you when it is safe to return.
Campus Emergency Call Boxes

Emergency telephones or call boxes are located in all residential and academic areas of the campus for your convenience and safety. These phones are located inside the bright red pole and are marked with a blue light on top to make them easy to find.

RPI ALERT

RPI Alert is an urgent mass notification system by which the Institute can notify campus constituents of an active, major campus emergency. The system includes:

- Text messages (SMS) to cell phones
- Voice messages to phones
- Email messages to designated addresses

WHEN IS IT USED?

Examples of when the RPI Alert system will be used include:

- Hazardous material spill/exposure impacting a significant portion of campus
- Severe weather such as a tornado reported to be approaching the campus
- An active shooter or other reported immediate life-safety threat on campus

How to register?

If you are on payroll at RPI you do the following:

1. Go to alert.rpi.edu
2. Click on “Update your Contact Info”
3. Enter your User ID and PIN
4. Enter your cell phone number
5. Tick the box “Number is Text Enabled Device” if you can receive text messages on your cell phone
6. Click on “Submit” button

What do you need to do if you do NOT want to be notified?

1. Go to alert.rpi.edu
2. Click on “Update your Contact Info”
3. Enter your User ID and PIN
4. Tick the box “Opt out option”
5. Click on “Submit” button

If you are NOT on payroll at RPI, in order to register for RPI Alert you must do the following:

1. Please contact the Director of Emergency Management at (518)276-3414 or abrams@rpi.edu to enroll for this free service.
2. You will be asked to provide your first and last name, length of stay, e-mail address and telephone numbers including which telephone is text enabled.

Your information will be removed from the RPIAler database upon your departure.

For more information, please visit http://alert.rpi.edu/about.html.

OFF CAMPUS

In an emergency, dial 9-1-1, or contact the Troy Police or the Fire Department directly. If you are confused or experience a problem, feel free to call the Rensselaer Public Safety Office. We strongly recommend that you not walk alone at night in isolated or poorly-lighted parts of the campus, or in the city of Troy. This is especially true for women. Troy really is a safe place, but our advice is "Better safe than sorry."

SERVICES OFFERED BY PUBLIC SAFETY

Below is some of the information you can get from the RPI Public Safety. In the Public Safety website is information on Your Safety, Public Safety Services, Community, Education & Training, Publications, Resources and Contacts.

- 24 –Safety Escort
- Vehicle Assistance
- Fingerprinting
- Emergency Phones
- Fire Safety
- ATM Safety
- Reporting Incidents
- Vehicle Safety
- Mail Handling
- Winter Storm

- Safety Classes
- Property Registration
- Lost & Found
- Shuttle Service
- Carbon Monoxide
- Identity Theft
- Office Safety
- Bike Safety
- Thunderstorm
- Campus Preparedness

- Room/Office/Vehicle lockout
- Crime Investigation
- Personal Safety
- Preventing Assault
- Travel Safety
- Suspicious Behavior
- Safe Living Off Campus
- Laptop Security
- Weather & Natural Disasters
- Medical Emergency
7. COMPUTER ACCOUNTS

If employed (receiving a salary/paycheck) by Rensselaer:

1. Once you appear on the payroll list a computer account is automatically set up for you.

If you are not employed (not receiving any salary/paycheck) from Rensselaer:

1. Your department must sponsor you.
2. The department can call or go to the “Help Desk” at Voorhees Computing Center (VCC) and obtain a “Guest Account” form.
3. The cost for 10 MB (megabytes) of space is approximately $2.50 per month.

8. TAXES

You need to know that taxes may be taken from your salary, stipend, fellowship or living allowance. Your income after taxes may be lower than you anticipated. The amount withheld from your paycheck is dependent upon your tax status, which, in turn, is determined by your visa classification and the amount of time you have been in the United States.

Tax treaties exist between the United States and other countries, which may exempt you from paying income tax in the United States. Information about tax treaties and income tax requirements can be obtained from the United States consulate in your country and from the Rensselaer Payroll Office.

The tax year is from January 1 to December 31. All foreign scholars and spouses are required to report their annual U.S.-source income by filing a tax return between January 1 and April 15 of the following year. Please keep records of your income and expenditures to substantiate later claims on your tax returns, and keep copies of your income tax forms.

Current regulations say that ALL F and J visa holders must also complete particular tax forms even if they had no U.S. based income. Even if you are not employed in the U.S., you will still need to fill out a tax form (8843). To do this you will need to obtain a “Taxpayer Identification Number = ITIN,” unless you have a social security number. The ISSS Office has the applications for this. It takes approximately 8 weeks to obtain the number so you should apply as soon as you arrive. When you fill out the application bring it with your passport to the ISSS office. We will need to make photocopies of the passport pages to submit with your application.

The ISSS Office staff cannot answer individual tax questions but we do host a Tax Workshop every March where someone from the Internal Revenue Service’s (IRS) and the New York State (NYS) comes and explains how to fill out tax forms.
9. **J-1 IMMIGRATION INFORMATION**

The following information is brief, incomplete, and subject to change. Therefore we suggest that you also consult the International Office (ISSS) if you have questions. The ISSS office keeps the scholars up to date on current regulations by putting the latest information on its homepage [http://doso.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=11](http://doso.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=11).

It is important to understand that the International Office (ISSS) is **not** a branch of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), or the United States Immigration Customs Enforcement (USICE). The ISSS Office is, however, required to answer immigration inquiries regarding address, telephone number, field of study, initial attendance date, date of visa issuance, date of extensions and your status. Information about your private life or activities discussed with ISSS staff is considered confidential and is not given to any outside authority without your permission.

**J-1 IS YOUR CLASSIFICATION**

“**Visa**” is a stamp in your passport used to enter the country”

**VISA STAMP IN PASSPORT**

- Is a stamp in your passport that lets you enter the U.S.A.
- Can be obtained ONLY outside the U.S. at the American Consulate or Embassy.
- States the number of entries and the time frame in which you may enter the U.S.
- Can expire and it does not matter as long as you enter the U.S. prior to the end date.
- Does not change your stay in the U.S.
- The most common Visa for scholars is J-1.

**I-94 (ALSO CALLED ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE RECORD)**

**IF YOU ARRIVE BY AIR OR SEA INTO NYC BEFORE MAY 7, 2013**

- Small white card stapled in passport at the port of entry by an immigration Officer.
- States your arrival date, your visa status and length of your stay.
- **MUST HAVE – VERY IMPORTANT**
- **IF IT IS LOST YOU MUST APPLY TO REPLACE IT IMMEDIATELY**!
- It is very expensive to replace your I-94 card.
- You turn it in with immigration when you leave the U.S. in order to prove that you did leave the U.S.

**IF YOU ARRIVE AFTER MAY 7, 2013**

- I-94 card is becoming the electronic form I-94 and will no longer be a paper form for air and sea travel into the United States.
- The stamp will no longer be on a piece of paper, but will be stamped into your passport with your arrival date, your visa status and length of stay.
- In order to access this information you will be told to go online at CBP.gov/I94 to print it out.

**D/S (DURATION OF STAY)**

- Stamped on I-94.
- Means that as long as you maintain your legal status, and your DS-2019 has not expired you can remain in the U.S.
- It helps determines when your status ends.
**DS-2019 FOR J-1 SCHOLARS**

- “Sponsor” is the agency who issued the DS-2019.
- Was sent to you by Rensselaer or another sponsor.
- Indicates how long you can stay in the U.S., sources of funding, major and what you are doing on campus.
- You must apply for an extension if you cannot finish your research before the ending date on the DS-2019.
- Extensions can be done at any time before the ending date of the DS-2019 at the ISSS Office. The appropriate paperwork will need to be filled out, along with signatures.
- Must leave the country within 30 days of ending date on your DS-2019.
- Keep all copies of DS-2019 stapled together (even from other schools).
- Lower left is where it indicates if you have a two-year home country residency requirement.
- It must be signed for travel once a year by your “sponsor”.

**STAYING “IN STATUS”**

- To legally stay in the U.S. you must remain “In Status”
- Passport must be valid at all times.
  1) Contact your embassy on what is required for an extension.
  2) Check ISSS homepage for addresses & links.
- Do not work illegally. **If you are not sure what is legal ask the ISSS Office.**
- Do not accept off campus employment without official permission from ISSS Office.
- **Maintain the correct health insurance for yourself and all your family members.**
- Keep ISSS Office informed of your current local address.
- You cannot change departments without ISSS approval.

**HOW TO EXTEND YOUR DS-2019**

(***This must be done before the DS-2019 expires***)

1. Get a new appointment letter from the “Dean” of your school at Rensselaer.
2. Fill out the blue “Extension for J-1 Visiting Scholar” form in the ISSS Office.
3. The paperwork for the extension should be turned in to the ISSS Office at least 2 months before the ending date of the DS-2019.
4. If Rensselaer does not financially support you then you will need to show the ISSS Office how you will be financially supported.
5. **REMEMBER** you are only allowed in the United States on a J-1 visa for 5 years.
6. The DS-2019 cannot be extended after it expires

**TRAVELING INSIDE THE UNITED STATES**

If you are planning a trip within the United States by car, bus, train or airplane, to U.S. cities near or far, **it is essential** that you have your passport and visa documents with you. We suggest that when traveling outside a 20 mile radius of RPI that you have all of your documents on you in case of an emergency and because of the heightened security within the United States.
10. TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES
(What you need to have to ensure a successful re-entry)

Proper documentation is needed when you travel outside the United States. Request any letter, travel signature or document at least two weeks in advance.

**J-1 scholars:**
- Valid Form DS-2019 must be endorsed/signed by ISSS office or the sponsor that issued the DS-2019 once every year.
- Valid I-94.
- Valid passport.
- Valid visa stamp in passport unless you are traveling to Canada or Mexico and some other islands adjacent to the U.S. for less than 30 days. (If that is the case you can leave and re-enter with an expired visa stamp).

Before traveling anywhere outside the U.S. please check that country’s Embassy’s homepage for their requirements.

11. HEALTH INSURANCE

You are required to have health insurance for yourself and your dependents. If you do not have health insurance coverage from your home country that meets the requirements, you may enroll in a health insurance plan upon your arrival. Be sure to read about the health insurance plan carefully. Make sure you read the section on the expenses that are not covered by the policy and the information concerning deductibles.

