

FALL 2009

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

GRADUATE SCHOOL

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS

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FALL 2009 IMPORTANT DATES

DATE	WHO SHOULD ATTEND	PROGRAM
Wednesday, Aug. 19 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	All International Teaching Assistants who are not US citizens or Permanent Residents Location: Heffner Alumni House	International TA Training
Thursday, Aug. 20 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	All International Teaching Assistants who are not US citizens or Permanent Residents Location: Darrin Communication Center	SPEAK TEST (Current Rensselaer students may take the SPEAK test during the summer, please contact Jeannie Steigler, ESL Coordinator at 276-6820 or e-mail at steigj2@rpi.edu).
Friday, Aug. 21 8:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	All New Teaching Assistants Location: Sage Dining Hall for registration and welcome	Teaching Assistant Training
Monday, Aug. 24 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	All New Teaching Assistants Location: See individual schedules provided at Friday’s registration	Teaching Assistant Training
Tuesday, Aug. 25 & Wednesday, Aug. 26	All New Students & New Teaching Assistants are required to attend in addition to General Orientation Location: See “Department Reporting Dates”	Individual department orientation.
Thursday, Aug. 27 9:00 a.m.	All New Students DCC 308	General Orientation
Friday, Aug. 28 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.	All students Downtown Troy	Community Welcome Festival
Saturday, Aug. 29 5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.	New International Students Location: Information and directions are included in the Welcome Packet from ISSS	Welcome Picnic
Monday, Aug. 31	All students	Classes begin
Thurs., Sept. 3 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.	All new graduate students Location: Heffner Alumni House	Welcome Barbeque Luncheon

ESSENTIAL REFERENCES

Graduate Admissions assists with the admissions process and post-enrollment clearance of any admissions conditions. It is located in the Admissions Building at the corner of Sage & Eaton Roads. Please take a moment to review the letter of admission previously sent to you. If you were missing an official transcript or test score that was requested at the time of your admission, it is important that you request that credential be forwarded directly to Graduate Admissions as soon as possible. This will enable us to clear you for registration. Call (518) 276-6216, or send an e-mail to admissions@rpi.edu for more information.

The Graduate School at Rensselaer provides current graduate students with the administrative, academic, and curricular guidance they need to progress through their courses and programs. This includes assisting in changes to student degree status, and advising on registration, thesis, and graduation issues. It works closely with faculty and staff, school and department administrators, and members of the Graduate Council, which represents graduate students in student government and university affairs. On-line information and graduate student forms (i.e., Plan of Study, Doctoral Committee Nomination, etc.) can be found on the Graduate School homepage at <http://gradoffice.rpi.edu/setup.do>. Having the right information and fulfilling basic requirements will make the graduate school experience much more enriching. Reviewing the Rensselaer Catalog, the Student Handbook and submitting your Plan of Study as required will help you get started on the right track.

Graduate Council is a body of elected students which represents all graduate students in university affairs, acts as a liaison between graduate students and the administration. The Graduate Council also organizes various social events to promote interaction among students, for more information go to Rensselaer Community Activities web site at <http://summer.rpi.edu/update.do?artcenterkey=90>, or contact the Graduate Council, e-mail grad-council@rpi.edu.

The Registrar's Office provides many services, including: course registration; student enrollment certification (including veteran's benefits); transcripts; graduation clearance; diploma orders; scheduling of classrooms and specific information on academic deadlines.

All students should contact their adviser or Graduate Program Director for course selection information before attempting to register. International students are required to check-in with ISSS Office before they can register. If you are a domestic student who has access to the Web and know which courses you will take, you may be able to register prior to arrival on campus. If you are unable to register via "On-line Registration" or do not have access to the Internet, you will be able to register after your arrival at Rensselaer. Please remember that all degree-seeking students must submit the required health form to the Health Center to be in compliance with New York State Immunization Law.

Online Registration:

- Visit <http://sis.rpi.edu>
- Select Login on the SIS Home page. You are now ready to begin the registration process. Note that this screen also allows access to the Course Catalog and Class Hour Schedule.
- To login, enter your "Rensselaer Identification Number" (RIN). Your initial PIN is your date of birth. Enter the month followed by the day and year (MMDDYY). Then click Login.
- The next screen will be the "Login Verification Screen." Enter your initial RIN as indicated on the screen. You must now change your initial PIN (date of birth) to the permanent PIN that you create. Any combination of numbers or letters are acceptable for your PIN. For security reasons, only you should know your PIN.
- Follow the instructions given on the screen from this point to complete registration.
- Classes begin Monday, August 31. The deadline date for adding a course after registration is September 14; the deadline to drop a course without appeal is October 23.

