



Rensselaer

School of Engineering

Student Life Handbook

Class of 2022

Advising Handbook

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Graduation Requirements and Registration

Many of the forms necessary for degree changes and specifications may be found on the Registrar's website at <http://registrar.rpi.edu/setup.do>, under the left-hand menu heading "Forms." Copies may also be picked up in the Registrar's Office located on the 2000 level of Academy Hall.

How to Change Your Major

To change your major, you must fill out the *Undergraduate Change of Major/Change of Status Form (Form 9)*, which may be found at the Registrar's website at <http://srfs.rpi.edu/>, under the left-hand menu heading "Forms." The form must be signed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for the School of Engineering (located in JEC 3018).

A new adviser will be assigned to you by the Associate Dean's Office, and you should arrange to meet with your new advisor as soon as possible to outline the program necessary to complete your degree in your new major.

Doubles, Duals, and Minors

Double degrees

Earning a second baccalaureate degree requires completion of the following conditions:

- The equivalent of at least two terms (30 credit hours) of additional work beyond the requirements of a single degree.
- The courses in the department in which you are registered, and such other courses as are required for the second degree.
- You must fill out the *Undergraduate Change of Major/Change of Status Form (Form 9)* to apply for the second major. The form must be signed by Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in JEC 3018. An advisor will be assigned by the Associate Dean's Office.

Dual majors

If you fulfill all the degree requirements for two curricula and have met the conditions below, you will have completed a dual major. Please note that you will receive one diploma noting both majors. Graduation in eight semesters cannot be guaranteed for students pursuing a dual degree.

- You must designate a first-named and second-named major by filing out an *Undergraduate Change of Major Form (Form 9)* at least one semester prior to graduation. The form must be signed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in JEC 3018.
- An adviser will be assigned by the Associate Dean's Office.
- The degree clearance officer in each program will certify that you have met all degree requirements in that department.
- Some departments such as BMED and CHEG strongly discourage dual majors due to scheduling issues preventing students from graduating in eight semesters.

Note that the 24 credit hour mathematics/science requirement and the 24 credit hour humanities and social sciences requirement will satisfy the Institute's requirements for both majors.

Minors

There are many possible minors at Rensselaer. Take Form #20 from the Registrar's Office – *Undergraduate Minor Approval Form* - to the department for the minor. They will list the courses needed and approve your minor, and your adviser will also need to sign the form.

Courses for the minor may not be taken on a Pass/No Credit basis.

No course which is required for a major can be used for a minor requirement.

No course which is required for one minor can be used for another minor requirement.

Humanities & Social Sciences Requirements/ Professional Development Requirements

Required 24 credit-hours of Humanities and Social Science:

- **4 credits** are part of the Professional Development class sequence.
 - PD I (one credit) is included in ENGR-2050 Introduction to Engineering Design, CHME-2020 ENERGY, ENTROPY, & EQUILIBIRUM (for Chemical Engineering students), or MANE-2220 Inventor's Studio I.
 - PD II (two credits) can be taken in STSS-496# PD2 Technical Issues & Solutions or one of the courses listed on this website: <http://sis.rpi.edu> – “Courses Which Satisfy PD II Requirement”
 - PD III (one credit) is included in ENGR-4010 Professional Development III
- **5 courses, or 20 credit hours**
 - 2 of which must be in ARTS, PHIL, STSH, IHSS, WRIT, or COMM
 - 2 of which must be social sciences (PSYC, ECON, STSS, or IHSS)
 - 1 of which must be at the 4000 level (under any of the above prefixes)

Note that: a) only three of these courses (or 12 credit hours) may be at the 1000 level, and that at least one of these courses must be at the 4000 level or above; b) two courses must have the same prefix but at different levels (i.e. 1000 level and 2000 level) to fulfill the depth requirement. For questions on this, go to Sage 4307.

The Archer Center for Student Leadership also offers the Professional Leadership Program, a half semester no-credit competitive program that allows students to challenge their leadership potential and get more in-depth leadership training. The class must be applied to during a student's sophomore year—invitations will be sent through the mail and the program will be advertised calling for applications. The course is taken during your junior year if you are selected.

Communication Intensive Requirements

Included in the requirements for engineering degree:

Two Communication-intensive courses:

- One within your major (automatically filled by your senior design course).
- One course that is “Communication-Intensive” from the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

For more information on these requirements, and for a list of “communication-intensive” courses, check the main log-in page of SIS at <http://sis.rpi.edu/> and click on “Communication Intensive Courses.” This will bring you to the Registrar’s website, where you can see the “Approved Communication Intensive Course Listing” for a list of current courses offered.

Core Program in Science for All Students

All Institute undergraduate students are required to complete a core program in science. As part of this program, students must take a minimum of 24 credit hours in physical, life, and engineering sciences, including at least eight credit hours of mathematics. No more than one course of the science core may be taken as Pass/No Credit. No courses graded S/U may be used to satisfy the science core.

Any of the courses with the following course codes meet the physical, life, and engineering sciences requirement: ASTR (Students majoring in the School of Science cannot combine two-credit Astronomy courses to satisfy a Science Elective), BCBP, BIOL, CHEM, CSCI, EARTH, MATH, MATP, PHYS.

Other courses may fulfill this requirement and will be reviewed by the science core curriculum adviser (currently the Associate Dean of Science) on a case-by-case basis. A number of upper-level courses in several engineering disciplines satisfy the requirement, but generally students taking these courses have enough prerequisites that the science requirement would already have been satisfied.

Course Registration

In order to register for classes for each semester, the Registrar's Office will email you a time ticket, which details when you will be able to register. You will want to check your account for **holds** before your time ticket slot to ensure you are able to register. You can check this on SIS. During your registration time, you will be able to log onto SIS and register for the courses you wish to take.

If you do have a hold on your account, see the Registrar's website at <http://registrar.rpi.edu/update.do?artcenterkey=21> for the office to contact regarding the hold.