**HEALTH INSURANCE TERMS**

**Medical Evacuation:** The charges for sending you home for treatment if you are seriously injured or sick.

**Benefits:** The amount which is paid by the insurance company to the injured person or health care provider.

**Premium:** The amount of money a person pays to an insurance company to be insured.

**Reparation:** The expense of returning the body, upon death, the person’s native country.

**Deductible:** The amount of money you must pay each year to cover your medical care expenses before your insurance policy starts paying.

**Claim:** A request for payment for Benefits received or services rendered.

**Exclusions:** Specific conditions or circumstances for which the policy will not provide benefits.

**Inpatient:** Service provided after the Member is admitted to the hospital. Inpatient stays are those lasting 24 hours or more.

**Outpatient:** A Member who is receiving care at a hospital, physician’s office or other health facility without being admitted overnight to the facility. The term “ambulatory” is often used to describe Outpatient care.

**Preexisting Condition:** A health problem or condition that existed before the date your insurance became effective.

**Primary Care Doctor:** Usually your first contact for health care. This is often a family physician of internist, but some women use their gynecologist. A primary care doctor monitors your health and diagnoses and treats minor health problems, and refers you to specialists if another level of care is needed.

**Provider:** Any person (doctor, nurse, dentist) or institution (hospital or clinic) that provides medical card.
12. MEDICAL SERVICES, INCLUDING URGENT CARE AND HOSPITALS

Do not wait until a medical emergency arises. If possible, find a family doctor in the area soon after your family comes to Troy.

However, if you cannot get an appointment with your primary doctor in time or after business hours, and the illness is not really bad, use Urgent Care Services.

What is Urgent Care?

Urgent care is a type of health care service that is available to any people in need of immediate but non-life threatening medical attention, and urgent care usually accepts most insurance plans. Urgent care centers are open all year around (except for major holidays) and longer hours. No appointments are necessary and walk-ins are welcome. You will receive your treatment quicker and it will cost much less than the emergency room care.

If you experience the following illness or injuries but your primary doctor is not available to treat you, you should visit an urgent care center:

- Sprains
- Cold/Flu like symptoms
- Fever
- Muscle/Body aches & pains
- Stomach ache, vomiting or diarrhea
- Urinary tract infections
- Minor eye injury or infection
- Minor eye injury or infection
- Rash or burns
- Insect bites
- Minor wounds such as cuts
- Routine gynecological problems

The closest Urgent Care Centers by RPI is as follows:

1. On Call Medical Services
   76 North Greenbush Road
   Troy, NY 12180
   Phone #: (518)286-3000
   Hours: Monday – Friday: 9AM-9PM
   Weekends: 9AM-5PM

2. Community Care Physicians Urgent Care Centers
   Capital Region Health Park
   711 Troy-Schenectady Road
   Latham, NY 12110
   Phone #: (518)783-3110
   Website: http://www.communitycare.com/MedicalServices/specialists/urgent_care.asp
   Hours: Monday – Friday: 5PM – Midnight
   Saturday – Sunday: 10AM – 8PM
   Holidays: 10AM – 5PM

Hospital services in the U.S. are very expensive.

There are two hospitals in Troy that are located close to Rensselaer:

* Samaritan Hospital, corner of Burdett and Peoples Ave., PH: 271-3300
* **Seton Health Systems (St. Mary’s Hospital),** 1300 Massachusetts Ave., PH: 268-5000.

Other hospitals in the area may be found by looking under the section of *Doctors* at [http://www.yellowpages.com/](http://www.yellowpages.com/)

The emergency rooms of the hospitals should be used only for true emergencies, because just the usage of the room may be very costly. Charges for the doctor will also be added to this.

### 13. HEALTH CARE TERMS

**Dentist:** Offers treatment for problems with teeth, jaws or mouth. However, insurance cover for dental care is often available at an additional cost.

**Family Practice:** Offers general medical care for all ages. In general, you can go to a family practice to receive health care for most ailments.

**Gynecology:** Medical care for women and reproductive health.

**Obstetrics:** Medical care for pregnant women and through child birth.

**Optometry:** Medical care for the eyes and vision problems, including glasses and contact lenses.

**Pediatrics:** Medical care for children (typically birth through teenage years)

Other specialists include:
- Allergy
- Bone and Joint pain
- Cardiology (Heart doctor)
- Ear/Nose/Throat Doctor
- Oncology (Cancer)
- Podiatry (foot/ankle)

### 14. HELPFUL FIRST AID KIT CHECKLIST

**Something for headache:** You can get brand names, or buy generic medication, which are generally just good and a lot cheaper. The ones are acetaminophen (the key ingredient is Tylenol). Ibuprofen (found in Advil or Motrin) and Naproxen (found in Aleve). Before you buy, read the labels. Some pain relievers do not mix well with alcohol and can damage your liver. Others can irritate your stomach. Aspirin is not good for some people, like flu patients, because it may cause undesirable side effects. Also, aspirin goes bad quickly if not used for a long time.

**Antiseptic Towelette:** To cleanse any affected skin area before applying some kind of medication.

**Antiseptic & Burn Cream:** For minor burns, scalds, small wounds, scratches, cuts and abrasions.

**Antibiotic Ointment:** To prevent infections

**Sterile Bandages/Pads:** Get a multipurpose box, with a variety of sizes (many times called Band-aids). Cover affected area after cleaning and applying medication. Cotton balls, tissues, swabs, tweezers, and a sewing needle. Use the tweezers and sewing needles for splinter removal.

**Thermometer:** If you do not know how to use one, please ask.

**Scissors**

**Medical Tape**

**Tissues**

Remember to wash your hands frequently!
15. INFORMATION FOR DEPENDENT FAMILY MEMBERS IN J-2 STATUS

INVITING YOUR SPOUSE/CHILDREN TO JOIN YOU IN THE UNITED STATES

1. Fill out the Dependent Request form in the ISSS Office, or download it from the ISSS homepage under “Immigration and Visa’s”.
2. If you are not paid by Rensselaer as a full-time employee, you will have to show documentation that you have the money to support your family. You need bank statements for the past three months showing you have the required amount.
3. The ISSS Office will type a DS-2019 that allows your spouse and or children to apply for a J-2 visa and enter the United States.

HOW TO APPLY FOR AN RPI ID FOR YOUR SPOUSE

You apply for a Rensselaer Identification card (ID) for your spouse at the ID desk in the Rensselaer Union.

All the required documentation must be presented before the issuance of the identification card, and both the scholar and the spouse must be present at the time the card is issued.

The scholar and spouse should bring the following to apply:
1. Scholar’s passport and I.D.
2. Spouse’s passport
3. Marriage certificates if the family names are different on the passport.

If your children are between the ages of 14 and 21 they can also received a Rensselaer ID card.

All spouses and dependents will be charged $10.00 for the original card and $25.00 for each lost or replacement card. Issuance of the Rensselaer ID card entitles a spouse/dependent to use the shuttle buses, gym, library and the Rensselaer Union, etc.

J-2 GETTING PERMISSION TO WORK IN THE UNITED STATES

A person on a J-2 visa may apply to Immigration to have permission to work in the United States. An application may be obtained from the ISSS Office.

Permission to work is granted by the Department of Homeland Security. Work is only approved if the income from the employment will be “used to support the family’s customary recreational and cultural activities and related travel”. Employment will not be given if this income is needed to support the J-1.

The J-2 can bring the application into the ISSS office and a staff member will review it, keep copies of it and mail it to Immigration.

Immigration will take approximately 12 weeks to process this application.

Work permission is given for one year at a time. The cost for this application is $340.00.
WHEN TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

J-2 spouses and minor children must also have:
* Valid Form DS-2019 must be endorsed by ISSS office or the sponsor that issued the DS-2019 once every year.
* Valid I-94.
* Valid passport.
* Valid visa stamp in passport unless you are traveling to Canada or Mexico and some other islands adjacent to the U.S. for less than 30 days. (If that is the case you can leave and re-enter with an expired visa stamp).

Each family member must have a DS-2019 form signed for travel within the past year to be able to re-enter the U.S.

HEALTH INSURANCE FOR DEPENDENTS

Since medical services are very expensive in the U.S. and since scholars have found themselves in financial difficulties because of medical expenses, J-1 scholars are required to take health insurance for all their dependents. If Rensselaer employs you, you can purchase Rensselaer’s insurance for dependents. If you are not employed by Rensselaer, brochures are available in the ISSS Office about other health insurance policies. The law states that you have to have medical insurance that covers (1) $50,000.00 medical benefits per person per accident or illness; (2) $7,500.00 for repatriation; (3) $10,000.00 for medical evacuation.

If you do not have this medical coverage for you and your family, you will be forced to leave the United States and your J-1 status will be cancelled.

MEDICAL SERVICES FOR DEPENDENTS

Even with medical insurance for your dependents, keeping them healthy can still be expensive. However, this does not mean that your dependents will have to do without medical care. Do not wait until a medical emergency arises; going to the emergency room of any hospital will be very expensive. There are ways of avoiding a medical emergency, and a trip to the emergency room.

If possible, get a family doctor in the area. In the first appointment he/she will probably need to give your dependents a physical examination and obtain medical histories. This is often expensive, but a doctor is more likely to see you on short notice if you are his/her private patient. Once you have a family doctor, go to him/her when your dependent first starts feeling ill; don’t wait until it becomes an emergency.

If a member of your family is seriously ill/life threatening, do not wait to get an appointment with a private doctor, go directly to Samaritan Hospital’s emergency room.

Except in the case of a severe emergency, be prepared to wait for several hours in order to receive treatment. Again we suggest using Urgent care if it not life threatening and your regular doctor is not available.
MATERNITY AND FAMILY PLANNING

There are several places where you may go to obtain advice on family planning. Spouses may go to Planned Parenthood in Troy.

Planned Parenthood
200 Broadway
Troy, NY 12180
Phone #: (518)434-5678
Website: http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center/findCenter.asp

If you find that you are going to have maternity expenses, and you are not covered by any insurance, you will be required to pay for ALL BILLS with your own money.