Bursar and Tuition Information

Graduate Tuition & Fees for 2009-2010

Tuition - Full Time	\$38,100 per academic year	\$19,050 per semester
Tuition Part-Time	\$1,587 per credit hour (Troy based)	
Activity Fee	\$290.50 per academic year	\$145.25 per semester
Transcript Fee	\$25 first time students only	
Health Center Fee	\$510 per calendar year	\$255 per semester
Health Insurance Fee	\$933 per calendar year	\$466.50 per semester
Dental Insurance Fee	\$198.00 per calendar year	\$99 per semester

Students whose primary activity is to pursue graduate study at Rensselaer pay the health center fee and receive full services from the student health center independent of the number of credits they are pursuing. The health center fee covers all visits to the on-campus Gallagher Student Health Center in Academy Hall, its several clinics (e.g., free flu shots in the fall), counseling, and health education services. These programs and services are designed to help all Rensselaer students, including your classmates, stay healthy and maintain their focus on their studies. Additionally, a health insurance fee of \$466.50 per semester provides graduate students with the Rensselaer Student Health Insurance Plan. Students with comparable health insurance coverage from another source may waive the health insurance fee by submitting a completed waiver form prior to September 15, 2009. Waiver applications are available at the Student Health Center. The health center fee cannot be waived.

The Guardian Dental Insurance Fee is \$99 per semester for the 2009-10 calendar year and may be waived only if one has comparable dental insurance. Dental waiver forms are also available at the Student Health Center.

Students whose primary activity is other than graduate study (e.g., full-time employment) are considered to be part-time continuing studies status. Continuing studies students are not eligible to use the services of the Student Health Center and the health center fee is not charged. They are also not charged the activity fee.

Questions about the health or dental fees should be directed to the Student Health Center at (518) 276-6287. Bills are payable by cash or check at the Bursar's office and are due upon registration. Payments may also be made on-line by credit card or with an electronic check transfer by referring to the Bursar's Web site at <http://finance.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=33>.

At the time a student formally registers for classes at Rensselaer the student agrees to accept:

- Financial responsibility for any charges and/or fees posted to their account as well as loans and financial aid accepted.
- Responsibility for understanding the Institute's official policies concerning schedule changes, withdrawals and leaves from the Institute and how these changes can affect their financial obligation with regard to aid eligibility.
- Any balance not paid or covered by financial aid by the due date noted on each bill will be assessed a late payment fee of \$175 as well as a hold put on their account. A hold prevents you from registering for the next semester and the release of transcripts. If any amounts are still outstanding at the end of a term, you must take a mandatory financial leave of absence. After completion of this leave, re-admittance will be contingent on payment in full of the prior balance plus full payment and/or an approved financial aid package for the semester you wish to return in. Failure to meet these financial requirements by the specified deadline set forth by the Bursar's Office will result in the cancellation of any and all registrations as applicable. The re-admittance deadline is one week prior to the first day of classes for each semester.

IF YOU DO NOT PLAN TO ATTEND RENSSELAER, YOU MUST formally notify the Graduate School and Graduate Admissions by the first week of classes or the charges will remain your personal obligation. FAILURE TO ATTEND CLASSES DOES NOT RELIEVE YOU OF FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Student Health Center

Medical History - Immunization Forms - Health Insurance: All regular (full-time) students at Rensselaer are required to submit a completed "Report of Medical History" form which you received with your admission material. This form is due in the Student Health Center no later than June 15, and must be completed in its entirety.

All students must have had a physical within the past 12 months before beginning classes at Rensselaer. NYS Health Department law requires all degree-seeking students be in compliance with their guidelines for measles, mumps, and rubella immunization. In addition, Rensselaer requires that all students have had a tetanus shot within the past ten years, and a

meningitis immunization within the past 3-5 years. A PPD skin test done in the United States is required for students who are from countries with endemic tuberculosis. To determine your requirement, please refer to and complete the TB screening portion of the Report of Medical History form on the bottom of page 4. For those students who need TB screening in the U.S., but are unable to complete it before they arrive, there will be a TB screening campaign held during the first week of classes in Academy Hall Auditorium. Please watch for announcements regarding this screening event. For those students unable to get the meningitis immunization before they arrive on campus, there will be an on-campus Meningitis Immunization Campaign during the first week of classes. The cost of the TB screening (\$10) and the meningitis immunization (\$90) can be charged to your student account. Failure to provide proof of the required immunizations will prevent registration for subsequent semesters.

If you are unable to schedule a physical exam with your family physician, an appointment can be made at the Student Health Center to complete the form. There is a \$75 charge for this service which is billed to your student account. The Report of Medical History Form is mailed to students when they confirm their intent to enroll on-line or by returning the admissions reply card. If you confirmed your intent to enroll and didn't receive a Report of Medical History Form, please see the Student Health Center website: <http://studenthealth.rpi.edu/>.