You should plan multiple possible schedules before registration, because often times some sections of a class that you want to take will be full. If the class you are trying to register for is completely full, and you need to take it, you can get signed into or put on the wait list for a course (see waitlist information below). In order to do this, start by talking to the instructor teaching the course for any non ENGR prefix courses. For general engineering (ENGR) courses that do not have Automated Registration Waitlisting, go to JEC 3018 to put your name on the wait-list for the class.

Some classes may be taken as Independent Study—speak with the professor and fill out form 4: *Independent Study Registration Form* found on the Registrar's website at <http://registrar.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=29>.

All students are required to take at least 12 credits to remain a full-time student and pay full-time student tuition. This tuition covers up to 21 credits in any given semester without having to pay extra for overload credits.

If you wish to audit a course, fill out *Form 12, the Full Time Rensselaer Student Audit Registration Form*, found on the Registrar's website under the Forms menu.

Waitlists

Automated Registration Waitlisting is a process that permits students to add their name, directly through SIS, to a list for a section of a course that has reached maximum enrollment and is closed. Please note that not all departments utilize the waitlist feature. If a seat becomes available in the closed section, the student in the first position on the waitlist is automatically notified and given the opportunity to register for that class.

Students registering for classes in the SIS will receive a message stating the section is closed. If the closed section is utilizing the automatic Waitlist feature, students are given the option on the Register Add/Drop page of signing up to be put on the waitlist. The same drop down box used to drop a section from their current schedule on the Register Add/Drop page is utilized to sign up for the waitlist. The position on the waitlist is on a first come, first serve basis. If a seat becomes available in the section either from a student dropping the course or an increase in the maximum enrollment, an email is sent to the student in the first position on the waitlist announcing a seat is available. The student has 48 hours from the time the email is sent to take action. If the student does not register for the course within the 48 hour time limit, he/she is dropped from the list and an email is sent to the next student in line.

- Pre-Requisites & Restrictions – Any pre-requisite and restriction that is in place for registration is enforced for the Waitlist. For example, if MATH 1010 is the pre-requisite

for MATH 1020, students who have not taken MATH 1010 would not be able to register for MATH 1020 nor could they go on the waitlist for MATH 1020. If COMM 1510/01 is restricted to EMAC majors, only EMAC majors will be able to sign up for the Waitlist.

- Multiple Sections – Students are able to register for a section of a course and add their name to the waitlist for another section(s) of the same course.
- Course conflicts – Students can register for a course and add their name to the waitlist for another course that is in conflict with the registered course. For example, a student can register for MATH 1010 on MR at 10am and go on the waitlist for ARTS 1200 that meets on MR at 10am. If a seat in ARTS 1200 becomes available, the student will be notified and can decide at that time to either drop the registered class and take the seat in the waitlisted course or not.
- Waitlist Position - Students are able to see their place on the waitlist.
- Closed Course Authorization Forms - In order to maintain the integrity of the waitlist, instructors cannot sign a student into closed sections using an authorization form. If a closed course authorization form is received by the Registrar for a closed section maintaining a waitlist, the student presenting the form is placed at the bottom of the waitlist.
- Pre-Req Override Authorization Form - An instructor can sign an authorization form to override a pre-req or restriction for a section maintaining a waitlist. If the section is closed, the student can be manually placed on the waitlist by the Registrar.

Cross-Registration at Area Colleges

It is possible to register for courses, at no additional tuition charge, at 13 other colleges and universities in the Capital Region. These include:

Albany College of Pharmacy
Albany Medical College
The College of Saint Rose
Empire State College
Union Graduate College
Hudson Valley Community College
Maria College

The Sage Colleges
Schenectady County Community College
Siena College
Skidmore College
University at Albany
Union College

Courses taken at one of the 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 grade points. Students must be full-time and no more than half of a student's academic credits may be taken off-campus in any semester. Students cannot cross register for courses offered at Rensselaer.

Graduate students must have the approval of their Graduate Program Adviser and the Office of Graduate Education prior to enrolling in a course taught at one of the participating colleges that is to be applied to their Rensselaer degree.

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. All course-related fees in excess of tuition are the responsibility of the student. 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.

AP, IB, and Transfer Credit

If you took any Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high school, request that the Educational Testing Service (ETS) send your AP scores to Rensselaer's Registrar's Office; the Registrar will in turn evaluate your scores and provide you with the results. Note that although you may receive credit for your AP courses, you will not receive a grade for them, and the credits are not included in any grade point average (GPA) calculations.

If you took any International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in order to receive credit, the original or certified copy of the exam results must be forwarded to the Registrar. Standard level exams are not considered.

Rensselaer will not award transfer credit for any college courses you took in high school if those courses were used to satisfy a high school graduation requirement. In addition, if you take an equivalent course here at Rensselaer, you will forfeit your transfer credit (you cannot receive credit twice).

If you received college credit during high school or if you wish to take courses somewhere other than Rensselaer during your undergraduate career, you will have to fill out Form 8, *Transfer Credit Approval Request Form* (found at the Registrar website under Forms). Bring a copy of the form and the syllabus (preferred) or the course description from the other school to the appropriate office for approval. Engineering courses: Associate Dean, Kurt Anderson (JEC 3018), Science courses: Associate Dean, Lee Ligon (SC 1C05), HASS courses: Associate Dean, Michael Kalsher (Sage 4301), Management courses: Stephanie DiPalma (Pittsburgh 3216). Your adviser will also need to sign the form. Students desiring transfer credit must have the registrar of the other institution forward an official transcript to the Registrar's Office. You must get a grade of "C" or better to receive transfer credit.

A maximum of 32 credits may be transferred towards a Rensselaer degree, including AP or IB credits. Study abroad credits, through approved programs, do not apply to this maximum, but a maximum of 16 credits may be transferred from non-affiliated study abroad programs. To earn a degree, at least 64 credits and four full-time semesters must be completed at Rensselaer.