DANGERS FOR CHILDREN

Some precautions about protecting children from danger are included here because there may be problems different from those encountered in your home country. Some things to watch for are:

* **Leaving Children Alone.** Do not leave your children alone in your apartment. There are many hazards, which young children may not understand. Leaving your children alone is a violation of New York State Child Protection Laws.

* **Medicines.** Keep ALL medicines of whatever kind in a place where children cannot reach them. They should be kept in childproof containers.

* **Cleaning supplies.** Cleaning supplies may contain substances harmful to children. Do not leave them where your children can reach them.

* **Poisons.** If you think you or your child has swallowed a poisonous substance, call (518)271-3300 (Samaritan Hospital); they will advise you on antidotes and the necessary action to be taken.

* **Abandoned Refrigerators.** A refrigerator no longer in use is dangerous for children. Children have crawled into such refrigerators and, being unable to open the door from the inside, have suffocated. If you see an abandoned refrigerator, report it to the police so that it may be disposed of.

* **Gas Stoves.** A gas stove is dangerous if the gas escapes. If your stove must be lit with a match, always light the match first before turning on the stove or oven. If you smell gas in your apartment do not light a match or turn on any lights! Open all windows, evacuate the building, and immediately call Niagara Mohawk's emergency numbers day or night: 1(800) 892-2345.

* **Plastic Bags.** Plastic bags are dangerous to children. Do not allow children to play with plastic bags or leave them where the children can get to them. Children may get the plastic over their faces and be unable to breathe.

* **Matches.** Do not leave matches or cigarette lighters where children can reach them. They often view them as playthings without understanding the danger.
- **Venetian Blinds.** Children can wrap the chords of the venetian blinds around their neck or get stuck in the chord and may fall. Keep them out of reach of your children.

- **Bathrooms and Toilet Bowls.** Don’t leave children alone in the bathroom. They can slip in the bathtub. Also, keep the seat and lid of the toilet bowl down to prevent children from falling in.

- **Fire Alarms.** When a fire alarm goes off in a building everyone must vacate the building and stay outside until the Fire department says they can go back inside.

**SOCIAL SERVICES**

The United States government and New York State offer financial assistance to low income families in the area of rent, shelter, food, fuel, and medical costs. However, these programs are available **ONLY** to citizens or permanent residents of the United States (holding an I-551 or Green Card). If you try to participate in federally funded programs, you **WILL** jeopardize your J-1 status.

**EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN**

Children of international scholars have the eligible to attend the FREE public schools of the district in which they are living. For example, if you live in Troy, your children have the right to attend the schools (and programs) in the Troy City School District. Typically the school year lasts from the beginning of September and ends in the end of June.

There are typically three levels of public school education:

- **Elementary School:** kindergarten through 5\(^{th}\) or 6\(^{th}\) grade (ages 5-10)
- **Middle School or Junior High:** 6\(^{th}\) or 7\(^{th}\) grade through 8\(^{th}\) grade (ages 11-13)
- **High School:** 9\(^{th}\) grade through 12\(^{th}\) grade (ages 14-18)

If you have school aged children you should speak with the Troy City School District. Check out their website at [http://www.troy.k12.ny.us/academics/](http://www.troy.k12.ny.us/academics/)

**ISSUES RELATED TO CHILDREN**

**CHILD ABUSE AND CHILD NEGLECT LAWS IN NEW YORK STATE**

According to New York State laws, the state may take children away from parents who abuse or neglect them. This includes excessive physical punishment of a child or leaving a child unattended. New York State may interfere on behalf of the child in such situations.

**TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN**

Please note that in New York State there is a law requiring all children under the age of 10 to be restrained in a special car seat or with a seat belt while riding in an automobile. All children under the age of four are required to be in regulation car seats as specified
16. TRANSPORTATION

Campus Bus Service:
Rensselaer has a contract with CDTA (Capital District Transport Authority), through which CDTA runs a free (for RPI ID card holders) shuttle bus service with different routes that connect RPI with many places across the Capital Region.

The bus schedules and routes can be found through the on-line CDTA Shuttle Bus Schedule (www.cdta.org), or at Public Safety Office. The service is safe, efficient and reliable; the employees are professional and friendly; and, the equipment is modern, clean and comfortable.

How to Ride on CDTA:
If you are a new rider or will be taking the bus to an unfamiliar place, you should get information about schedule times, locations and fares (cost to ride) before you begin your CDTA trip. That’s where the Customer Information Center comes in. The Customer Information Center is open from 6AM to 7PM, Monday-Friday and from 8:30AM – 6PM on Saturday, Sunday and Holidays. Their phone number is (518)482-8822. The information operators will tell you which bus to catch, where to board and which stop is closest to your destination. When you call them, make sure you have paper and pen handy to write the information down. And be prepared to give the telephone operator the address or intersection you are at, the address or nearest intersection you want to go to, and the time that you would like to travel.

People with hearing impairments can reach the information center through our telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD). The TDD number is 482-9024.

Bus Schedules:
On the cover of each schedule, you will see a route number and name. The number and name on the schedule correspond to the information on the large sign above the windshield on every CDTA bus. A time schedule and route map tells you when and where a bus travels. Bus schedules are divided into sections for weekdays and, Saturdays and Sundays. If a bus route does not travel on Saturday and/or Sunday, this will be noted on its schedule.

Schedules are written to tell you when the bus will pass through a major intersection along the route. Determine where you want to go and at what time. Follow the row of
time points from the place you want to travel from, to the place you want to travel to. Determine which time is good for you, and you will be on your way. If there is a symbol near any of your time points, check the notes section of the schedule. Some routes have alternate patterns or slight trip deviations to accommodate more customers. These symbols explain these trip deviations in detail.

Bus schedules are available at hundreds of locations throughout the Capital Region. On campus, they can be picked up at the Student Union and the Public Safety Office. Schedules are also available online at www.cdt.org.

Waiting for the bus:
Schedule times can be affected by traffic and weather conditions, so you should plan to arrive at your bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled arrival time of your bus.

About Bus Stops:
Stand at the bus stop or in the shelter. Do not stand in the roadway or at the edge of the curb. CDTA bus stop signs are white with blue and gold trim. Each bus stop sign contains the number of the bus route that passes by that location. In general, bus stops are spaced about 500 feet apart. In the interest of safety, CDTA bus operators are instructed to pick up and drop off customers only at official bus stop locations. As your bus approaches, raise your hand to signal the bus operator. This will let the bus operator know that you want to board.

Identifying Your Bus:
To be sure that you are boarding the right bus, check the route name and number which is displayed on the large sign above the windshield on every CDTA bus. This is called the overhead destination sign. The route number and name on the overhead destination sign should be the same as that shown on the front cover of the bus schedule. The space on the far right-hand side of the destination sign will tell you where the bus is going. A sign over the passenger side window will tell you the direction that the bus is traveling on that route. If you are not sure that you are getting on the right bus, ask the bus operator for help.
**Boarding the bus:**
Let departing customers exit before you board. We ask that customers try to exit through the rear door to speed the boarding process. If you think you might have difficulty climbing the bus steps, ask the operator to lower the steps for you. All CDTA buses are equipped with a kneeling device which lowers the first step to curb level for your convenience. Some buses are equipped with lifts to accommodate customers who use wheelchairs.

Board the bus carefully. Always use the hand rails for support when you enter or exit. Be careful when walking up or down the steps during bad weather, and be extra careful if you are boarding with young children. The steps can get slippery during rain or snowstorms.

Please have your Rensselaer ID ready. If you need a transfer, ask the bus operator for one when you show your ID. After showing your ID, find a seat quickly and make yourself comfortable. The seats of the front of the bus are reserved for senior citizens and people with disabilities. Please relinquish these seats if they are needed. If all seats are occupied, move to the back of the bus to allow additional customers to board. You will find poles throughout the bus to hold onto if you are standing. Please hold small children securely when the bus is moving. Do not allow small children to walk around the bus unattended.

**Paying the fare:**
You may have to pay some transfer fares in the City of Albany. CDTA bus operators do not handle money, so they cannot make change. All fares are deposited into the fare box. Please have the exact fare when you board. This will speed up the payment process and make the trip faster for everybody.

**With your valid Rensselaer photo ID you can ride all CDTA buses for FREE.**

Valid RPI photo identification cards will be accepted on all CDTA bus routes. Just swipe your ID through the farebox and you’re on your way. Invalid ID card will not be accepted and the bus operator may refer an individual using an invalid ID card to the Campus Parking Office.

**Putting Money in the Fare Box:**
All CDTA buses are equipped with electronic fare boxes that automatically count and process fares. The fare box “beeps” after the correct fare has been deposited. The fare boxes accept both coins and dollar bills. The coin slot and dollar bill receivers are clearly marked on the top of the fare box. Dollar bills must be unfolded and inserted flat into the bill receiver. The fare boxes do not make change. If you are not sure how to deposit the fare, ask your bus operator for help.
Riding the Bus:
You will find CDTA service to be comfortable and reliable. You can help to make riding the bus more pleasant for all customers by following a few simple riding tips:

- New York State Law Prohibits smoking on-board CDTA buses.
- There is NO EATING or DRINKING on-board CDTA buses, and please do not litter.
- There is NO PLAYING RADIOS, tape players or other audio equipment while on-board CDTA buses. You may listen to these instruments with earphones or headphones provided the volume is turned down.
- ANIMALS are not allowed on-board CDTA buses unless they are in a carrier that can fit on your lap or at your feet in front of you. Seeing eye dogs are allowed on-board to provide assistance to customers with sight impairments.
- DO NOT Vandalize or damage Buses or Shelters. Vandalism is a crime and will be punished with a fine or a jail sentence. Report vandalism to us immediately if you see it happening.
- GAMBLING IS NOT ALLOWED on any CDTA bus.
- FIREARMS ARE NOT ALLOWED on any CDTA bus.
- The seats at the front of every bus are reserved for senior citizens and people with disabilities. Please relinquish these seats if they are needed.
- If there are no seats available when you board, it is OK to stand. Stand behind the yellow line on the floor at the front of the bus. If possible, move to the rear of the bus to allow other customers to board. For your safety, hold on to the hand rails when standing on-board CDTA buses.
- Baby strollers and grocery card allowed on-board, provided they are collapsed and will fit on your lap or at your feet in front of you.
- Please keep your hands and arms inside the windows of the bus at all times.
- Shopping bags and small boxes are OK to bring on-board CDTA buses, provided they are small enough to fit on your lap or at your feet in front of you. Do not put bags or boxes in the aisles where they may block passage for other customers.
- We require that you wear shoes and a shirt on-board a CDTA bus.
- Emergency-exit instructions are displayed inside all CDTA buses for customer safety. In an emergency or unusual situation, please notify your bus operator immediately.