Student Payroll

Student payroll is processed generally through the student's department, with the exception that International Students who are assisted in the process by International Services for Students and Scholars (ISSS). There will be opportunities during orientation for all Teaching Assistants to initiate the paperwork necessary to be paid. To verify employment eligibility, all students need to bring the following documents to Rensselaer:

U.S. citizens and permanent residents:

- (1) Un-expired state-issued driver's license, or a state-issued ID card provided they contain a photograph, or a U.S. Military card
AND
- (2) An original social security card or birth certificate. If available, U.S. citizens and permanent residents may substitute a U.S. Passport (unexpired), or a Permanent Resident Card.

International Students ONE of the following:

- (1) An unexpired foreign passport with an unexpired Arrival-Departure Record (Form I-94) bearing the same name as the passport and containing an endorsement of the alien's non-immigrant status if that status authorizes the alien to work for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.
- (2) An unexpired foreign passport with a temporary I-551 stamp.
- (3) An unexpired Employment Authorization Document that contains a photograph (Form-I766, I-688, I-688A, I-688B).
- (4) Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551).

Residence Life

Rensselaer graduate students have the opportunity to live either on campus or in housing off-campus.

On-campus housing is available to matriculated full-time students only and is available for single graduate students as well as married students with families, as space permits. This alternative is attractive to students who value the convenience of amenities such as utilities, maintenance, local telephone service, cable television, and high speed Internet included in their rent. Students interested in on-campus alternatives should contact Residence Life at (518) 276-6284 to learn about the availability of on-campus housing units. Residence halls will open August 26, at 11 a.m. Check-in for housing assignment will take place from 11am - 7pm, Wednesday through Friday (location to be determined – monitor <http://reslife.rpi.edu> for updated check-in locations and times), and 11am-7pm on Saturday and Sunday at Residence Life in the Commons West building. Please plan to arrive during these times. If your arrival time will be unavoidably delayed, you should notify your department, the Graduate School, and the Residence Life Office as soon as your travel plans are known. If you have any questions or any conflicts with your arrival time, you should contact Residence Life at (518) 276-6284 or res_life@rpi.edu immediately.

Note: New international graduate students may opt to wait and receive an on-campus housing assignment once they arrive on campus and meet with a representative of the Residence Life Office. The Office of International Student Services will be available to assist incoming international graduate students between August 17 and August 28. Students will be responsible for their own overnight lodging until their housing assignment is available. If you select on campus housing, one night's lodging (up to a \$100 value) will be reimbursed to the student – original receipt will be required for reimbursement.

Students wishing to live off-campus may want to take advantage of the Off-Campus Housing Database, available on-line at <http://offcampus.union.rpi.edu/>. It not only provides access to available housing units near campus, but it also allows students

to search for apartments by rent, number of bedrooms, furniture, etc. The DOSO offers the Living Off-Campus program to introduce students who are thinking about living off campus or who want to learn more about the community and being successful tenants - to basic and useful need-to know information about tenant rights and responsibilities. Interested students should see the Off-Campus Living website, <http://doso.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=40>, to find out about DOSO sponsored Living Off Campus Seminars.

International Services for Students and Scholars (ISSS)

The International Services for Students and Scholars (ISSS) Office maintains student and scholar status regarding U.S. immigration laws and practical matters. ISSS provides information concerning immigration requirements before students arrive on campus, as well as on-going training in cross-cultural communication, travel within the United States and outside, employment, visas, immigration, personal issues, etc. For more information, call 518-276-6561, send an e-mail to havisj@rpi.edu, or check the Web site at <http://doso.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=11>.

English as a Second Language Programs (ESL)

The English as a Second Language (ESL) office is located in the Russell Sage Lab, Room 2106. The following programs and services are offered through the ESL Program. Contact Jeannie Steigler, ESL Coordinator at (518) 276-6820 or e-mail steigj2@rpi.edu.

Proficiency Screening - New or returning international graduate students who will be Teaching Assistants at Rensselaer for the first time are required take the SPEAK Test of oral proficiency to assess oral communication skills. The test takes approximately 20 minutes and is given during TA Training.

English Classes – Free, non-credit English as a Second Language classes are available to students who need or want to improve their English in order to function successfully as students or Teaching Assistants. Placement in these classes is based on an interview with Jeannie Steigler, the Coordinator of ESL Programs. As space in these classes is limited, priority will be given to Teaching Assistants and first-year students. Returning students, visiting scholars, post doctorates, and spouses will be placed in classes if there is space left after new students have been placed.