Students who wish to transfer coursework from other institutions should be sure that the course(s) will transfer before enrolling at the other institution. Since some courses are not equivalent to Rensselaer courses, transfer of credit is not guaranteed unless prior approval is obtained. In addition, many institutions require proof of prior approval before allowing a visiting student to register.

Undergraduates must earn the equivalent A, B, or C grades at the other school to transfer credits. Graduate students must earn the equivalent A or B grades.

Note that grades for transferred courses do not appear on the Rensselaer transcript, nor are they included in your Rensselaer QPA. They are, however, included in your Earned Hours total.

The Institute requires a degree candidate's last 30 credits in courses to be completed on this campus or through a program formally recognized by the Institute. Transfer courses are limited to two courses or eight credits counting toward the student's last 30 credits and require approval of the director of the Advising and Learning Assistance Center.

A student transferring back to Rensselaer who now holds an associate's degree and who formerly was a Rensselaer matriculating student may begin a new cumulative GPA subject to the approval of the director of the Advising and Learning Assistance Center. His or her former Rensselaer courses will still appear on the permanent record but will not be calculated in the new GPA.

Under Rensselaer's Repeated Courses Policy, courses taken at another college are not eligible to replace the Rensselaer grade in calculating the QPA. A student who repeats at another college a course that he/she failed at Rensselaer may be required by his/her department at Rensselaer to pass an examination before transfer credit is approved.

Students may not receive transfer credit for any of the Professional Development series courses.

Transferring Credit Towards the HASS Core

Students entering Rensselaer in their first year may transfer up to two HASS courses (up to eight credit hours) toward their HASS core requirement (including Advanced Placement credit) and must take the Communication Intensive requirement at Rensselaer.

Transfer students from an accredited collegiate program who have completed at least one college year but who come to Rensselaer with first-year status may qualify for additional core transfers at the discretion of the HASS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Transfer students entering Rensselaer at the sophomore level or above are not limited in the number of courses they may transfer for HASS core credit. All others must take at least 16 credit hours of their HASS core at Rensselaer

Enrolled Rensselaer students wishing to take a HASS course for credit at another accredited institution must obtain prior approval for the course from the HASS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Applicants must furnish a catalog description of the proposed course and syllabus, and a completed copy of Rensselaer's Transfer Credit Approval form to the HASS Student Services Suite on the 4th floor of the Sage building. A maximum of two courses (up to eight credit hours) of transfers is allowed (including AP courses).

Transferring Credit Towards the Science Core

Students entering Rensselaer as first-year students may transfer up to two science courses (up to eight credit hours) toward satisfying their science core requirement. Other science and mathematics courses may be transferred as free electives.

Students who have taken advanced placement or the International Baccalaureate higher level exams may be granted credit for all such mathematics and science courses depending on their scores.

Transfer students from an accredited collegiate program may qualify for transfer of additional credits toward satisfying their science core requirement at the discretion of the science core curriculum adviser (currently the associate dean of science).

Students enrolled at Rensselaer who wish to take a science course at another accredited institution must obtain prior approval for the course from the science core curriculum adviser. To apply for approval, a student must furnish a catalog description of the proposed course and a completed copy of Rensselaer's transfer credit approval form to the science core curriculum adviser.

Academics

Student Advising

As a freshman, you will meet with your HUB advisor twice during the fall semester and once during the spring semester. After freshman year, you are required to meet with your adviser once a year, usually in the spring semester, in order to be cleared for registration. Beginning with your fourth semester you will be assigned a faculty advisor from within your major(s). Reminder emails will be sent out every year from Advising & Learning Assistance Center (ALAC) to remind you to meet with your adviser.

You may check who your current adviser is by logging into SIS. Under the student menu, under Curriculum Information, click on “View my Adviser and Curriculum Information.” Select the term you are looking for. Your advisor’s name will be listed in the row titled Primary Adviser.

If you want to take an unrestricted elective that is not part of your major’s class plan, you will need permission from your degree clearance officer. A list of degree clearance officers by department may be found at <http://info.rpi.edu/advising-learning-assistance/> under “Advising” + “Finding officers by curriculum.” If for some reason your adviser leaves Rensselaer, you will be automatically assigned a new one by the Associate Dean’s Office (an email will be sent to you). It is then up to you to contact (email or visit) the new adviser to get to know them, and to attain registration clearance.

The HUB

<http://eng.rpi.edu/students/hub>

The School of Engineering Advising Hub is the primary source of academic advising for all engineering students during their first three semesters at RPI. The Hub is located in the Ansell lounge on the third floor of the Jonsson Engineering Center (JEC) and is staffed by experienced advisors who will offer academic assistance for all engineering majors. Hub advisors assist students in establishing a foundation for academic success through student responsibility and planning. The Hub is a resource for all advising purposes including:

- Semester course planning
- Clear Student Advising Meeting (SAM) holds
- Major/minor declaration or changes
- Form approvals
- Registrar Protocol
- The Arch planning
- HASS and other course requirements

The Advising Hub will offer academic support to students through the end of the fall semester of their sophomore year. At that time, students will transition to a faculty advisor specific to the student’s major. The faculty advisor will then contribute to the student’s academic success by offering valuable perspective on internships, research and job prospects in addition to graduation requirements.

The Advising Hub hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 9am-4pm, by appointment.

Walk-in Wednesdays offer 20 minute meetings with no appointment necessary.

Study Aids

If you are not doing well in a course, talk to the instructor. They are there to help you and will do everything they can to help you succeed. There are lots of ways to get support for a course you are struggling with (see below).

You may drop a class without appeal within the first eight weeks of the semester. To drop a class, you simply go to SIS and drop it (the same way you registered for it).

