

# Graduate Student Practical Information

## Rice Department of Mathematics

This handbook has been prepared for the purpose of orienting new students and providing information and assistance to all students in the Department of Mathematics. Please refer to this handbook throughout your time in the mathematics department graduate studies, as revisions or additions may be made from time to time.

### Registration Procedures

You should have received your student ID and instructions on how to set up your NetID and password. Rice's technology services are accessed by Single Sign On (SSO), which allows you to log in using your NetID and password with Duo two-factor authentication. ESTHER, is Rice's self-service web application for students to enroll and register for classes. If you haven't yet received instructions on how to set up your NetID, email [graduate@rice.edu](mailto:graduate@rice.edu) for assistance or visit <https://registrar.rice.edu/students/esther-login-duo>

If you have received your credentials, login to <http://esther.rice.edu>.

For information on courses go to the Registrar's website: <https://registrar.rice.edu/students-and-alumni>

Make sure you meet with your advisor to discuss course registration.

### Accident and Health Insurance

Every degree-seeking student is required to have health insurance coverage, compliant with the Affordable Care Act, while enrolled at Rice University. Therefore, all students must take action during the open enrollment period to elect to enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan administered by Aetna Student Health, OR request a waiver of the student insurance by demonstrating comparable insurance coverage. Current information on open enrollment dates and forms can be found here: <http://studenthealthinsurance.rice.edu/>

Be aware that an Insurance Hold will be placed on your student account until you satisfy the enrollment or waiver requirements. This hold does not affect your ability to register for courses or restrict any other online activity. The University now offers partial subsidies for Rice health insurance. ALL on-site students are required to pay a Health Center fee, regardless of whether they purchase Rice University medical insurance or are covered by some other agency. This fee entitles students to see doctors at the Student Health Services. Visit <http://health.rice.edu> for more information.

### Stipends

Mathematics graduate students' base stipend is disbursed as 65% Fellow and 35% TA. The Fellow portion is paid semi-monthly on the 15th and last day of the month (in the event that either day falls on a weekend or holiday, checks will be issued the Friday before). The TA portion is paid on a bi-weekly cycle according to the payroll calendar found here: <https://controller.rice.edu/payroll-calendar>

This year the first academic-year Fellow check will be issued on August 31<sup>st</sup>, and the first TA check will be issued September 2nd. Please note Instructor of Record assignments are 100% TA (no Fellow) and will be paid on the bi-weekly payroll cycle.

**All mathematics graduate students with active TA / RA/ Instructor assignments must have the form I-9 on file with Human Resources in order to be paid.**

Rice University has adopted iO a centralized administrative platform for Human Resources, Payroll, and Finance.

It is strongly suggested that all students confirm their address on file is current, and that direct deposit is set up.

Direct deposit can be set up in iO (TA Payroll) and with Procure to Pay (Fellow pay). Please note that Payroll automatically enrolls payees in the Rice payroll card program (prepaid debit card) if direct deposit is not set up. Procure to Pay checks and Payroll cards are mailed out to the address on file in your iO and student account if direct deposit is not set up. Students contact information is updated through iO.

### Summer Research and Vacation Time

Rice fellowships are awarded and paid on a 9-month academic year and a 3-month summer basis.

This may be pro-rated for students not participating in the program for the full academic year or summer. Summer stipends are for studies or research work and require an eight-week campus residency; exceptions to this requirement are given by special permission of the graduate committee. Ligia Leisner, the department academic coordinator, must be notified by April 15th if you will be away on personal business for more than four weeks. Each student must discuss his/her/their plans with his/her/their advisor.

## **Procedure for Submitting Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Forms**

The following forms must be neatly and legibly filled, preferably on line before printing; once all required signatures and supporting documents are gathered turn in to Ligia Leismer for submittal to GPS.

