



Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Dean of Students Office

# Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights & Responsibilities

Rev. November 2017

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## INTRODUCTION

The *Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities (Handbook)* is a reflection of the values, beliefs and expectations we have as a community of scholars. The *Handbook* lays out both the rights and the responsibilities of students at Rensselaer to help ensure mutual respect, integrity, and an environment where all students can effectively pursue their educational goals.

All Rensselaer students are expected to comply with the rules and regulations set forth in the *Handbook*, as well as with the requirements set forth in other Institute policies and rules. Compliance with the requirements of this *Handbook* are also conditions of occupancy for all residents in campus housing – in addition to the contractual terms set forth in room and board contracts.

It is each student's responsibility to be familiar with the contents of this *Handbook*, and other policies of the Institute.

Notice regarding changes: Review of this *Handbook* will commence at least annually. Rensselaer reserves the right to change any regulation or policy affecting its students, including those set forth in this *Handbook*, as well as any tuition and fees, room and board costs, academic standards and requirements, or any rules governing admission, occupancy of residence halls, or the granting of degrees at any time. Changes to this *Handbook* will be communicated to the Rensselaer community. Such communication will include access to the updated *Handbook*.

This *Handbook* is effective as of the revision date noted, and it replaces and supersedes any and all prior versions of the *Handbook*. To the extent the *Handbook* summarizes separate policies, the actual terms of those policies will control.

Questions and concerns about this *Handbook* should be addressed to the Dean of Students Office.

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## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS<sup>1</sup>

### **STATEMENT OF ADOPTION BY THE TRUSTEES**

The Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Student Bill of Rights has been considered by the Trustees.

In order to safeguard the rights of all members of the Institute community, certain specific rules and regulations are necessary. Recognition of the Student Bill of Rights as herein expressed is not intended to limit or restrict the ultimate responsibility and authority of the Board of Trustees to promulgate and enforce rules and regulations reasonably consistent with the general principles set forth in the Student Bill of Rights, which the Board of Trustees deems necessary and appropriate to the Rensselaer community.

By its very nature, the Student Bill of Rights cannot be successful without corresponding student responsibilities and obligations which, although they have not been spelled out in the document, must of necessity be considered a part of it and without which it cannot succeed.

In adopting the document in principle, the Trustees wish to make clear to all concerned that their primary obligation, duty and concern is in the best interest of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute as an educational institution and that this document, like all other policy statements and decisions concerning the Institute, is subject to the continuing paramount control of the Board of Trustees.

Under no circumstances shall student fees or other Institute funds be used to promote, prosecute, initiate, or defend an adversary proceeding against the Institute without written consent of the Institute.

### **ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE**

**Section A:** The name of this document is the Rensselaer Student Bill of Rights.

**Section B:** The student is a citizen of the nation at large, and the Institute shall not impede or obstruct students in the exercise of their fundamental rights as citizens. It is the purpose of this document to set forth ways in which these rights, some of which may be limited by resources, are applied to student members of the Rensselaer community.

### **ARTICLE II: FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AT RENSSELAER**

**Section A:** The Institute shall state, in a specific written document, the characteristics and expectations and responsibilities of students which it considers relevant to success in the institution's programs. The Institute shall be open to all students who are qualified according to its admission standards, barring no one on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, disability, military status, veteran status, prior criminal convictions, genetic information, genetic predisposition, domestic violence victim, or any other basis prohibited by law. Efforts shall be made to seek out and admit students of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds whose potential could be reached through a Rensselaer education. Prospective students may, before entering the Institute, request Institute regulations, contractual rights, obligations and responsibilities.

<sup>1</sup> The Student Sexual Misconduct Bill of Rights is located in the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy (<https://sexualviolence.rpi.edu>) and on Page 31 in this Handbook.

**Section B:** The facilities and services which are normally available to students under the rules and regulations of the Institute shall be open to all of its students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, disability, military status, veteran status, genetic information, genetic predisposition, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis prohibited by law. Age or year in school shall not be used arbitrarily as a basis for discrimination, but there may be valid reasons for differential access based on educational goals or allocation of resources. The Institute shall endeavor to secure equal access for all students to public facilities in the local community.

**Section C:** Every prospective student shall have the right to a written explanation of the basis of eligibility for financial aid, and the requirements for continuation. In addition, recipients of such aid shall be provided an explanation of the reasons for change in financial aid that may occur in subsequent years.

### **ARTICLE III: STUDENT – TEACHER RELATIONSHIP**

**Section A:** The professor in the classroom and in conference shall encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression. Students shall be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion.

**Section B:** Students shall have the right to learn from and be informed by the instructor about the procedures and standards by which they are to be graded. Student performance in coursework shall be evaluated on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious evaluation.

**Section C:** Information about student activities, views, beliefs, and political associations which professors acquire in the course of their work as instructors, advisers, and counselors shall be considered confidential. Persons who provide confidential statements or written judgments of ability and character in connection with an application in which the student gives express permission for the release of such information are responsible to the recipient and to the subject equally to be honest and fair in their judgment.

### **ARTICLE IV: CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

The Institute shall publish an explicit policy statement as to the information which is a part of a student's permanent official educational record and the conditions of its disclosure. To minimize the risk of improper disclosure, academic, financial, disciplinary, and medical records shall be separate, and the conditions of access to each shall be published in an explicit policy statement. Transcripts of academic records shall contain only information about academic status, and the student and his or her adviser shall have the right to see these records at any time. Information from student records shall be available only to authorized persons as determined by the Institute or legal regulations. Other persons, both on campus and off, shall have access to such records only with the express permission of the student. No educational records shall be kept which reflect as such the political activities or beliefs of students. Provisions shall also be made for periodic destruction of inactive non-academic and nonfinancial records. The student shall have the right to view and contest the contents of his or her official Institute records, except those relating to his or her admissions application and all records of the psychological counseling and medical services, regardless of where such records may be physically located.