There are many programs in place to help you academically succeed at Rensselaer. A good place to start is with the Advising & Learning Assistance Center (<https://info.rpi.edu/advising-learning-assistance> or 518-276-6269, Sage 2106). ALAC offers drop-in tutoring, supplemental instruction sessions for freshman classes, time management assistance, and other assistance programs.

Another good resource is the APO test bank. Log into <http://apo.union.rpi.edu/cms> and then click on “Back Test Catalog” on the left. APO is a service fraternity with an office in the Student Union—Room 3420. They keep files of back tests for most classes that you may borrow, copy, and use to practice.

For most, if not all, of your classes, there will be Teacher’s Assistants working to help with grading and teaching. If you are struggling with a class, the TA’s office hours are meant to help you clarify questions about the material. TA office hours should be announced in the class syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

For group meetings and personal study sessions, Folsom Library offers private library study rooms that may be reserved and rented out for free (ask at the Circulation Desk).

GPA Issues

A student whose grade point average for any term falls below 1.50 is placed on academic probation automatically. In addition, any student whose cumulative grade point average falls below the following specified averages is automatically placed on probation: freshmen—1.50 at the end of the fall term or 1.80 at the end of the spring term; sophomore—1.80 at the end of the fall term or 2.0 at the end of the spring term; juniors and seniors—2.0 at the end of the fall or spring term. If placed on academic probation, extracurricular activities may be limited so that you concentrate on schoolwork. Keep in mind that some scholarships also depend on good academic standing. New Federal Financial Aid Rules have changed reporting requirements. The probation will be lifted once the student raises their GPA. For more information see <https://info.rpi.edu/advising-learning-assistance/center-coordinated-intervention-students-struggling-academically>

On the other side of the spectrum, in any given semester, a student who attains a grade point average of 3.50 or better and has no grade below C is placed on the Dean’s Honor List for the following semester. A student must have completed at least 12 credit hours with the grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+ or C.

The Dean’s Honor List is compiled at the end of the grading period. No students will be placed on the Dean’s Honor List retroactively except in the case of administrative error or late

submission of grade reports by a professor. A student will not be placed on the Dean's Honor List upon resolving a grade of "I."

It is important to know that many internships, programs, jobs, and graduate schools (including Rensselaer's co-terminal program) require a minimum GPA of 3.0, so keeping your GPA around or above that point is a great goal.

Grading System

Non-standard letter grades and their meanings are:

"FA" Grade This letter grade is assigned by the registrar to students who withdraw from a course but do not submit a Drop/Add form or an official notice of withdrawal from the university.

"I" Grade The grade "I" (incomplete course work) is given, when, due to illness or other extenuating circumstances such as a personal emergency beyond the student's control, a student has been unable to complete the required course work. The "I" grade is given only after the contract form, Authorization for Grade of Incomplete, has been completed and signed by both the instructor and the student and received by the registrar.

The "I" grade is given only in instances of incomplete course work, such as laboratory exercises, course projects, term papers, etc. Under no circumstances may the "I" be given for the following situations:

- Absence from a final examination.
- Student on class list who has never attended class.
- Student who wishes to do additional post-semester work in order to improve a grade.
- Student who wishes to repeat the course as auditor, retaking examinations, etc., in order to improve a grade.

The "I" grade must be completed within one semester. If facilities (i.e., laboratory) are required to complete the outstanding work but are not available during the next semester, then one year is the maximum time limit, subject to approval by the instructor.

If the agreements made in the "I" grade contract are not observed or if the "I" grade is not cleared in the time specified in the contract, the grade automatically becomes the grade noted on the "I" contract at the time the "I" contract is signed. If no grade is noted on the contract the "I" grade automatically becomes a "WI." Once the "I" grade is changed to "WI," no other grade change will be accepted. The "WI" grade will be calculated as an "F" in the student's GPA. The grade of "I" is considered a penalty grade in the calculation of the term GPA.

The grade of "I," until it is changed, is calculated as if it were the grade of "F."

"WI" Grade The registrar assigns this letter grade to students who received an Incomplete ("I") and failed to meet the criteria or the deadline specified in the "I" contract. It is calculated as an "F" in the student's GPA.

"IP" Grade The grade "IP" (In Progress) is given at the end of preliminary semesters of multiple-term courses such as Thesis, Project, or Research.

"NE" Grade The "NE" grade is given only by the dean of students/Student Experience Office or the Office of Graduate Education to students who have been excused from taking a final exam at its scheduled time. In each case, the course instructor is to be informed. (See "Final Examinations" rules listed in the catalog.) If the examination is not taken by the date specified, the grade automatically becomes an "F." Once the "NE" grade is changed to an "F," no other grade change will be accepted.

Grades of "NE" given in the fall semester must be made up during the spring semester. "NE" grades given at the end of the spring semester must be made up during the summer recess and not later than two weeks after the beginning of the fall semester. The grade of "NE" is not considered in the calculation of the term GPA.

"S" and "U" Grades These grades can only be assigned in courses specifically approved for such grading. Examples of such courses are seminar, thesis, or certain general electives.

"W" Grade The grade of "W" is assigned when a student is permitted to withdraw from a course after the deadline to drop a course. Only the Office of Graduate Education or the Academic Standing Committee can permit a student to drop a course after the deadline. If permission is granted, the registrar will assign a grade of "W."

"Z" Grade The registrar assigns the grade of "Z" if the instructor does not submit the course grade in time to print the semester grade reports. The student should see his or her instructor for a grade.

Pass/No Credit

Subject to the limitations listed below, undergraduate students may elect to take courses on a pass or no credit basis, for which the grade is either "P" (Pass) or "NC" (Fail). Grade points will not be assigned for these courses and the "P" or "NC" will not be reflected in the grade point average. "NC" is a failing grade and can be cause for academic action.

Courses taken on a Pass/No Credit option can count toward credit-hour and distribution requirements if the grade "P" is received. This option allows a student to take courses outside his or her normal curriculum or minor program that, because of grade considerations, the student otherwise might not consider.