All forms that must be submitted electronically include:

- a) C-2 Candidacy Petition (Doctoral degree) [\[link to form\]](#)
- b) C-3 Request for Committee Revision [Request for Committee Revision](#)
- c) E-1 Extend Time Boundary for Approval of Candidacy [\[link to form\]](#)
- d) E-2 Extend Time Boundary for Defense [\[link to form\]](#)
- e) G-2 Certification of Non-Thesis Master's Degree [\[link to form\]](#)
- f) L-1 Leave of Absence [\[link to form\]](#)
- g) L-2 Parental Leave or Short-Term Medical Release [\[link to form\]](#)
- h) L-3 Withdrawal [\[link to form\]](#)

## **Candidacy, Oral Defense and Thesis Submission Procedures**

Students must submit a Petition for Approval of Candidacy before the beginning of their 9th semester. Bring the signed form and supporting documents to Ligia Leismer for electronic submittal to GPS.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule the final oral examination in defense of a thesis to take place at a date, time and venue agreeable to all members of the committee. For the doctoral degree, the examination must be publicly announced and the **student must submit the announcement at least two weeks before the scheduled defense**. Failure to submit the announcement on time will prevent the student from defending.

Defense announcements can be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies by filling out the following form: <http://events.rice.edu/rgs/>. GPS will issue an original Approval of Candidacy form and it is the student's responsibility to confirm the form is up to date and the committee members listed are correct. Candidates must be enrolled in the semester they defend or through Friday of the 1st week of the class of the following semester.

Complete information on Oral Defense requirements can be found here: <http://graduate.rice.edu/oraldefense>

Within one week (7 calendar days) of passing the oral examination the student must create an account on <https://thesis.rice.edu/> and upload the defended version of the thesis and the approval of candidacy form signed and dated by the thesis committee.

In order to graduate, the final thesis must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies before noon on the deadline listed in the academic calendar (or six months after the oral defense, which ever occurs first).

Detailed instructions for the submittal of the thesis can be found here: <http://graduate.rice.edu/submitthesis>

Students must submit an Application for a Degree to the Registrar's office according to deadlines of the semester they want the degree conferred. The Application for a Degree can be found in your ESTHER account.

## **Computers and Printers**

The Rice NetID is a unique login credential for each Rice student, faculty, or staff member. Your NetID is your default account name for your Rice email account. Upon receiving your Rice ID number, you can activate your NetID at:

<https://docs.rice.edu/confluence/display/ITDIY/MyNetID+Instructions+and+Help>.

Remember your password; Rice uses a Central Authentication system for almost all its online services.

If you forget your password you will need to contact IT or go to the Help Desk in the Mudd Building with your student ID to get it reset.

The departmental server (math.rice.edu) has a number of math packages you can access, including Matlab, Mathematica, and Magma. It also hosts the department and personal webpages. Contact the Help Desk to verify that an account has been created for you [helpdesk@help.rice.edu](mailto:helpdesk@help.rice.edu)

The department maintains several laser printers for educational and research purposes. Room 40 in the basement has an HP LaserJet 600 and off the Commons Room (438) on the fourth floor there is an HP LaserJet M806. The LaserJet M806 is capable of printing 2-sided copies; to save paper please make sure that the duplex option is set up in your printer preferences. For printer setup guides, please email Lisa Geda.

For any IT-related problems or questions, including webpages, printers, and computer problems, send an email to [lg31@rice.edu](mailto:lg31@rice.edu) or use the web form at <https://oit.rice.edu/request-help>

## **Copying**

### **Departmental**

Students may use the department's copying machine located in HBH 215 for their studies and research work. The copier also has high volume printer and scanner capabilities. Please see Lisa Geda in the front office and she will issue you the ID number and password required to use the machine.

### **University**

IT supplies and supports B/W printers networks that can be found in the RMC, classrooms and labs, Fondren Library and Mudd Lab. Mudd Lab also has color and thesis paper printers, as well as poster printers called plotters. Students can print to these lab printers from their personal computers, college lab computers and academic classroom/lab computers. Printing charges are nominal and can be tracked in the IT Self-Service web site. Student printing charges are sent to the Rice Cashier's Office in the middle of each month and will appear on the next bill.