Getting off the bus:

When the bus gets near your stop, pull the cord above the window or press the yellow strip between the windows. This will signal the bus operator to stop for you. You only need to pull the cord or press the strip once to notify the bus operator that you wish to get off. The bus operator will stop at the next designated bus stop location.

Please remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop. Once the bus has stopped, exit the bus through the front or rear door, whichever is closest to your seat. Whenever possible, use the rear door to exit. This will allow boarding at the front door to go quickly and smoothly.
Exit carefully, using the handrails for support. Do not rush towards the door, and please watch your step. Use extra caution if you are traveling with young children. Once you are off the bus, move away from the bus and onto the sidewalk. If you are crossing the street, wait until the bus pulls away before crossing the street. Do not walk in front of the bus after getting off. Cross the street carefully and quickly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Albany-Troy-Watervliet</td>
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<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Troy – Schenectady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Troy – 5th Ave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Troy-Cohoes via Green Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Watervliet Belt</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>Waterford – Troy</td>
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<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>Beman Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>182</td>
<td>Troy – Cohoes – Latham</td>
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<tr>
<td>224</td>
<td>Albany – Troy – Rensselaer</td>
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<td>280</td>
<td>Troy/Albia</td>
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<td>286</td>
<td>RPI Shuttle</td>
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<td>289</td>
<td>Griswold Heights</td>
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<tr>
<td>522</td>
<td>Hudson River Express</td>
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</tbody>
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**CDTA bus route 87 will take you to Price Chopper (the grocery store) and Wal-Mart**

- The bus stops on campus in 20-40 minute intervals during weekdays!
- Holidays and weekends have different schedules, so make sure to check out the schedule before you plan a trip!
- The CDTA bus for route 87 picks up students on 15th Street just next to the footbridge, OPPOSITE side of the street as the Union. (the same side Academy Hall is located)
- Bus will drop passengers off at the main doors of both Price Chopper and Wal-Mart. **This is where it will also pick-up to return to RPI.**
Above is what a Bus Schedule looks like:

Riders with Disabilities

Those riders with a disability should contact the Parking and Transportation Office at (518)276-6616 to arrange for a pick-up.
For more information, please visit Public Safety Parking and Shuttle information.
Red Hawk Shuttle:

The Red Hawk Shuttle benefits all students, faculty, staff and guests of the Institute. All persons wishing to use the service may do so free of any charge. All buses are modern, comfortable, and clearly marked. Buses specially equipped for persons with disabilities are available for all routes at any times. The Red Hawk Shuttle runs between the Houston Field House parking lot and certain locations on campus. To park at the Field House you will need to obtain a parking permit from the Parking Office located at 2144 Burdett Ave.

To track where the shuttle is located go to: [http://shuttles.rpi.edu/](http://shuttles.rpi.edu/). There are two routes but both stop at the union and have multiple stops throughout campus. The east shuttle travels west to Hoosick St. and up to ECAV. The west shuttle travels downtown to Blitman.

For exact shuttle routes: [https://www.rpi.edu/dept/parking/shuttle/shuttle_route.html](https://www.rpi.edu/dept/parking/shuttle/shuttle_route.html). Be prepared for possible delays! Although waiting time for a shuttle is usually 15 to 20 minutes (or less), always arrive at your shuttle stop 30 minutes earlier than your scheduled class. Drivers strive to stay on schedule but slight variations may occur.

- Stand back from the shuttle until it has completely stopped and the driver signals you to board.
- Enter the shuttle in single file and without pushing. Remember to use the handrail and to watch your step.
- If there is an available seat in the shuttle, please use it. Try to limit the number of people standing when the shuttle is in motion.
- Baggage brought into the shuttle must fit on your lap. Do not block the aisle with any baggage.
- No hazardous materials are to be transported in the shuttle.
- Keep your body totally inside the shuttle when it’s in motion.
- Wait until the shuttle comes to a complete stop before standing and exiting.
- Remember to use the handrail when exiting the shuttle — and watch your head and your step.
- **Shuttle does operate during the summer or vacation period on a limited basis.**
17. AUTOMOBILES AND DRIVERS LICENSE

Automobiles are expensive to buy, insure, and maintain. If you do decide that you need a car and you purchase one, you must register it with New York State. To do this you must have a New York State driver's license. Please note that you cannot use your driver's license from your home country or an international driver's license for this purpose. The Department of Motor Vehicles issue licenses and has an excellent booklet on motor vehicle rules. Unless you are familiar with cars, buy from authorized car dealers.

How to buy a used car:

1. Be educated. There are many things you should know about a car before you purchase a good one. You can get good advice from Edmund’s Web site (www.edmunds.com). Also check out the car’s current information at Carfax.

2. Look for cars for sale in the classified section of the local newspapers, and on school bulletin boards.

Driver's License

A valid driver license from another country is also valid in New York State. You do not need to apply for a NYS driver license unless you become a resident of New York or if you need to register and insure a vehicle. According to the NY Department of Motor Vehicles, a non-resident becomes a resident of New York after living in the state for 90 days. After becoming a resident you must apply for a New York driver’s license within 30 days. For more information please go to: http://www.dmv.ny.gov/license.htm#driversfrom

Motor Vehicle requires a Social Security number to apply. If you do not have a Social Security number you are required to get the letter from the Social Security Office in Troy stating that you are not eligible for a Social Security number.

To obtain a New York Drivers license you must be able to prove that you will be in the United States for 11 months or more. If you cannot prove this, then you cannot get a driver’s license.

Automobile Accidents

New York State law requires that all cars on the road be insured. Insurance agencies can be found in the Yellow Pages of the Telephone Directory. The agent will inform you of the basic policies available and the minimum coverage required by law.

If you are driving a car and are involved in an accident, stop and wait until the police arrive. Be sure to get:

- The name and address of the other driver
- His/her license number
- The name of his/her insurance company
The other driver will want the same information from you. You should not argue with others at the scene, nor should you admit responsibility.

**Notes of Caution:**

Never leave your keys in the car. Be sure to lock the doors and close the windows when parking.

If you get pulled over by the police, please stay in the car. If you are given a ticket for traffic violation, do not argue with the police officer. If you think that the reason for the ticket is invalid, request a hearing at traffic court.

In the winter, you may find it necessary to purchase snow tires. It is advisable to leave them on until spring (early May).

Children under the age of 10 are required by law to be restrained with a seatbelt while traveling in an automobile. Children under the age of four are required to be in a regulation car seat (for infants and toddlers) and securely fastened. The fine for not obeying this law is $50.00.

A Mandatory Seat Belt Law is in effect in New York State. It states that all passengers in the front seat, and passengers in the back seat who are under the age of 16, must wear seat belts. Failure to obey this law will result in a $50.00 fine.

Another law states that whenever you are using wipers during rain or snow, the headlights of your car must be turned on. The law is in effect for both night and day times.

Since 11/1/2009, New York State law prohibits all drivers from using portable electronic devices such as cell phones and smart phones to send text message and email and talk on the phone when driving. Failure to obey this law will result in a $150.00 fine.
18. CELL PHONE SERVICES

Cell phones are very convenient to have. You can get pre-paid cell phones at stores like Wal-Mart or cell phones with a monthly plan from a company like AT&T, Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile and many others.

You can compare plans at http://www.myrateplan.com/wireless_plans/
Location: AT&T, 307 Troy Road, Rensselaer, NY 12144, (518) 828-4400

19. HOUSING

Tips for off-campus housing:
- Shop around and compare prices
- Do not sign a lease until you have inspected the apartment, house, or room
- Ask questions of former/current tenants or neighbors if possible
- Check the deposit policy to see if it is refundable
- Check lease duration! If you are not going to be in Troy for 12 months, try to find a lease for shorter than 12 months. If you cannot find a shorter lease, plan to sublet (privately lease to another person) during the months you will be gone
- Negotiate the terms of the lease if you do not agree with all items
- Get EVERYTHING you agree upon in WRITING!
- Read the entire lease before you sign it
- Follow all terms of the contract you sign
- Buy Renter’s or Property insurance (optional, but recommended)
- Ask about garbage and recycling and if the utilities are included or not
- The landlord will want a security deposit up from in order to protect them from property damage or failure to pay rent. Usually this amount of money is payed at the time the lease is signed. This money may be an added expense for you when you move into an apartment, however it is refundable at the end of the lease as long as the tenant complies with the lease and does not damage the property.

Housing Terminology:
Landlord: The person who owns or manages the apartment
Lease: A contract to rent a house, room or apartment. Most leases last one year.

Common Housing Abbreviations:
AC: air conditioning
BA: Bathroom
BR: bedroom
Blks: Blocks
DR: Dining Room
DW: Dishwasher
Frplc: Fireplace
Furn: Furnished
Gar: Garage
Incl: Included
Kit: Kitchen
Lg: Large
/mo: per month
Pd: Paid
Util: utilities (gas, water, electric)
W/D/: Washer and dryer
20. ELECTRICAL AND GAS SERVICES

To set up utility services at your house or apartment, first speak with your landlord to find out if utilities are included in the rent and which utilities are necessary. Living off-campus means you will have to create an account with National Grid for electric and heat.

Check out their website at https://www1.nationalgridus.com/StateLandingNY

21. FURNITURE FOR UNFURNISHED APARTMENTS

- **Buying Furniture:** Once you have a list of all the furniture and household items you will need, you may consider buying used items instead of new ones in order to save some money. There are several different ways you can go about buying used items.
- **Craigslist:** This is an easy way to obtain furniture and other household items, and simple emailing can get you the information you need. You will probably have to find a way to pick up the furniture, and therefore must think ahead of time about transportation.
- **Newspaper Advertisements:** The classified section of the local newspapers has used items for sale including clothing, furniture and cars. A phone number will be listed for you to contact the person selling the items.
- **Yard Sales and Garage Sales:** These sales are usually held on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. These sales are held at people’s homes where one or more families sell items they no longer need or want. The locations of these sales are listed in the classified section of the local newspapers.
- **Thrift Stores:** These are stores that sell used items. You can locate these stores by looking in the yellow pages of the telephone directory under the heading of Thrift Shops.

22. MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

**Newspapers:** Local newspapers are not only a good source of news but also a source of savings in terms of discount coupons and sales brochures that accompany them. For home delivery of newspapers you can call:
- Troy Record   (518)270-1200
- Times Union   (518)454-5694

**Television:** Locally there are about five television channels that can be watched without cable. These channels include:
- CBS (6)
- ABC (10)
- PBS (17)
- FOX (23)
- NBC (13)

For more channels, an extensive cable service, including Digital Video Recorder (DVR) and movie channels, can be obtained from:
- Time Warner Cable (518)869-5500
GENERAL INFORMATION

- **NEVER sign your name on any paper that you do not fully understand.** Once a contract is signed, it becomes a binding legal document and it cannot be canceled.
- Never buy anything until you know how much it costs, no matter how great a bargain it seems. Some foreign scholars have had difficulty with unscrupulous business people and companies.
- Always be sure to keep the receipt, or sales slip, for anything you buy. In some stores all packages are checked at the door as a protection against stealing; your receipt is your proof that you have bought the things you are carrying.
- If you find that what you have bought is the wrong size or color, you can usually return it, exchange it, or ask for a refund or credit. To do this you must show the receipt or sales slip.

In the U.S., sales taxes are not included in the price; therefore, be prepared for this added cost. Everything you buy in a store in New York State is taxed, except necessary food items. In most of New York State, the tax is 8%; for every dollar an item costs, you pay an additional 8 cents.

Farmers Markets:
- Troy Waterfront Farmers Market
  The Farmers market has two seasons, the winter season and the summer season. Check out their website, [http://www.troymarket.org/page/contact-us-14.html](http://www.troymarket.org/page/contact-us-14.html), to see when the seasons are, because this decides where the farmers market is being held.
  It happens every Saturday morning to early afternoon.
  There are more than 50 growers, bakers, artisans and chefs that gather together!

- Empire State Plaza Farmers Market
  From May through October it is held outside and from November to April is the Winter market. Check out [http://www.albany.com/farmers-market/](http://www.albany.com/farmers-market/) to check the times and locations.

Used Goods:
- You can buy gently used clothing or household items at a Salvation Army. They also take donations from the public, so you may consider donating extra or unneeded items when it comes time for you to leave.
  Salvation Army in the Troy Plaza
  156 Hoosick St, Troy NY

Hardware stores:
- Hardware stores sell many household goods, small appliances and tools to help you fix up things within your apartment or house.

  Pfeil Hardware and Paint
  63 3rd St, Troy NY
  (518)687-0014

  You can also check out Lowes and the Home Depot, located in Albany for a bigger selection.
Pharmacies:
Also known as Drug stores, Pharmacies are the only places that sell doctor-prescribed medicines. Many drugs may only be obtained with a doctor’s prescription in the United States. You can also buy non-prescription drugs in Pharmacies. If you do not see the items you are looking for, ask a Pharmacist to assist you.

Rite Aid
272 Hoosick St, Troy NY
(518)272-5735

Rite Aid
869 Second Avenue, Troy NY
(518)235-5530
https://www.riteaid.com/

CVS/pharmacy
49 4th St, Troy NY
(518)272-1666
http://www.cvs.com/

SHOPPING ON A BUDGET
Some of the moderately priced stores for clothes and household items are:
- Wal-Mart (87 bus) 760 Hoosick St., Troy
- Latham Farms, Latham
- Target 675 Troy-Schenectady Rd, Latham
- K-Mart 570 Troy-Schenectady Rd, Latham
- Sam’s Club Latham Farms, Latham
  (membership needed)

Shopping Plaza’s in Troy
- Wal-Mart Plaza (87 Bus)
  o UPS Store; Family Footwear Center; Empire Vision Center; Dollar Store
- Price Chopper Plaza (87 Bus)
  o Quinoas Subs; Key Bank
- Troy Plaza
  o Big Lots; Dollar Store; Grocery Store; Friendly’s restaurant; Radio Shack; Chinese restaurant

Large Shopping Malls
The largest shopping malls that are closest to Troy are located in Albany, NY. By bus this would take 2 hours to get to, and by automobile it would take about 25 minutes.
- Colonie Center
- Crossgates Mall
Mail and Shipping Services:
If you need to send items overseas once you are here in the United States you can do so through the Post Office.

Post Office, Corner of 4th & Broadway, Troy, PH: 272-7300

You may want to use the services of the following companies to ship large items overseas. Call or write to them for information:

International Sea and Air Shipping Corp.
8 Connerty Court
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
(732) 390-0322
Website

Directory of International Shipping Companies, Website

Federal Express International, (800)463-3339, Website

United Parcel Service, (800)742-5877, Website

24. SERVICES IN TROY

- YMCA, 2500 21st Street, Troy, PH: 272-5900; Educational & Recreational Programs
- YWCA, 21 First Street, Troy, PH: 274-7100; Educational & Recreational Programs
- Troy Public Library, 100 2nd Street, Troy, PH: 274-7071
- Troy Police Station, 55 State Street, Troy, PH: 270-4411
- Social Security Office, 500 Federal street, First Floor (in the medical building)
- County Office Building, 1600 7th Avenue, Troy;
  - Motor Vehicle Office, PH: 270-2600;
  - Rensselaer County Health Department, PH: 270-2660

25. WEATHER IN TROY

Upstate New York has long, cold winters that last from beginning of November until April, where it can be very cold. If you are here in upstate New York during the winter, make sure to have plenty of hats, gloves, scarves and a good winter coat. Spring normally starts in April and lasts for a couple of months until summer hits, where it can be very hot. You should check www.weather.com for the average daily temperature, chance of storms and a forecast for the rest of the week.
26. OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT AND CURRENCY

There are many banks in Troy. We suggest you “shop around” to compare all the different options that banks offer before you choose the bank for yourself. We recommend that you open a U.S. bank account as soon as possible. This will allow you to receive money in the United States and also pay any bills. Banks are typically open Monday through Friday, and a few are open on Saturday mornings. Banks are closed on Sundays and public holidays.

**Banks are requiring the following in order to open a bank account:**
- Your local Address in Troy and you must be able to verify it. You can verify it to the Bank Officials by showing a copy of your lease, a letter addressed to you at that location or a bill
- Phone number
- Your Passport – the bank must make a copy of your visa stamp and identifying pages in your passport
- Your Rensselaer identification card

**Banks in Troy:**

SEFCU: Rensselaer Union Branch - (518)452-8183
285 Hoosick Road, Troy - (518)452-8183

Key Bank: 130 4th St, Troy
(518)274-1213

M&T Bank: 251 River St, Troy
(518)274-4388

Bank of America: 59 Third St, Troy
(518)266-0519

First Niagara: 33 3rd St, Troy
(518)271-0324
U.S. Currency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$0.01 (1¢)</th>
<th>penny</th>
<th>The only copper-colored coin.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0.05 (5¢)</td>
<td>nickel</td>
<td>A silver-colored coin, larger than a penny.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0.10 (10¢)</td>
<td>dime</td>
<td>A silver-colored coin, it is the smallest size US coin, even smaller than the penny.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0.25 (25¢)</td>
<td>quarter</td>
<td>A silver-colored coin, it is larger than the penny, nickel and dime.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A few silver-colored 50¢ coins (half-dollars) and $1.00 coins are also in circulation. These are rarely ever used.

Some calculations:

- 5 pennies = one nickel or 5 cents
- 2 nickels = one dime or 10 cents
- 2 dimes & one nickel = one quarter or 25 cents
- 4 quarters = $1
- 10 dimes = $1
- 20 nickels = $1

Five 1 dollar bills = One 5 dollar bill
Ten 1 dollar bills = One 10 dollar bill
Twenty 1 dollar bills = One 20 dollar bill
Two 5 dollar bills = One 10 dollar bill
Four 5 dollar bills = One 20 dollar bill
Two 10 dollar bills = One 20 dollar bill
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Bill Description</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1</td>
<td>1 Dollar Bill</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="1-Dollar-Bill.png" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slang Term:</strong> Buck</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5</td>
<td>5 Dollar Bill</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="5-Dollar-Bill.png" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10</td>
<td>10 Dollar Bill</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="10-Dollar-Bill.png" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20</td>
<td>20 Dollar Bill</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="20-Dollar-Bill.png" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the exception of some more recently-printed bills, paper money is all the same size and color. These bills come in $1, $5, $10, $20, $50, and $100 denominations; you may still find some old $2 bills in circulation too. Larger denominations are rarely seen.
27. SMOKING POLICIES

RPI smoking policy states that:

“RPI is a smoke-free workplace. No smoking is permitted indoor or outdoor on the Rensselaer campus. It is Rensselaer’s policy to provide a tobacco-free environment in all Institute facilities and outdoor areas. Tobacco Use is defined as the act of using any tobacco product in any Institute facility or outdoor area, including chewing tobacco, smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes (that involve the use of tobacco and tobacco products) and the act of smoking or carrying a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe or any other smoking material or device.

Smoking policies in New York are very different from your home country. Below is a list of places you CANNOT smoke:

- Bars
- Food service establishments
- Swimming pools, gymnasiums
- Public transportation, including subways, underground subway stations, buses, vans, cabs and limousines
- Ticketing, boarding and waiting areas in public transportation terminals
- Colleges, universities and other educational institutions
- Public buildings including theaters, museums, libraries, retail stores, restrooms, etc.
- Hospitals and other health care facilities
- Retail stores, restrooms

Smoking is still allowed in:

- Private homes and private automobiles
- Hotel/motel rooms rented to guests - only if it says for smoking
- Tobacco businesses

28. ALCOHOL POLICIES

Alcohol Policy in New York State:
• You must be 21 years old to consume alcoholic beverages.
• You cannot sell or serve alcohol to persons under the age of 21.
• When Blood Alcohol Content Level* reaches .08%, you are considered legally intoxicated.
• Driving a motorized vehicle when BAC level exceeds .08% is illegal.
• In order to sell or serve alcohol at public events you must obtain a permit.