In the School of Engineering no course required by name, required technical/multi-disciplinary/science elective, or similarly designated subsets of courses (except where explicitly stated otherwise) to be applied toward the student's program curriculum or minor may be taken on a Pass/No credit basis.

A student may take up to four courses as Pass/No credit.

Courses that can be taken Pass/No credit are:

- Free electives
- Two courses in the science core unless explicitly required by name
- Two courses, for a total of 8 credits, of the HASS Core that are not part of the depth sequence or used to meet the communication intensive requirement

The Pass/No credit cannot be used for:

- Courses required by name in the student's major, required professional/ technical/ multidisciplinary/ science elective, or similarly designated subsets of courses (except where explicitly stated otherwise) to be applied toward the student's program curriculum

- Courses used towards the minor

- Courses at the 6000 level

This option is not available to graduate students or non-matriculated students.

A student exercising the Pass/No Credit option must file a form with the registrar before the Friday of the 13th week of the semester. Having elected to take a course on this basis, a student may drop the Pass/No Credit designation by notifying the registrar in writing by the Friday of the 13th week of classes for the semester.

You may re-take a class that you fail (or get a bad grade in) if you have time later in your schedule. If you re-take the course, both grades will appear on your transcript, but the **re-take grade** (not necessarily the *higher* grade) will be used in your GPA calculations.

Undergraduate Repeating a Course If an undergraduate repeats a course, both grades are entered on the record. However, course credit will count only once and, although both grades appear on the transcript, the grade received in the repeated course is always the one used in computing the GPA. Senior "F" examination rules remain the same. The grade for a repeated course taken on a Pass/No Credit basis or for which the student receives a grade of "W" or taken at another institution cannot be used in place of the original course grade in calculating the GPA. Students in a premedical or pre-professional program may want to consult with their advisers before repeating a course.

Grade point average

A student's grade point average is determined on the basis of the following numbers assigned to the letter grades: A=4, A-=3.67, B+=3.33, B=3, B-=2.67, C+=2.33, C=2, C-=1.67, D+=1.33, D=1, F=0, I=0, FA=0, WI=0. The grades P, U, S, IP, NE, NC, W, and Z are not considered in computing averages. The grade point average is computed by multiplying the number corresponding to the grade in each course by the number of credit hours for the course, totaling these products for the courses taken, and then dividing the sum by the total number of credit hours for the courses considered.

The grade point average for the term is computed at the end of each term. The cumulative grade point average is also computed at the end of each term for the full period of attendance at the university.

All grades are included in computing the average; even those earned in courses not required for the degree sought. Courses taken at institutions other than those at a consortium college, or

through exchange programs are not included in calculating the GPA although they may qualify for credit.

Learning Management System (LMS)

For many classes, professors will use this online system to upload documents critical to the course that students can log in and access. From <http://info.rpi.edu/>, click on the Learning Management System link under Academic Resources. This will direct you to <https://lms.rpi.edu/>. From here enter your RCS ID and password, and click “Login”. This will direct you to a homepage with course names that will allow you to access class documents.

Missing Class/ Excused Absences

The only way to get an excused absence from a class, lab, or test, is to attain a Student Experience excuse. Policy and Procedures may be found on the Student Experience website at <http://studentlife.rpi.edu/student-experience/excused-absence>. The only valid excuses are: funeral, health reasons, wedding, Rensselaer-sanctioned event (such as an academic conference), religious, sports, or weather related. In all cases, documentation must be provided. Note that the Student Health Center only grants excused absences if you are broken, barfing, or bleeding.

For absences involving foreseeable event such as on-site job interviews, the student should work directly with his or her instructors and arrange the interview such that it does not interfere with scheduled exams, or other important scheduled events such as group project presentations. Permission to attend other events such as group competitions (e.g. “Design, Build, Fly” Formula SAE, etc.) may be denied if student’s academic performance in one or more courses justify it.

Leave of Absence

To request a leave of absence, see the Student Experience Office on the 4th floor of Academy Hall, or at <http://studentlife.rpi.edu/student-experience/leaves-and-withdrawals>. or call 518-276-8022.

Academic Standing

A student is considered in good academic standing if the student is making satisfactory progress toward his or her educational goals. Students not making satisfactory progress will be suspended or dismissed from the university. The university serves students from diverse educational backgrounds and interests and recognizes the individual differences in educational goals between matriculating and nonmatriculated students, between full-time and part-time students, and between graduate and undergraduate students.

Undergraduate Academic Probation

Students are placed on academic probation as a warning that they are in jeopardy of losing their good academic standing. Students are informed of their probationary status by a letter from the director of the Advising and Learning Assistance Center at the end of the semester. Academic and extracurricular restrictions may be placed on them so that they can concentrate on their academic programs.

A student whose grade point average for any term falls below 1.50 is placed on academic probation automatically. In addition, any student whose cumulative grade point average falls below the following specified averages is automatically placed on probation: freshmen—1.50 at the end of the fall term or 1.80 at the end of the spring term; sophomore—1.80 at the end of the fall term or 2.0 at the end of the spring term; juniors and seniors—2.0 at the end of the fall or spring term.

Undergraduate Academic Suspension and Dismissal

The Committee on Academic Standing reviews the records of students subject to suspension or dismissal. The committee is authorized to suspend or dismiss any student who:

- Fails to qualify for removal from probationary status at the end of a term.
- Has been on probation for two separate terms and is subject a third time to probationary status.
- Fails three or more courses in any one term.

Undergraduate Disciplinary Suspension or Expulsion

A student whose behavior is in violation of university regulations is subject to disciplinary action. This may result in disciplinary suspension or expulsion from Rensselaer. These disciplinary actions may become a permanent part of the student's record. A student who is expelled for disciplinary reasons cannot apply for readmission.