### **Office Keys**

Each student will be issued a door key to his/her office. Office keys and after hours building card access are issued by RUPD at the request of the mathematics department office. Students must go to the RUPD office located on the west side of campus to pick up and return keys. A photo ID is necessary to pick up keys. Offices are routinely reassigned each academic year as students arrive and/or graduate and keys are exchanged at the RUPD office. There is a replacement cost of \$25 payable to RUPD for lost or stolen keys. Keys may not be duplicated under any circumstances. All keys must be returned to RUPD when a student permanently leaves Rice. For questions about office keys and after-hours building access see Lisa Geda.

### **Mailboxes**

Each student will be issued a personal mailbox and will have the option to obtain a key to access the mailbox from the hall outside the department office. Mailboxes are located in the workroom adjacent to HBH 220. Mailboxes are routinely assigned each academic year as students arrive and/or graduate. If you would like a key, one may be obtained from Lisa Geda and must be returned when there is a change of mailbox assignment and/or when a student permanently leaves Rice. There is a replacement cost of \$5 payable to the Math Department for lost or stolen keys. Keys may not be duplicated under any circumstances. Each student should check email (and her/his/their mailbox) at least once a day for mail or messages.

### **Student Parking**

Parking is available for graduate students by purchasing a permit. For further details, check <http://parking.rice.edu>.

### **Supplies**

Supplies that are needed for research and university work are available in the mailroom off the main department.

### **Books**

Desk copies are provided for the use of instructors, TA's and graders; the books are the property of the department and must be returned at the end of the semester. All books, desk copies, and references must be checked out and returned to the Math office. All books are checked out on a semester-by-semester basis; if you would like to retain the book for more than one semester, please notify Lisa Geda in the Math office.

### **Society Memberships and Journal Subscriptions**

The department pays for graduate student membership to the American Mathematical Society (AMS) and Associated Women in Mathematics (AWM). Student membership rates to other professional societies and journal publications are substantially less than the normal rates and can be found on the web.

### **Travel**

There are limited travel funds within the department available for student travel for the purpose of furthering their educational and research goals. Student travel supported by the department must be authorized well in advance of the

planned date of travel to be eligible for reimbursement. Please follow the guidelines below when seeking travel support: If you are traveling to a conference, you must try to first obtain funding from the conference before requesting travel reimbursement from the department. Travel authorization should be requested via email from the graduate student's advisor first. After receiving the approval from his/her/their advisor, the graduate student should send an email to the Department Chair providing the information about the travel. Please copy Gihan Semine on any email requests. Please include the following information in your email:

- Name, date, and link for the conference, seminar, workshop etc.,
- Dates of travel
- Estimated expense for the trip
- The acceptance letter stating the financial support provided by the organization/conference.

Please coordinate with Gihan on turning in the funding check. You will be reimbursed for your travel expenses and held accountable for turning in the conference funding in a timely manner.

Ideally, we would like the conference funding to be issued directly to the department. Please use the following information to complete your conference funding request:

Make check payable to: Rice University  
Mailing address:  
Rice University Department of Mathematics  
6100 Main Street, MS 136,  
Houston, TX 77005  
Attn: Gihan Semine

Once the travel request is approved and the student requires flight and/or hotel arrangements, please consult with Gihan Semine before making any travel arrangements, especially if you need assistance in locating reasonable accommodations or airfare.

#### **Hotel Reservations and Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate:**

If you are reserving a hotel in any of the 13 states below, including Texas, you must request a tax-exempt status. Prior to traveling, you need to inform the hotel, request a hotel occupancy tax exemption, and present the Texas Hotel Occupancy and Tax Exemption Certificate upon check in and prior to making any payment.

**Rice will no longer reimburse hotel occupancy taxes paid in these states.** Rice University's Tax Exemption Number is #74-1109620 Please visit the [Math Finance blog](#) for the Texas hotel exempt form.

#### **Participating States:**

1. Connecticut
2. Florida
3. Indiana
4. Kansas
5. Kentucky
6. Michigan
7. New Jersey
8. Ohio
9. Tennessee
10. Texas
11. Utah
12. Wisconsin
13. Wyoming

#### **Airfare:**

Air transportation supported by an NSF grant must be booked in accordance with the Fly America Act and/or the Airlines Open Skies Agreement. This means travel must be performed by or under a code-sharing arrangement with a U.S.-flag air carrier if service provided by such a carrier is available. Please visit the [Math Finance blog](#) or consult with Gihan Semine to ensure your airfare complies with those guidelines.