*Blood Alcohol Content Level (BAC) is the concentration of alcohol in the blood measured by percent or volume.

Alcohol Policy at RPI:
• Consuming alcohol under the age of 21 is prohibited.
• Providing or selling alcohol to persons under the age of 21 is prohibited.
• Misrepresenting your age to receive alcohol is prohibited.
• The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of alcohol is prohibited on RPI property.
• Consumption of alcoholic beverages on campus is only permitted to those of the age of 21 in the privacy of their own residence or areas where alcohol is allowed by a permit.
• One must obtain a permit from the Alcohol Review Committee (of the Student Health Services) to serve alcohol at an event occurring on Institute grounds.

To find out more about the RPI alcohol policy, go to:
# RENSSELAER UNION # 35 on campus map

## Lower Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ID Card Office</td>
<td>Where you will go to get your Rensselaer Identification Card.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>In addition to textbooks, the Bookstore sells a wide variety of great RPI apparel, supplies and other merchandise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEFCU Bank</td>
<td>Provides a full banking facility located on the ground floor of the Rensselaer Union.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers Marketplace</td>
<td>Father’s carries snacks, breakfast items, coffee, a wide assortment of cold drinks, and supplies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rathskeller</td>
<td>Place for eating, studying and meeting friends with several different dining options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Unisex Hair Salon</td>
<td>The Campus Unisex offers the latest in hairstyles to faculty, staff and students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben &amp; Jerry’s</td>
<td>Ice-cream shop!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games Room</td>
<td>Arcade games, pool tables, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Main Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McNeil Room</td>
<td>Cafeteria, including ThunderMountain Curry, paninis, sandwiches, burritos, hot meals and many other options. This is a great place for group meetings, eating and studying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Area</td>
<td>There is a fish tank, a piano practice room, and a place for students to meet and relax.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 3rd Floor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>A quieter place for meeting and studying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clubhouse Pub</td>
<td>The Pub offers a great selection of beers, ales, and wines to RPI students, faculty and staff each week, must be 21 to use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Administrative Offices    | Chaplains Office  
School Newspaper “poly” Office  
School Government Office |
30. ADJUSTING TO AMERICAN CULTURE

CULTURE SHOCK: UNDERSTANDING AND HANDLING IT

Understanding the cultural adjustment process can help you in coping with the often-intense feelings that you may experience as you begin your life in the US. Each stage in the process is characterized by “symptoms” or outward signs typifying certain kinds of behavior.

“Honeymoon” period: Initially, many people are fascinated and excited by everything new. The visitor is elated to be in a new culture.

“Culture shock”: The individual is immersed in new problems: housing, transportation, shopping, and language. Mental fatigue results from continuous straining to comprehend the new language.

“Initial Adjustment”: Everyday activities such as housing and shopping are no longer major problems. Although the visitor may not yet be fluent in the language spoken, basic ideas and feelings in the second language can be expressed.

“Mental Isolation”: Individuals have been away from their family and good friends for a long period of time and may feel lonely. Many still feel they cannot express themselves as well as they can in their native language. Frustration and sometimes a loss of self-confidence result. Some individuals remain at this stage.

“Acceptance and Integration”: A routine (e.g., work, business or school) has been established. The visitor has accepted the habits, customs, foods, and characteristics of the people in the new culture. The visitor feels comfortable with friends, associates and the language of the country.

Note: This cycle may repeat itself throughout your stay in a new culture. AND, these feelings are normal. Note also that upon returning home, you may experience some of the same feelings as you did when you first arrived in the new culture. This is called “reverse culture shock.”

Ways to minimize the Impact of Culture Shock:

- Look for logical reasons for things in the host culture that seem different. Try to be open to change.
- Resist “looking down on” or making jokes and comments about the host culture. Avoid others who take part in such derogatory remarks.
- Talk about your feelings with a sympathetic and understanding friend or talk to someone in your department.
- When you hear yourself making negative judgments or generalizations, stop and try to view the situation objectively—without value judgments.
- Take care of your physical health. Eat nutritious foods, get enough sleep, and, most importantly, get some exercise every day (take a regular walk if nothing else).
ENGLISH LANGUAGE RESOURCES
If you wish to improve your English language skills, we have some resources for you. The Capital Language Center is a great place to add a U.S. Accent, and improve their English language skills for academic purposes, university writing and overall communication! They offer group practice, private instruction and tutoring. They also offer both adult and children’s classes. Open enrollment is year round with beginning through advanced lessons. They do often come on campus to RPI if that is something that you would also be interested in.

They are located at 24 Aviation Road, Albany NY 12205, (518)884-4652
Check out their website at http://crlcalbany.org/

GENERAL CHARACTERISTIC OF AMERICANS

Individualism: Americans generally believe that the ideal person is an autonomous, self-reliant individual. Most Americans see themselves as separate individuals, not as a representative of a family, community or other group.

Informality: Americans treat each other in an informal manner, even in the presence of great differences in age or social standing. It also extends in the way they dress and communicate with each other. It is quite acceptable for women to wear very little clothing in the summer; this is not an indication of loose morals. It is also common for students to act casually with their professors and advisors; however, this is not a sign of disrespect. First names are often used in the U.S. A few basic rules concerning this may be: use first names with someone of approximately the same age and status. A woman older than yourself can be addressed as “Miss” or “Mrs. [Last name]”, depending on her marital status.”Ms.” can be used for either a single or married woman unless she has a title such as Dr., Prof. or Dean. An older man may be addressed as “Sir” if you don’t know his name. If older people wish you to call them by their first name, they will probably ask you to do so.

Friendship: Friendships among Americans tend to be shorter and less intense than those among people from other cultures. This may be due to the fact that America move around so much and don’t spend all their lives in just one place. Americans are often outwardly friendly with others, even if they don’t know them well. In time you will learn to distinguish casual friendships from more serious and deeper ones.

Time consciousness: Americans place considerable value on punctuality. They tend to organize their activities by means of schedules. When an appointment or invitation is made, you will be expected to be there on time. If you know you will be late, it is expected that you will call to inform the host of the delay.

Awareness of other cultures: In spite of their being a highly educated population, Americans are remarkably ignorant of other cultures. You may find that they have very strange ideas about your country.
Privacy and private property: As members of a highly individualistic society, Americans may seem to be very possessive of not only their material things (home, clothing, cars, money), but of their knowledge (unwillingness to share class notes, test information, etc). In spite of their directness in many matters, certain areas of discussion are considered very private and should be approached gently; for example, personal financial affairs, age, religious beliefs, sexual behavior, and political views.

Language: Approximately 82% of the population speak English, 10.7% speak Spanish. According to the latest census reports, one out of five speaks Spanish.

GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICAL SITUATIONS

Older men usually shake hands with each other when they first meet. Women may also shake hands. Younger women may take their cue from older women; men generally take their cue from the woman.

Invitations: A casual verbal invitation such as “come and see me sometime” or “drop in” is usually given with the unspoken understanding that you will call and make more specific plans before going over. However, oral invitations such as “Why don’t you come over Tuesday evening at 8:00pm?” are very specific. If you accept, the host will expect you to be there unless you call or tell them you will not be able to make it. If you are invited for a meal and the host offers you some food, don’t say “no” unless you mean it. To the host, a “no” means you don’t want any, so be sure to say “yes” if you are hungry or you would like a second helping. If there are foods that you may not eat for religious or health reasons, it is appropriate to inform your host in advance of the meal.

Gifts and Thanks: If you are invited to a family’s home, you may wish to bring some candy. This is not necessary, but may be appropriate at a later visit. In any case, it is greatly appreciated if, after a dinner party or other social occasion, you send a very short note thanking the family for the nice evening (a brief telephone call may be a substitute for the note).

Use of “Please” and “Thank you”: Use “please” and “Thank you” with a smile when making requests in student service offices and in your department. Office secretaries, other people working with students and the general public may perceive you as impolite and demanding when they feel that you are “telling them what to do”.

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

Over and over you will read references to Americans as individualistic and independent. The highly competitive environment at Rensselaer makes these characteristics especially obvious and this place particularly difficult for some students to adjust to. In order for you to make friends and communicate well at Rensselaer, it is essential that you accept the idea that here in the U.S., you are responsible for your own happiness. If you are feeling lonely and depressed, all the busy people around you may not notice, or if they do, they will respect your private life. When you “reach out” to someone, asking for help, almost any American will gladly and generously assist you.
Until you take initiative, your fellow students may assume that you have many friends and are perfectly happy. Americans may also be reluctant to join you in your social activities because they are uncomfortable. Take the initiative; ask an American student to your apartment for dinner, to see a particular movie in which you are interested, etc. In this way, you can begin to break down the communication barrier.

**Tipping:** Tips, or services charges, are not usually added to the bill in U.S. hotels or restaurants. Nevertheless, tips are often expected and needed by employees. It is currently customary to tip the waiter or waitress in restaurant 15% of the amount of the check if the services are satisfactory. Tips are not expected in cafeterias or fast food establishments such as McDonalds or Burger King. In a hotel, the bellboy who assists you to your room expects a minimum of $1.00 plus $1.00 per suitcase. Tip taxi drivers 15% of the fare. Porters (luggage carrier in airports and train stations) expect $1.00 per bag. Tip your hairdresser 15% of the bill or $1.00 minimum. Do not tip gas station attendants, bus drivers, theater ushers or parking attendants who do not park your car.

ABSOLUTELY DO NOT tip postal workers, government employees, and customs officials, drivers test examiners, police or anyone associated with a public service job. This will be viewed as an attempted bribe. This is illegal and very unethical in the U.S.