Academic Integrity

Intellectual integrity and credibility are the foundation of all academic work. A violation of Academic Integrity policy is, by definition, considered a flagrant offense to the educational process. It is taken seriously by students, faculty, and Rensselaer and will be addressed in an effective manner.

If found responsible for committing academic dishonesty, a student may be subject to one or both types of penalties: an academic (grade) penalty administered by the professor and/or disciplinary action through the Rensselaer judicial process described in the [Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#).

Academic dishonesty is a violation of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action as described in this handbook. A student may be subject to any of the following types of disciplinary action should disciplinary action be pursued by the professor: disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, disciplinary suspension, expulsion and/or alternative actions as agreed on by the student and hearing officer. It should be noted that no student who allegedly commits academic dishonesty will be able to drop or change the grade option for the course in question. A record of disciplinary action is permanently maintained by the Institute as noted below:

- RECORD OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION (2014-2016 Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights & Responsibilities, August 2014, p. 15)

Any disciplinary action can be disclosed to federal, state or local government entity, law enforcement, licensing or certification board, or corporate entity upon request of said

agency if and only if: (a) by subpoena or (b) a student signs a confidentiality waiver for said agency or government entity.

The definitions and examples presented below are a sampling of types of academic dishonesty and are not to be construed as an exhaustive or exclusive list. The academic integrity policy applies to all students, undergraduate and graduate, and to scholarly pursuits and research. Additionally, attempts to commit academic dishonesty or to assist in the commission or attempt of such an act are also violations of this policy.

- **Academic Fraud**
The alteration of documentation relating to the grading process. For example, changing exam solutions to negotiate for a higher grade or tampering with an instructor's grade book.
- **Collaboration**
Knowingly facilitating and/or contributing to an act of academic dishonesty. For example, allowing another student to observe an exam paper or allowing another student to "recycle" one's old term paper or using another's work in a paper or lab report without giving appropriate attribution.
- **Copying**
Obtaining information pertaining to a graded exercise by deliberately observing the paper of another student. For example, noting which alternative a neighboring student has circled on a multiple-choice exam.
- **Cribbing**
Use or attempted use of prohibited materials, information, or study aids in an academic exercise. For example, using an unauthorized formal sheet during an exam.
- **Fabrication**
Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information in an academic exercise. For example, use of "bought" or "ready-made" term papers, or falsifying lab records or reports.
- **Plagiarism**
Representing the work or words of another as one's own through the omission of acknowledgment or reference. For example, using sentences verbatim from a published source in a term paper without appropriate referencing, or presenting as one's own the detailed argument of a published source, or presenting as one's own electronically or digitally enhanced graphic representations from any form of media.
- **Sabotage**
Destruction of another student's work. For example, destroying a model, lab experiment, computer program, or term paper developed by another student.
- **Substitution**
Utilizing a proxy, or acting as a proxy, in any academic exercise. For example, taking an exam for another student or having a homework assignment done by someone else.

Financial

Paying Tuition

You are expected to pay any charges on your student account every month. Tuition is charged in one amount once a semester, so be prepared to pay hefty bills twice a year. You can pay in person at the Bursar's office (by check or cash—there is a financial penalty for paying by credit card, so try to avoid that). If you sign up for the eBill, your bill can be checked online at <http://finance.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=119>. You can then pay your bill with bill pay from your bank.

The Bursar's Office is located on the 2000 level in Academy Hall. It is very busy, so it is often best to go there in person instead of trying to call.

How to get an on-campus job

Student looking for jobs should do so in JobLink <https://rpi-csm.symplcity.com/students>. JobLink is Rensselaer's online job posting portal that allows students to see job descriptions for Federal Work Study jobs, find jobs that are available on-campus, as well as, look for jobs off campus when the time comes for the student to graduate.

Students who qualify for need-based financial aid may receive a work study job on campus, where they will work in an office or on-campus job for pay. For more information on work study, contact financial aid <http://finance.rpi.edu/update.do?catcenterkey=210>.

For those who don't qualify for work study, there are other on-campus job opportunities:

- Ben & Jerry's in the Union—ask at the counter on the 1st floor of the Union
- Catering for Sodexo
- RenExchange—more information will be given to you during your freshmen year
- Ushering at EMPAC—ask at the EMPAC box office, main floor of EMPAC

More options are available off-campus. There are many restaurants and cafes in Troy that students can work at. Or you can take the bus for free (with your Rensselaer ID) to other job locations.

Undergraduate Research Projects (URPs)

An Undergraduate Research Project is a research opportunity Rensselaer undergraduates can take advantage of for credit or for pay. To get a URP, start by talking to your advisor. It is also good to talk to professors you have about their research. Or just search the Rensselaer website for research you are interested in, and email the researcher working on it. See <http://info.rpi.edu/undergraduate-research> or your Department Booklet for more information.

For more information of the types of projects available, see the department you are interested in working for.

Career Information

Center for Career and Professional Development (CCPD)

Offers:

- Resume critiques
- Mock interviews
- Information sessions with recruiters.
- Joblink, an online job-search system, found at <https://rpi-csm.symplicity.com/students>.
- Freshmen Fridays – drop in sessions regarding career management
- Sophomore Career Experience
- Focus2 – online assessment tool to explore career paths

Spring Career Fair – held by the CCPD Office.

NSBE/SHPE Fall Career Fair: This larger career fair is held every year in early fall and offers a great opportunity to get to know potential employers. For more information, see the website at <https://www.rpi.edu/dept/cdc/students/careerfairs.html>.

The Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and Professional Engineering (PE) Exams

While it is not required in all engineering fields, you may want to consider taking the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and the Professional Engineering (PE) exams sometime during your engineering career. It is common to take the FE in your junior or senior year of college, or just after you graduate. The FE is often required for starting Civil Engineering positions.

Chi Epsilon, the Civil Engineering Honors Society at Rensselaer, offers registration for the FE every year in October and FE Exam Review Sessions each spring.