The Career Development Center

The Career Development Center (CDC) offers several programs and services for graduate students. Attention is given to the special needs of graduate students on resume writing, preparing for interviews, and identifying potential employers. Visit the CDC Web site at <http://www.rpi.edu/dept/cdc/>. Click on "Current Students" and you will begin to see the resources available to help you make informed decisions about your career. The first step to take in working with the CDC is to register on Joblink. In doing so, you will be able to view the CDC calendar of events and monitor job openings. Pay particular attention to the experiential opportunities presented by our Cooperative Education Program as well as summer internships. Many employers view these experiences as the critical first step to full-time employment after graduation. You are also encouraged to take advantage of the many Employer Information Sessions offered throughout the academic year, the on-campus recruiting program that runs in both the fall and spring semesters, and the Career Development Center's Spring Career Fair that is held the beginning of the spring semester every year. Appointments with a counselor can be scheduled by visiting the CDC Web site and clicking on our appointment scheduler. The time to begin a job search for permanent employment begins right at the start of your graduate education. The Career Development Center is here to help every step of the way. After all - *Life After Rensselaer Begins Here*.

Disability Services for Students (DSS)

Individuals with physical, psychological, or learning disabilities may receive assistance to achieve full access to a variety of academic and campus time activities such as adapted housing, specialized equipment, recorded textbooks, and alternative testing arrangements. Students are encouraged to notify DSS early to facilitate planning. For more information, go to <http://doso.rpi.edu/dss> or contact Mark Smith, Dean of Students at (518) 276-6266 or e-mail dss@rpi.edu.

The Rensselaer Catalog applicable to your semester of entry, can be accessed by going to <http://www.rpi.edu/academics/catalog/>. Please carefully review the degree requirements for your area of interest and contact your adviser immediately if you have any questions.

The Student Handbook outlining students' rights and responsibilities is available online on the Dean of Students web site at <http://doso.rpi.edu/setup.do>.

Legal Services This program is funded through your activity fee and provides free or inexpensive legal service for students and their spouses. Dependents are not eligible for this program. The program is administered by the Martin Law Firm which has its offices at 279 River Street in downtown Troy. During the regular school year there are consultation hours in the Union, Room

3511, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. for walk-ins and appointments from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. made by calling (518) 272-6565. In the civil law area, program attorneys can help you with landlord disputes, consumer matters, simple wills and power of attorney. Criminal matters where the attorneys can represent you include Class E, Class D, and narcotic related Class C felonies; actual court cost fees and court representation fees for criminal matters are paid directly to the attorneys. A full brochure detailing the service is available in the Union, Room 3702 and the Union website <http://home.union.rpi.edu/pages/view/9>.

McNeil Loan Fund Small, interest free loans are available to all students in good standing at the Rensselaer Union Administration and Student Activities Office. Often students miss a paycheck. The maximum amount of the loan is \$500 and that is dependent on the available money in the loan fund. There is a simple clearance process that occurs between the Union and the Bursar.

Clubs and Organizations Besides student government, there are over 170 clubs and organizations that graduate students and their spouses might be interested in. For instance, you can take DANCE LESSONS taught by professionals with the Dance Club. The cost is only \$52 semester and you can take all the Modern, Jazz, Ballet, and Tap lessons that are offered. Ballroom Dance lessons are \$40 per semester per person. Martial arts professional instruction is offered in JUDO, TAE KWON DO, ISSHRINYU KARATE, CAPOEIRA and AIKIDO two nights a week and the dues are only \$87.50 a semester for each form of instruction and KENDO twice a week for \$87.50 for the year. There is an Auto Shop for students who want to work on their own car. Learn about these and many other opportunities at the Activities Fair, on Thursday, September 3, from 6 - 9 p.m., at the Livingston Houston Field House. Check the Union's website which is <http://home.union.rpi.edu/landings/view/1> for a list of events and student organizations.

Fitness The Mueller Center makes available, at no cost, the fitness and weight areas starting at 7 a.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. on the weekend. What a great way to stay fit, get rid of the stress you deal with every day, and stay healthy. There are over 60 fitness machines on the main level and inexpensive fitness/aerobic programs available. Website: <http://www.muellercenter.rpi.edu/>

The Married Students Organization This Student Union organization offers many programs for the families of our students. They range from English as a Second Language to holiday celebrations for children. Also, there are 20 different international student organizations that conduct programs for the Rensselaer Community.

Campus Playschool The Campus Playschool at Rensselaer provides a stimulating environment in which 3 and 4 year-old children can learn through play. The emphasis of the program is on building self-confidence and encouraging each child to develop his or her own capabilities. The Playschool is administered by parents, who serve as officers and assist in other areas. The Playschool is located in the Bryckwyck Apartment area. For information visit <http://www.campusplayschool.com/> or write: Registrar, The Campus Playschool, 285 Sunset Terrace, Building E, Troy, NY 12180.

The Rensselaer Union Classical Concert Series This endowed series provides a limited number of FREE tickets at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, Kiggins Hall at the Emma Willard School and Proctors in Schenectady. Pick up a copy of the season brochure and the FREE tickets in the Union, Room 3702.