This Tip Chart is a good tool to help you to figure out how much to tip the waiter/waitress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dollars</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>Dollars</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>Dollars</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>20%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$ 1.00</td>
<td>$ 0.10</td>
<td>$ 0.15</td>
<td>$ 0.20</td>
<td>$ 3.00</td>
<td>$ 0.30</td>
<td>$ 0.45</td>
<td>$ 0.60</td>
<td>$ 5.00</td>
<td>$ 0.50</td>
<td>$ 0.75</td>
<td>$ 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 2.00</td>
<td>$ 0.20</td>
<td>$ 0.30</td>
<td>$ 0.40</td>
<td>$ 4.00</td>
<td>$ 0.40</td>
<td>$ 0.60</td>
<td>$ 0.80</td>
<td>$ 6.00</td>
<td>$ 0.60</td>
<td>$ 0.90</td>
<td>$ 1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 6.00</td>
<td>$ 0.60</td>
<td>$ 0.90</td>
<td>$ 1.20</td>
<td>$ 10.00</td>
<td>$ 0.90</td>
<td>$ 1.35</td>
<td>$ 1.80</td>
<td>$ 14.00</td>
<td>$ 1.40</td>
<td>$ 2.10</td>
<td>$ 2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ 15.00</td>
<td>$ 1.50</td>
<td>$ 2.25</td>
<td>$ 3.00</td>
<td>$ 35.00</td>
<td>$ 3.50</td>
<td>$ 5.10</td>
<td>$ 6.80</td>
<td>$ 50.00</td>
<td>$ 5.00</td>
<td>$ 7.50</td>
<td>$ 10.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This Tip Chart is a good tool to help you to figure out how much to tip the waiter/waitress.
### NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Official Name</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 1</td>
<td>New Year's Day</td>
<td>Celebrates beginning of the Gregorian calendar year. Festivities include counting down to midnight (12:00 AM) on the preceding night, New Year's Eve. Traditional end of holiday season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Monday in January</td>
<td>Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., or Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</td>
<td>Honors Martin Luther King, Jr., Civil Rights leader, who was actually born on January 15, 1929; combined with other holidays in several states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Monday in February</td>
<td>Washington's Birthday</td>
<td>Washington's Birthday was first declared a federal holiday by an 1879 act of Congress. The Uniform Holidays Act, 1968, shifted the date of the commemoration of Washington's Birthday from February 22 to the third Monday in February. Many people now refer to this holiday as &quot;Presidents' Day&quot; and consider it a day honoring all American presidents. However, neither the Uniform Holidays Act nor any subsequent law changed the name of the holiday from Washington's Birthday to Presidents' Day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 17</td>
<td>St. Patrick’s Day</td>
<td>While not a legal holiday anywhere in the United States, is nonetheless widely recognized and celebrated throughout the country. It is observed as a celebration of Irish and Irish American culture. Celebrations include prominent displays of the color green, eating and drinking, religious observances, and numerous parades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date varies, Sunday in March or April</td>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>Christian festival and holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day. Easter is the culmination of the Passion of Christ, preceded by Lent, a forty-day period of fasting, prayer, and penance. Good Friday is always the Friday before Easter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Sunday in May</td>
<td>Mother’s Day</td>
<td>Mother's Day is an American invention and it is a celebration honoring mothers and motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Monday in May</td>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
<td>Honors the nation's war dead from the Civil War onwards; marks the unofficial beginning of the summer season. (traditionally May 30, shifted by the Uniform Holidays Act 1968)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Sunday in June</td>
<td>Father’s Day</td>
<td>Father's Day is a celebration honoring fathers and celebrating fatherhood, paternal bonds, and the influence of fathers in society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>Celebrates Declaration of Independence, also called the Fourth of July.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Monday in September</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td>Celebrates the achievements of workers and the labor movement; marks the unofficial end of the summer season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Monday in October</td>
<td>Columbus Day</td>
<td>Honors Christopher Columbus, traditional discoverer of the Americas. In some areas it is also a celebration of Italian culture and heritage. (traditionally October 12); celebrated as American Indian Heritage Day and Fraternal Day in Alabama;[10] celebrated as Native American Day in South Dakota.[11] In Hawaii, it is celebrated as Discoverer's Day, though is not an official state holiday.[12]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11</td>
<td>Veterans Day</td>
<td>Honors all veterans of the United States armed forces. A traditional observation is a moment of silence at 11:00 a.m. remembering those killed in war. (Commemorates the 1918 armistice, which began at &quot;the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Thursday in November</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Day</td>
<td>Traditionally celebrates the giving of thanks for the autumn harvest. Traditionally includes the consumption of a turkey dinner. Traditional start of the holiday season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 25</td>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>Celebrates the Nativity of Jesus. Some people consider aspects of this religious holiday, such as giving gifts and decorating a Christmas tree, to be secular rather than explicitly Christian.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POPULAR SPORTS

Sports play an important role in American cultures and households. The most popular sports in the U.S. include –

1. Baseball
2. Basketball (both National Basketball Association/NBA and College level basketball, you might hear about March Madness)
3. American Football (not soccer)
4. Ice Hockey (It is HUGE at RPI and everyone gets very excited, especially for BIG RED FREAKOUT)
31. IDIOMS/GREETINGS/SLANG TERMS

Americans use idioms/greetings and slang terms when they speak. Here are some we hope you will find helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sick</td>
<td>Someone likes something, can also mean sickness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bumping</td>
<td>A place is really busy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploding</td>
<td>Someplace is really busy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoot the breeze</td>
<td>To talk with others about general topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catch you later</td>
<td>You’ll see someone at another time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later</td>
<td>You’ll see someone at another time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awesome</td>
<td>Really nice/Great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get ahead</td>
<td>To make progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get around</td>
<td>To travel, to move about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fell through</td>
<td>Fail to occur, not to happen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep it down</td>
<td>To become more quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To stand out</td>
<td>To be noticeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold on</td>
<td>To wait, to pause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To catch on</td>
<td>To finally understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To show up</td>
<td>To arrive, to appear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Came about</td>
<td>How someone got to that decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run over</td>
<td>To review, to rehearse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick to it</td>
<td>To never change or abandon, to hold, to keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To part with</td>
<td>To give away, to sell, to separate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go for it</td>
<td>Try at any length to reach your goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put up with</td>
<td>To tolerate, to accept unwillingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look forward to</td>
<td>Anticipate with pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get through to</td>
<td>To make (someone) understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To look up to</td>
<td>To respect, to admire greatly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To cut up in class</td>
<td>Fool around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To look back on</td>
<td>To remember something from one’s past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To put off</td>
<td>To postpone, to delay, to defer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To call off</td>
<td>To cancel, to stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To take up</td>
<td>To begin work on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get off one’s chest</td>
<td>To finally release one’s true feelings or emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have on one’s mind</td>
<td>To think about something a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To cut out</td>
<td>Leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need a lift</td>
<td>To need a ride somewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chill out</td>
<td>Relax, calm down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chillin’</td>
<td>Relaxing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dicey</td>
<td>Chancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s cool</td>
<td>Agree with one or more people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How’s it goin’?</td>
<td>Someone asking how your life is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What’s up?</td>
<td>Someone asking what is going on at that particular time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get a life</td>
<td>Find something to do, occupy yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get real</td>
<td>Face reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool</td>
<td>Someone like something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, ok</td>
<td>Someone agrees with you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wasted When someone is drunk and not in control
Trashed When someone is drunk
Knock it off Stop it
Hot Looks good
Get over it Move on to the next thing
Whatever Someone agreeing with you because they have no opinion in the matter
NOT When someone does not agree with you
No way When someone does not want to do what you would like to do
Hey dude Hello to a person, greeting
Right on Exactly correct
Geeeee/um Speech filler when you don’t know what to say
Wimp Slang term for someone who will not stand up for himself/herself
Chicken out Someone back out from doing something/Coward
Loser Annoy ing and useless
Screwed up Messed up
Geek Someone who lacks a social life
Babe Inappropriate term for a young woman
Jerk Someone who does inappropriate things in public
Wicked Something that is good, also used to mean something evil
Wicked good Something that is very good
Looks good Something that looks correct at first glance
Hum A noise we make when thinking about something
To pull an all-nighter To study all night without sleep
I’m beat To be tired
Maxed out Exhausted
I’m swamped To have a lot of work to do
Bent out of shape When you are upset about something
Bummed To be disappointed
Bummer Something that disappoints
Good call Expression meaning good idea
Catch some rays or Go Tanning To lay out in the sun
Cheesy Something that is stupid
Couch potato Someone who is lazy and sits around a lot
Cram Study or do a lot in a short period of time
Cruisin’ Driving around with no place to go
Cushy Easy
Dork Slang term used to describe someone who is strange
Whacko Someone who is considered crazy
Whack job Someone who is considered crazy
Basket case Someone who is considered crazy
Wussy Weak person
Rockin’ Going very well
No sweat Not a problem
Pain in the neck Nuisance/Annoying
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party animal</td>
<td>Someone who likes to party and party often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party pooper</td>
<td>Someone who takes the fun out of things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chintzy</td>
<td>Low quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit the sack</td>
<td>Go to bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a hike</td>
<td>Leave alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get outta here</td>
<td>Leave me alone, stop lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get shot down</td>
<td>To have an idea turned down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down in the dumps</td>
<td>To be sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hook up</td>
<td>To set up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veg out</td>
<td>To relax and do nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My bad</td>
<td>I made a mistake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goofed up</td>
<td>Made a serious mistake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boo-boo</td>
<td>Mistake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td>To agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mad</td>
<td>A slang term for “super”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break a leg</td>
<td>Wishing someone good luck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catch-22</td>
<td>A situation where conflicting rules make the desired outcome impossible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Mouth</td>
<td>Talk too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a break</td>
<td>Getting rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead</td>
<td>Slang term for quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flip-out</td>
<td>Lost control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freebie</td>
<td>Free stuff/giveaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go bananas</td>
<td>Go insane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nut</td>
<td>Crazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lame</td>
<td>An inadequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meltdown</td>
<td>Total collapse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piece of cake</td>
<td>Easy to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharp</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sucker</td>
<td>Be deceived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig out</td>
<td>Eat a lot/Overeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get it</td>
<td>Understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dough</td>
<td>Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buck</td>
<td>Dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep pocket</td>
<td>Has a lot of money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booze</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airhead</td>
<td>Stupid person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many more slang terms that we use here in America, we highly encourage you to do some research on the internet and learn more about American slangs. Here are some useful resources:

http://www.manythings.org/slang/
http://www.idiomsite.com/
Troy, a city of 55,000 people, is more than 200 years old. Located along the Hudson River in New York, Troy was a major center for the industrial revolution in the 1800's. It was the home of the detachable shirt collar, stove manufacturers, textile mills, stagecoach and carriage builders, breweries, bell manufacturers, iron and steel centers, and more. Iron plates for the Civil War ship the "Monitor" were rolled in Troy. Even Samuel Wilson, better known as Uncle Sam, lived and worked in Troy during this time.