For more information, see the Civil & Environmental office in JEC 4049. The exam reference manual may also be downloaded at <http://www.ncees.org/>.

Health & Safety

Health Center

The Rensselaer Health Center <http://studenthealth.rpi.edu/> is available to students who have purchased the Rensselaer student health insurance. It is located in Academy Hall and offers medical treatment, referrals for more serious conditions, counseling services, and public health programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous. The Health Center also runs flu shot clinics in the fall that are free to students.

All enrolled students have access to the Counseling Services, which offer:

- Individual/group counseling

- Relaxation training for anxiety
- Biofeedback training
- Study skills/time management
- Reducing test anxiety
- Limited screening for learning disabilities (as time allows)
- Vocational interest testing
- Computerized stress testing
- Group workshops scheduled upon request
- Consultation
- Outreach

These services are available by appointment, which may be scheduled by calling 518-276-6287 for medical appointments, 518-276-6479 for counseling appointments, and 518-276-6287 for information on health education programs.

Public Safety

The Department of Public Safety has an office in the middle of campus (between the footbridge and the Mueller Center).

An important feature offered is the Public Safety escort system. Public Safety will provide an escort to students from campus to other locations on or near campus. It's a really great service, and you can use it as many times and whenever you want by calling 518-328-0465.

RPI Guardian – service allows the Dept. of Public Safety Communication Center to immediately identify your location on campus during an emergency, using either GPS or cell phone that you have registered with RPI Guardian. Sign up: www.getrave.com and then sign in with your RPI ID and password to sign up for the program. In an emergency call 518-328-0463.

There are also various blue emergency lights set up all over campus. The large help buttons on these emergency lights will call public safety to that location in the event of an emergency.

Student Life

The Basics

Rensselaer has a very active student life. The campus has over 175 clubs and organizations. You can learn more about them at <https://union.rpi.edu/> or at various Activity Fairs held throughout the year.

The Mueller Center is the main gym on campus—offering a pool, track, weight rooms, workout rooms, and a variety of classes.

The Student Union is the heart of student life. In the center of campus, the Union houses the offices required to run student life, the religious offices, study and meeting rooms, study spaces, cafeterias, the games room, the post office, performance spaces, club offices, and the student government offices.

The Student Senate serves and represents the interests of the student body, developing projects and passing legislation within the Union involving academic affairs, facilities, student rights, and all other topics pertinent to the student body. The 44th Student Senate meets regularly each Monday at 6:00 pm in Union 3202. The student body president at Rensselaer is known as the Grand Marshall (or GM), and the director of student activities is known as the President of the Union (or PU). Elections for the student senate and the race for GM and PU are held every year during a week in April known as GM Week. The week is full of fun activities and political campaigning, with no class on Wednesday so that students can vote. Elections for freshman student government are held each year a few weeks after school has started.

Greek Life

Many students find Greek Life an important aspect of their social lives at Rensselaer. It's also a great way to get involved in community service, and have leadership opportunities. About 26% of undergraduates pledge in a fraternity or sorority. For more information on Greek Life, see http://union.rpi.edu/clubs?combine=&field_category_tid=33&sort_by=title. If you are interested in pledging, you will have the opportunity to meet many of the Greeks during Fall or Spring rush or at the Greek Fair. More information is available from the Office of the First Year Experience and the Dean of Students Office.

Housing

All first and second year students will be required to reside in Institute-owned or leased residence halls. This requirement is consistent with our expectations for students as part of the First Year and Sophomore Year Experiences. Housing will be guaranteed for the first two years while limited options will be available for students during their junior, senior and fifth years or beyond. Contact Residence Life at 518-276-6284 for questions.

If there are any handyman-type problems in your residence, you need to contact Fixx, who will send someone to fix the problem. See <http://fixx.rpi.edu/>

Study Abroad

Many students at Rensselaer study abroad, usually during their junior or senior year. It is important to plan ahead if you wish to study abroad so that you can still take all the courses required to graduate. A list of study abroad options can be found at: <https://rpi-sa.terradotta.com/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.SimpleSearch>

For more information on study abroad programs, go to the Office of International Programs, located in Walker 4103, or see the Office of Undergraduate Education website at <http://info.rpi.edu/international-programs> Office of International Programs.

The Arch

<https://info.rpi.edu/the-arch>

The Arch is a unique approach for student development and growth that prepares students to meet the multifaceted challenges of the 21st century. The Arch will augment academic and experiential programs, and provide an even more robust-and transformative-educational experience for undergraduate students.

The Arch is a restructuring of the Rensselaer academic calendar. It creates additional opportunities for experiential learning that complement curricular and co-curricular offerings at Rensselaer.

Rising juniors will attend a full summer semester, the Arch, between their sophomore and junior years, followed by an “away” semester taken during either the fall or spring of the student’s junior year.

This will allow students to take advantage of the numerous experiential learning activities available off campus, including international travel, internships, co-ops, research opportunities, and engagement in community service projects.

The Arch FAQs

When will I be expected to participate in the Arch?

Students in the Class of 2022 will be required to participate in the Arch program in summer 2020. There is an exception process for athletes, ROTC, and a few other select cases.

Does this mean it will take more than four years to graduate?

With the exception of students in the five-year bachelor of architecture program, matriculation to degree completion is not intended to take more than eight terms at Rensselaer. To accelerate your academic progress, and graduate in fewer than eight semesters, you may take classes elsewhere prior to enrollment at Rensselaer, obtain AP/IB credit from high school, take summer courses in subsequent summers, study abroad during the away semester, or some combination of these options.

Do I have to pay tuition during my "away" semester?

Not necessarily. The semester away is an opportunity to pursue internships, co-ops, and collaborative research, as well as athletic, entrepreneurial, philanthropic, and community service activities. This is a good opportunity to earn money while gaining valuable professional experience. Students who participate in affiliated study abroad during the semester away will pay regular Rensselaer tuition and may use one of their eight semesters of Rensselaer financial aid, subject to eligibility

What will I do on my semester “away” from Rensselaer?