#### **Expense Reimbursements:**

To receive reimbursement for expenses the following is required:

- A detailed travel expense statement filled in its entirety (available in this Box folder and on the Math Finance blog)

- Supporting detailed receipts - must be itemized and list the form of payment clearly.
- For Mileage reimbursement, please provide a copy of a Google map showing the route and number of miles traveled.
- Acceptance letter and any funding information from the conference.
- Advisor approval or department approval email
- Meals – individual **itemized** receipts from the restaurants are required; detailed receipts must show credit card number or the method of payment and a detailed transactions e.g., food or beverage ordered etc.

Allowable reimbursements may include the following:

- Reasonable airfare costs - Airline ticket receipts should clearly show itemized cost of ticket and proof of payment, include boarding passes if available.
- Lodging - Hotel receipts must detail all applicable charges and clearly state room rate and taxes or lack thereof.
- Local transportation costs.
- Auto rental receipts should detail daily rate and total cost. Cost of rental must not exceed, and be compatible to reasonable local transportation costs. Optional rental agency car insurance will not be reimbursed; Rice is self-insured and will cover all Rice authorized domestic travel.
- Registration fees.
- Meals reimbursement will be limited to a per diem rate of 37.50 for first and last day of travel, and \$50 for the remaining days **when funded by the Math department**. If you are traveling someplace where the cost of food is extraordinarily high and/or breakfast is not provided by the hotel or conference, or in extenuating circumstances, students are encouraged to discuss a possible increase with the Graduate Committee Chair

### **Departmental Purchase Card (PCard):**

The Mathematics Department/Gihan has a university issued credit card for graduate students' use strictly for department-approved purchases such as business-related travel and other mathematics department business or event and to assist with upfront travel costs. Please contact Gihan to coordinate the use of the PCard.

Graduate students may use the PCard with the understanding that the following rules apply:

- The student agrees to comply with the card user responsibilities as outlined in the [Controller's Purchasing Card Program User's Manual](#).
- The student is responsible for the return of the card and all receipts for purchases made while in his/her/their possession.
- The student is liable and must pay back any and all unauthorized purchases made while the card is in his/her/their possession
- If the card is lost or stolen the student must immediately notify Gihan Semine.

Use of the card is a privilege that must be taken very seriously as its purpose is to mitigate the financial burden of out-of-pocket expenses for the student engaged in departmental approved travel or event purchases. Failure to comply with any of the stated rules will result in immediate loss of card user privileges.

### **Exam Grading Meals Policy**

Graduate students grading midterm and final exams in-person may each charge up to \$20 for a meal to the department. Meals – please ask for individual **itemized** receipt from the restaurants; detailed receipts must show credit card number or the method of payment and a detailed transactions e.g., food ordered etc. Students should coordinate with Gihan Semine.

### **Tutoring Policy**

Graduate students may tutor outside students independently for extra income as long as this work does not prevent satisfactory progress to their degree as determined by the graduate committee.

### **Title IX support**

Rice encourages any student who has experienced an incident of sexual, relationship, or other interpersonal violence, harassment or gender discrimination to seek support. There are many options available both on and off campus for all graduate students, regardless of whether the perpetrator was a fellow student, a staff or faculty member, or someone not affiliated with the university.

Students should be aware when seeking support on campus that most employees are required by Title IX to disclose all

incidents of non-consensual interpersonal behaviors to Title IX professionals on campus who can act to support that student and meet their needs. The therapists at the Rice Counseling Center and the doctors at Student Health Services are confidential, meaning that Rice will not be informed about the incident if a student discloses to one of these Rice staff members. Rice prioritizes student privacy and safety, and only shares disclosed information on a need-to-know basis.

If you are in need of assistance or simply would like to talk to someone, please call Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center, which includes Title IX Support: x3311 / (713) 348-3311

Policies, including Sexual Misconduct Policy and Student Code of Conduct, and more information regarding Title IX can be found at [safe.rice.edu](https://safe.rice.edu)