

# Academic Information and Regulations

Each student is expected to be familiar with the academic regulations of the university and the particular requirements for his or her educational program. The student has sole responsibility for complying with regulations and meeting degree requirements as set forth in this catalog and as amended from time to time.

General academic standards and regulations are set forth below, followed by the university requirements for degrees. Students should also consult the current edition of *The Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities*, which explains disciplinary regulations and related matters. This handbook is available from the Office of the Dean of Students.

Exceptions may be granted to the undergraduate academic regulations when circumstances suggest this to be in the best interest of the student's educational objectives. Such requests are handled individually, and students should first consult with their faculty advisers about the correct procedure. The Advising & Learning Assistance Center approves exceptions for undergraduates. In only the most compelling circumstances will exceptions be made to the graduate academic regulations. After consulting with their academic adviser, graduate students can seek exceptions at the Office of Graduate Education.



## Registration

Before the end of each semester, all students enroll for courses for the next semester. With the help of a program adviser or by using a plan of study, specific required and elective courses are selected, and this information is submitted to the registrar. Registration procedures are in the *Class Hour Schedule*, which is available from the Registrar's Office.

Courses with insufficient registration will be canceled. Students affected will be notified so that they can select another course. The university reserves the right to cancel or not offer any course listed in the *Rensselaer Catalog*.

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### **Times for Registration**

All full-time continuing students must register during the period specified each semester by the registrar. New, part-time, or readmitted students must register before the first day of classes. An undergraduate may not register for a semester after the tenth class day of the term. Graduate students may not register after the tenth class day of the term.

Waivers to the above deadlines are not normally given unless circumstances beyond the student's control prohibit complying with the deadlines. Undergraduates wishing to register after the deadline must have a signed waiver from the director of the Advising and Learning Assistance Center. Graduate students may be granted a waiver from the Office of Graduate Education. Students granted a waiver must pay late fines and file specified forms with the registrar. Students will not be permitted to register after the start of the fifth week of classes except in extraordinary circumstances.

An off-campus student may register for Independent Study, Thesis, or Research by writing to the department chair or adviser prior to the end of the Add Period. The chair or adviser will arrange for the registrar to register the student.

A student's registration is not complete until he or she has paid or arranged for payment of university fees. If special arrangements for payment are necessary, they should be made through the Bursar's Office. Every full-time student entering Rensselaer must submit a medical history and record of physical examination on a form provided by Rensselaer. A student's registration is not complete until this form is submitted.

### **Late Registration Fees**

Full-time continuing students who miss registration must pay \$50 and register before the first day of classes each term. All students who fail to register before the start of classes will be charged \$25 to cover additional processing costs. For full-time continuing students, this charge is added to the \$50 fee. Students must pay late registration fees prior to registering.

Students who wish to petition for a refund of the fee must fill out a Late Registration Fee Waiver Request after registering in the Registrar's Office. The registrar evaluates the waiver request, and the student is informed of the decision. Students who wish to appeal this decision must write to the registrar and ask for a review of the decision. Late Registration fees will not be waived unless the student was unable to register or notify the registrar during the required period because of a personal emergency beyond the student's control.

### **Cross-Registration at Consortium Colleges**

It is possible to register for courses, at no additional tuition charge, at 20 other colleges and universities in the Capital Region, all members of the Hudson Mohawk Association of Colleges and Universities: In addition to Rensselaer, consortium members include:

Adirondack Community College  
Albany College of Pharmacy  
Albany Law School

Albany Medical College  
The College of Saint Rose  
Empire State College

Fulton Montgomery Community College  
Hartwick College  
Hudson Valley Community College  
Maria College  
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
Excelsior College  
The Sage Colleges

Schenectady County Community College  
Siena College  
Skidmore College  
SUNY Cobleskill  
University at Albany  
Union College

Courses taken at one of the consortium colleges are entered on the student's record in the same manner as courses taken at Rensselaer and thus carry term and cumulative hours and quality points. No more than half of a student's academic credits may be taken at a consortium college in any semester. Students can not cross register for courses offered at Rensselaer.

For graduate students, prior to enrolling in a course taught at a consortium college, the course should appear on an approved Plan of Study. The Office of Graduate Education reserves the right not to accept the course toward a degree program if it was not listed on an approved Plan of Study.

Cost for courses taken at one of these colleges is covered by the tuition charge at Rensselaer and subject to the same regulations that apply for courses taken at Rensselaer. Such courses may be taken on the Pass/No Credit option and may be added or dropped in accordance with the policy in effect at Rensselaer. The Pass/No Credit option is not available to graduate students. When the other college is on a calendar year that differs from Rensselaer's, time adjustments for adding or dropping courses or placing courses on Pass/No Credit will have to be made. The student taking such courses is responsible for learning the last date for such changes. This information may be obtained from the registrar.

The general regulations governing the interchange of students and other forms and information concerning the program are available at the Registrar's Office.

### **Williams and Harvey Mudd Exchanges**

The Williams and Harvey Mudd Exchanges, available only to undergraduates, will be entered on the student's record in the same manner as those taken at Rensselaer or at a consortium college. These courses, therefore, carry term and cumulative hours and grade points. Those students who successfully apply to the dean of undergraduate education for either exchange program will spend an entire semester on the Williams or Harvey Mudd campus.