You can take advantage of numerous co-curricular and experiential activities available off campus, including international travel, internships, co-ops, research opportunities, and engagement in community service projects.

Will I have help in finding a co-op or internship?

Students seeking a co-op or internship experience during their “away” semester will have the full resources of the Center for Career and Professional Development available to assist them in their search.

What if I want to study abroad?

Both affiliated exchanges and non-affiliated programs are available during the Semester Away. Students who participate in affiliated study abroad will pay regular Rensselaer tuition and may

use one of their eight semesters of Rensselaer financial aid, subject to eligibility. The Office of International Programs (OIP) will support students in their search for a suitable opportunity during both regular semesters and the Semester Away.

Rensselaer's Student Information System

The Student Information System (or SIS <https://sis.rpi.edu/>) is every Rensselaer student's online control panel to their education. On the home screen you can access important links, or log-in. Once logged in, you can check your grades, academic status, request a transcript, you name it. For a User's Guide to SIS, see the following:

1. **Log-in:** UserID is RIN number, PIN is your chosen password (if you lose your password or have too many failed log-in attempts you will have to call the Registrar at 518-276-6231). Create a security hint for those times that you are locked out and the Registrar Office is not open.
2. Almost everything you need is on the **Student Menu** (listed at the top)
3. Under **Registration Information**
 - a. Be sure to "**Check My Registration Status**" before class registration comes around. This will list any holds you have on your account (you want all checkmarks). If you have a hold, you won't be able to register until you get the hold cleared.
 - b. To Add or Drop a class go to **Register, Add or Drop**
 - i. Select the appropriate term and click submit
 - ii. To Register or Add a class, scroll to the bottom and click **Class Search**. Select a subject (matching the course code of the class you are looking for) and enter the course in the Title box (or search by other methods like professor) and click **class search** *Note: Courses with course code ENGR can be found under "Core Engineering". This will give you a list of courses. Select the section you want (listed in column Sec), scroll to the bottom and click **Register**.
 - iii. To drop a class, find the class in your Current Schedule. Select "**Drop via Web**" from the drop-down menu in the Action column. Scroll to the bottom and click **submit changes**.
 - c. "**View My Weekly Schedule Day/Time Grid**" will give you a copy of your schedule by course code on any particular week of the semester (enter the date in the upper right corner for the week you want to view). The schedule will appear in grid-form by day of the week and include location and hours.
 - d. "**View My Weekly Schedule**" will give you a list of courses you are registered for including course title, course code (which you can take to the Bookstore to order books), assigned instructor, credits, times, classroom and term.
4. Under **Curriculum Information**
 - a. "**View My Grades**" will give you your grades and GPA for any given semester. Select the Term you are looking for from the drop-down menu and click **Submit**. This will give you a list of your classes, the grades in each class, the GPA earned for that term, and your cumulative GPA. It will also list your academic standing for the semester (you want "good"). At the top of the page, you may also click on **View My Current Rank** to see how you rank in comparison to other students in your class, as well as in your school and major based on GPA.
 - b. "**View my Transcript**" will give you an unofficial web copy of your transcript, which lists all courses you have taken and grades received at Rensselaer. It will also list transfer and AP/IB credits and your cumulative GPA.

- c. “**Request a Transcript**” will allow you to send up to two copies at a time to any address in the world for free. Select the appropriate transcript type and enter the address information of the receiver. Click **continue**. You may either pick up the transcript yourself at the Registrar’s Office in Academy Hall, or have the transcript mailed. Type the number of copies you need and Select your Delivery Method. Click **continue** and review your request before clicking submit request. You can check the status of your transcript (if it’s ready, if it’s been sent or not) by clicking “**Check My Transcript Request Status**.”
 - d. “**Degree Works**” can be used to track your degree progress, create a plan of study, and calculate GPAs. View the quick reference guide at <https://info.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/Degree%20Works%20Student%20Guide%20202-21-18.pdf>. The Worksheets Tab will allow you to choose Degree Audit for tracking your progress, Graduation Checklist, or Registration Checklist. The Plans Tab allows you to create a plan of study that your advisor would approve and activate. You may create other plans but only one would be considered active. The GPA Tab will allow you to determine what grades you would need to get a desired GPA at graduation or by term.
5. Under **Personal Information** you may change your password, or update your address and emergency contact information.
 6. Under **Human Resources/Payroll** you would enter timesheet hours for any jobs you work for pay at RPI, check your withholding information, or review your W2 form.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can freshmen have cars on-campus?

Parking is hard to find, and freshmen are not allowed to purchase Rensselaer parking passes. If you do choose to bring your car, you must park it on the street, which may be difficult. For more information, see <http://www.rpi.edu/dept/parking/>.

Will I have time for extracurricular activities?

Absolutely. Just don't overdo it by signing up for everything at once—academics come first. Extracurricular activities are a great place to meet people and relieve stress, so don't miss out.

What is the process to appeal a grade?

The first step is to contact the instructor to review the grade in question. If you still feel you have an appeal the next step would be to meet with the department head for the course i.e. for an MGTE course you would meet with the department head of Industrial and Management Engineering. Within the School of Engineering, the third step if the situation has not been resolved to your satisfaction would be to appeal to the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies located in JEC 3018. The exception to this would be for ENGR courses in which case the Dean of Undergraduate Studies acts as the department head.

Do I have to take part in the Arch program?

Students in the Class of 2022 will be required to participate in the Arch program in summer 2020.

Do I have to use the RPI email system?

Your RPI email address is the official email that will be used by the various offices on campus including the Registrar office. You can set up your rpi.edu email to forward to another account, however you should still log into your webmail (Roundcube) account to make sure that items are in fact being forwarded.