Most of Troy's buildings stand from the 18th and 19th centuries; fine homes of former industrial tycoons, worker and factory housing, and homes of the emerging middle class are still used and lived in today, many retaining their original character and features. Wood frame, terra cotta, brownstone, and brick houses line the streets of the city. Queen Anne, Mansard, Beaux Arts, Romanesque, Italianate, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, and other kinds of buildings can be seen everywhere in Troy. Restoration is an ongoing event here. In fact, a section of downtown has received an impressive collection of art galleries and boutique shops.

Troy has become the "restaurant district" of the capital region, and has many regular, popular events such as the summer's Riverfront Arts Festival with sidewalk chalk art competitions and the winter's Victorian Stroll, which includes events, music, crafts all around Troy's downtown, and the Hart-Cluett mansion decorated for a Victorian Christmas inside.

Troy Savings Bank Music Hall,
7 State Street, (518)273-0038.
If there's a performance at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall (above) while you're in town, you might consider attending to relax and enjoy the music as well as the impressive hall itself. The music hall, which opened in 1875, is built over the Troy Savings Bank. The lower floor consists of the bank, and the rest of the building is dedicated to the hall. Known for its near-perfect acoustics, it seats more than 1,000 people and has two balconies. Several music groups record in the hall. For most of the year, a free concert is offered once a month during a weekday lunch hour (noon-1 p.m.); concertgoers are invited to bring a lunch with them.
Chapel & Cultural Center (C+CC)
2125 Burdett Avenue, Troy, (518)274-7793
The Chapel and Cultural Center is an architecturally unique, multipurpose performing arts and spiritual space in Troy, owned and operated by the Rensselaer Newman Foundation (RNF).

Arts Center of the Capital Region
265 River St., (518)273-0552
The gallery at the Arts Center of the Capital Region offers year-round exhibits of challenging contemporary art, and has been a focal point and resource for artists and arts students in the Capital Region since 1962. The Arts Center offers as many as 300 classes each year in a wide range of arts disciplines, including painting, drawing, pottery, the culinary arts, metalworking and performing arts. A "Crafts for Credit" program offers college credit for completing Arts Center classes.

Hart-Cluett Mansion
59 2nd St, (518)272-7232
Completed in 1827, this Federal style home was a local landmark. Today, both 57 and 59 2nd St. are owned by the Rensselaer County Historical Society. These buildings house the Society's extensive museum collections, changing exhibits, gift shop, research library, and offices. The house is open for tours or for your own look-around. If you visit, check out the small book in each room that contains photographs of the room as it appeared many years ago when the house was occupied. A small donation is requested.

The Children's Museum of Science and Technology
Rensselaer Technology Park, 250 Jordan Road, Troy, NY 12180, (518)235-2120
The Children's Museum of Science and Technology (CMOST) is the only science center in the Tech Valley designed specifically for kids and parents to Explore, Discover, and Imagine the world of science together. General Admission is $5 per person for ages two and up.

Oakwood Cemetery
Entrances off of Oakwood Ave. or at the head of 101st St. Perhaps not a spot you would normally visit, but Oakwood Cemetery (above) is large, tranquil, and beautiful. Many notable people from Troy's past are buried here, including Uncle Sam. There is much beautiful stonework to be seen in monuments and headstones. If you enter from the Oakwood Avenue side, take a look at the impressive gargoyle on the still-operating crematorium.
Emma Willard School
285 Pawling Avenue, (518)833-1300
Founded in 1814, Emma Willard (above) was among the nation's first institutions for the higher education of women. Located on Mount Ida above the City of Troy, Emma Willard is a college-preparatory boarding and day school for 292 girls in grades 9 through 12 and the post-graduate year. The School's rigorous curriculum is complemented by diverse independent study options in the community, a thriving visual and performing arts program, exceptional leadership opportunities, and competitive interscholastic athletics. The School's collegiate Gothic architecture fills 137 acres on Troy’s residential east side.

Two other local schools worth mentioning include Russell Sage College, and Hudson Valley Community College, the second-largest institution of higher learning in the Capital Region and nationally ranked 27th for the number of associate degrees awarded annually.

The Erie Canal, snaking from Troy to Lake Erie
Three years after Emma Willard opened her first school, workers broke ground on Erie Canal. When it was originally proposed, the project was ridiculed as "Clinton's folly" and "Clinton's Big Ditch" (i.e., DeWitt Clinton, "Father of New York," First Governor of New York State). When the Erie Canal opened for business in 1825 it was widely considered one of the engineering marvels of the world. Just west of the Federal Lock at Troy (in picture above), the world's greatest series of high lift locks are located in Waterford, the largest lift (169 feet) in the shortest distance on any canal system in the world!
**Troy Public Library**
100 Second Street, Troy, New York 12180, (518) 274-7071
A local architectural marvel, the [Troy Public Library](#) is the local repository for historical and genealogical materials relating to the City of Troy and Rensselaer County. A member of the Upper Hudson Library System, whose members stretch from Albany to Cohoes, the Troy Public Library has access to a wealth of resources both in the stacks and online.

**Riverfront Park**
Riverfront Park runs along the Hudson River (left), behind City Hall and other buildings on River Street. Events are often held in the park and free concerts held in the bandshell. A statue of Uncle Sam (right) greets visitors approaching from the corner of River and 3rd Streets.

If you like stained glass, you might enjoy visiting some authentic Tiffany windows in town.

This [Troy NY website](#) is awesome and you should check it out!
Some of the windows can be seen at:

- Main lobby of the Troy Public Library at 100 2nd St.
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 58 Third St.
- Bush Memorial Center at Russell Sage College. The building is on the corner of Congress and 1st. streets.
- St. John's Episcopal Church at 146 1st St.
- Church of the Holy Cross Episcopal at 142 8th St.
- St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church at 416 3rd St.
- Oakwood Cemetery, at the head of 101st St.
### METRIC CONVERSIONS

#### CAPACITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 ml</th>
<th>1 teaspoon</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 ml</td>
<td>1 tablespoon = 3 teaspoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 quarts</td>
<td>8 pints = 16 cups = 1 US gallon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 ml</td>
<td>3.4 fluid oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240 ml</td>
<td>1 cup = 16 tablespoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 ounces (oz)</td>
<td>1 pound (lb)</td>
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#### LENGTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>.0397 inches (in)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>.3937 inches (in)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 meter (m)</td>
<td>1.0936 yards (yd)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 kilometer (km)</td>
<td>.6214 mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.4 mm</td>
<td>1 inch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.3048 m</td>
<td>1 foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.9144 m</td>
<td>1 yard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6093 km</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
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#### MASS (WEIGHT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>500 grams</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>= 35 ounces</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 milliliter (ml)</td>
<td>1 pound (lb)</td>
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**TEMPERATURE CONVERSION CHART**

Conversion °F to °C = subtract 32; divide by 1.8
Conversion °C to °F = multiply by 1.8; add 32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAHRENHEIT</th>
<th>CELSIUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 F</td>
<td>-16.6 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 F</td>
<td>-15.5 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 F</td>
<td>-14.4 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 F</td>
<td>-13.3 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 F</td>
<td>-12.2 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 F</td>
<td>-11.1 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 F</td>
<td>-10.0 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 F</td>
<td>-8.8 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 F</td>
<td>-7.7 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 F</td>
<td>-6.6 C</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 F</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 F</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 F</td>
<td>-3.3 C</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 F</td>
<td>-2.2 C</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 F</td>
<td>-1.1 C</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAHRENHEIT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32 F</td>
<td>0 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 F</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>90 F</td>
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<tr>
<td>100 F</td>
<td>37.7 C</td>
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**MILES TO KILOMETERS**

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<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kilometers</th>
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</table>
34. RESPONSIBILITIES OF A J-1 SCHOLAR
RPI Office of International Services for Students and Scholars

Maintain Adequate Health Insurance
As a J-1 Scholar, the U.S. Department of State requires that you maintain adequate health insurance for yourself and any J-1 dependents. You must present evidence of health insurance to the ISSS Office within 7 calendar days of arrival. Your health insurance policy must provide the minimum coverage as listed in the International Scholar Pre-Arrival Booklet. If you do not already have insurance that meets the minimum requirements, you must purchase health insurance. We have information available in the ISSS Office for you.

Report Address Changes to the ISSS Office
If you move or change address, the U.S. federal regulations require you to report the new address to the ISSS office within 10 days of the change. Please email us with any change in your local address.

Obtain Travel Signature Prior to Departing the U.S.
Scholars and dependents should obtain a signature from the ISSS office on the DS-2019 form(s) prior to traveling outside the United States. You may come into the office, fill out the green Travel Signature request form and leave it with someone at the front desk. This should take about 5-10 business days.

Apply for an Extension Prior to the DS-2019 Expiration
If you wish to extend your time here at RPI beyond the dates of your current DS-2019, you should request a program extension at least 60 days before your DS-2019 expires. You must pick up the extension request forms in the ISSS office and obtain the appropriate signatures before it can be filed.

Transfer Authorization Prior to Leaving Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
If you plan to leave RPI in order to pursue your program at another institution in the United States, you must receive transfer authorization from the ISSS office prior to leaving. You should email the ISSS Office to make an appointment to discuss the transfer.

Report Early Departure to the ISSS Office
If you will leave the U.S. prior to the end of your program, you must inform the ISSS office of the new departure date and the reason for ending your program.

Depart the U.S. within 30 Day Grace Period
Scholars must depart the U.S. within 30 days of the DS-2019 expiration date, unless a change of status application has been filed with the USCIS.

Fill Out a Departure Form
Before you leave RPI please fill out a departure form that can be picked up from the ISSS Office, or download it from our website and bring it in to the office.