### **Auditing**

Auditing is attending a course without credit. Participation in recitations or discussions (or the requirement of such participation) is at the discretion of the instructor. Auditors must register after classes begin, but before the end of the second week of classes, and may not register for credit in the audited course later in the term. They may, however, register in a later term for this course on a credit hour basis. A permanent record will be maintained for the audit. The only grade given for the audited course is "AU" (Audit). Full-time matriculating Rensselaer students can audit up to three courses per semester on a nonfee basis with the permission of their adviser and the course instructor. Rensselaer students must be full-time for the summer term in order to be eligible to audit on a nonfee basis. The spouse of a full-time teaching assistant, research assistant, or fellowship recipient may audit one course per semester at no cost. All other persons, if granted auditing privileges, will be charged the regular credit hour fees for the course.

## Program Adjustments (Drop/Add)

**All Students** Specific regulations are given below for undergraduate and graduate students. The following apply to all students.

Dropping or adding courses is done via Rensselaer's Web registration system. Detailed instructions are available in the *Class Hour Schedule*.

Responsibility for dropping or adding courses prior to the deadline rests entirely with the student. Failure to fulfill the responsibility because of an oversight, ignorance, or possibility of low grades is not sufficient grounds to petition for permission to drop or add a course after the deadline. It is the policy of the Institute that no petitions be accepted for the retroactive dropping or adding of a course except under extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control.

No credit will be given for a course in which the student is not properly registered. Failure to attend a class for which a student is registered or unofficial notification to the instructor does not constitute dropping a course and will result in an Administrative "F" ("FA" grade).

**Undergraduate Students** The following additional regulations apply to program adjustments:

- Undergraduates may add a course any time during the first ten class days of a semester.
- A student may change sections of a course any time during the first two weeks of the semester.
- A student may drop a course any time during the first eight weeks of the semester.
- If a full-time undergraduate student is taking less than 12 credit hours, the director of the Advising and Learning Assistance Center must approve.
- During the summer sessions, courses may be added during the first week of each session. Courses may be dropped any time before the end of the third week of classes.

Only the Academic Standing Committee via the director of the Advising and Learning Assistance Center can make exceptions to the drop/add rules. Students wishing exceptions must petition with supporting documents from parties involved, such as instructors, adviser, or medical director.

Students who have approval to drop a course after the eighth week of classes will receive a grade of "W" in the course.

Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to register after the start of the last week of classes for the term.

Full tuition is charged after the fifth week of classes and prorated for courses dropped prior to the fifth week of the semester for students withdrawing from the university.

**Graduate Students** The following additional regulations apply to program adjustments:

- Tuition charges for part-time students are based on the number of credits a student is enrolled in at the end of the fifth week of the term independent of any further late drops. Any additions made after the fifth week result in additional tuition charges. Tuition for part-time students is charged on a per-credit-hour basis.
- When program adjustments are made, the student's Plan of Study should be updated accordingly.
- During the summer sessions, courses may be added during the first week of each session. Courses may be dropped any time before the end of the third week of classes.
- Graduate students may add a course any time during the first ten class days of a semester.
- A student may change sections of a course any time during the first two weeks of a semester.
- A student may drop a course during the first eight weeks of the semester.
- A graduate student must take at least 12 credit hours each term to be considered a full-time student

unless employed as a teaching assistant, in which case a minimum of 9 credits is allowed. Full-time graduate students must maintain full-time status at all times throughout their graduate career.

Only the Office of Graduate Education can make exceptions to the drop/add rules. Students wishing exceptions must petition with supporting documents from parties involved, such as instructors, adviser, or medical director.

Students who have the approval of the Office of Graduate Education to drop a course after the eighth week of classes will be given a grade of “W” in the course.

## Academic Load

**Undergraduate** The normal academic load for undergraduates is 14 to 18 credit hours. An undergraduate whose program exceeds 21 credit hours must secure the written permission of his or her adviser. An undergraduate whose program is less than 12 credit hours must secure the written permission of his or her adviser and the director of the Advising and Learning Assistance Center.

The minimum requirement for a full-time undergraduate is 12 credit hours. An undergraduate student whose program is reduced to fewer than 12 credit hours in any semester may continue at Rensselaer only on the recommendation of the Committee on Academic Standing. The student must petition the committee for such recommendation.

**Graduate** The full-time load for a graduate student normally is 12 to 15 credit hours each term. A student who wishes to register for more than 15 credit hours must have the permission of his or her department and the approval of the Office of Graduate Education. A full-time student may register for as many as 12 credit hours during the summer, at the rate of six credit hours for each of two summer terms, with the permission of the adviser and the chairperson of the department. Summer tuition is charged at \$1,155 per credit hour for full-time students.

**Graduate Teaching Assistants** Graduate teaching assistants are not required to take more than 9 credits per semester. However, at their own discretion and with Department Chairperson and Office of Graduate Education approval, graduate assistants may take up to 15 credits per semester for the following reasons:

- 3 additional credits assigned to a research project for thesis.
- 3 additional course credits added to meet a specific academic objective.

**Rensselaer Staff** The maximum study load for a full-time member of the Rensselaer staff is eight credit hours per term. This includes all courses taken for credit, whether undergraduate or graduate. Requests from staff members to register for graduate research beyond the maximum study load are decided by the student's department and the Office of Graduate Education.

## Advisers

A faculty adviser is assigned to each student to assist in academic program planning toward a sound plan of study. Accordingly, the adviser's signature is usually required on Pass/No Credit forms, thesis registration forms, and related forms. Students should contact their advisers on any matters pertaining to their educational programs. The Advising and Learning Assistance Center, the academic department, and the Office of Graduate Education are also available for consultation.