### **ARTICLE V: FREEDOM IN STUDENT LIFE**

**Section A:** (1) Students shall be free to organize and join lawful associations to promote their common interests. The policies and actions of a student organization will be determined by the membership within the limits established by the Rensselaer Union (Institute student body) and other appropriate bodies within the Institute. Affiliation with an extramural organization shall not of itself disqualify a student organization from recognition by the Rensselaer Union. In order to receive Rensselaer Union recognition, student organizations may be required to submit a statement of purpose, criteria for membership, rule of procedure, and a current list of officers. All Rensselaer Union organizations, including those affiliated with an extramural organization, shall be open to all eligible students without discrimination. Recognition shall not imply approval or disapproval of an organization's

aims, objectives, or policies. (2) The denial of access to facilities or reduction of funds shall not be used by the Institute or the Rensselaer Union as a means of censorship or suppression of any lawful activity. Rensselaer Union building facilities shall be available for the use of all members of the Institute community.

**Section B:** (1) Students and student groups shall be free to examine and discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. They shall be free to support causes by orderly means, including peaceful assembly, which do not disrupt the normal operation of the Institute. Unless otherwise authorized, students and student groups speak only for themselves in their public expressions or demonstrations. (2) Students and student groups shall be allowed to invite and to hear any person of their own choosing. Such students and groups shall have an affirmative obligation to comply with Institute procedures which are designed to ensure that for such an event there is adequate preparation and security, and that such an event is conducted in a manner appropriate to an academic community. The sponsors of any event shall make clear to the academic and at-large communities that such sponsorship does not necessarily imply approval or endorsements of the views expressed, either by the sponsoring group or by the Institute.

**Section C:** In the delegation of editorial responsibility to individual students, the Rensselaer Union shall provide sufficient editorial freedom for the student publications and other media to maintain their integrity of purpose as vehicles for responsible free expression in an academic community. To this end, the Rensselaer Union shall provide written clarification of the role of student media, the standards to be used in their evaluation, and the limitations on control of their operation. Editors and managers of student media shall be free from arbitrary suspension or removal because of student, faculty, administrative, or public disapproval of editorial policy or content. Only for proper and stated causes, shall editors and managers be subject to removal, and then only by orderly and prescribed procedures as established by the Rensselaer Union. All Rensselaer Union published and financed student media shall explicitly state on the editorial or in other appropriate fashion that the opinions expressed there are not necessarily those of the Institute or student body.

**Section D:** Students shall be free, individually and collectively, to express their views on issues of institutional policy and on matters of general interest to the student body. The student body shall have a means of providing input on institutional policy affecting academic and student affairs. The role of student government and both its general and specific responsibilities shall be made explicit, and the actions of the student government within the areas of its jurisdiction shall be reviewed through orderly prescribed procedures.

## **ARTICLE VI: OFF – CAMPUS FREEDOM OF STUDENTS**

**Section A:** The Institute's students are both citizens of the nation at large and members of the academic community. As citizens, off-campus, students shall enjoy the same freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, and right of petition that other citizens enjoy. Off-campus and on-campus, students are expected to conduct themselves in a civil, respectful and lawful manner.

**Section B:** When the activities of students result in apparent violation of the law, staff from the Division of Student Life, the Rensselaer Union, Public Safety, and other appropriate administrative offices shall be available to apprise the students of sources of legal counsel and other sources of assistance. Students who violate the law may incur penalties prescribed by civil authorities but Institute authority shall not attempt to duplicate the function of public authority. Rensselaer reserves the right to address off-campus student conduct which violates Rensselaer's Grounds for Disciplinary Action through the Institute's judicial process.

No student's status at Rensselaer shall be altered on the basis of pending legal action or conviction for any crime, except when the presence of such student could constitute a danger to the safety of person or property on the premises of the Institute or the student's behavior is otherwise subject to the jurisdiction of Rensselaer as set forth in this Student Bill of Rights. Institutional action shall be independent of community pressure.

## **ARTICLE VII: PROCEDURAL STANDARDS IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS**

**Section A:** The administration of discipline shall provide procedural fairness to an accused student.

Thus, each Institute regulation shall be as clear and specific as possible. The Institute shall initiate disciplinary action for conduct including that which could be a threat to the personal safety of members of the academic community, conduct that endangers property, and/or conduct that is disruptive to the educational and administrative processes of the Institute. Disciplinary procedures shall take into account the case circumstances in particular, and each accused student shall be entitled to an individual inquiry/hearing if requested. The jurisdiction of campus judicial bodies, the disciplinary responsibilities of institutional officials, and the disciplinary procedures, including the student's right to appeal a decision, shall be clearly formulated and available in advance. Penalties shall be imposed or assessed under prescribed procedures.

**Section B:** The student shall be informed of the nature of the charges against him or her and shall be given a fair opportunity to refute them. Neither the Institute nor any of its judicial bodies shall be arbitrary in its actions and there shall be provisions for the appeal of the initial decision. Except in extraordinary circumstances, standards of conduct will be formulated with student input and published in advance through such means as a student handbook or a generally available body of institutional rules.

**Section C:** Premises occupied by, and personal property of, students shall not be searched (as distinguished from ordinary maintenance activities) or seized without an externally issued search warrant or its internally issued equivalent based on comparable standards, or without the student's knowledge and approval of the search, except in cases where Institute officials have a reasonable basis for believing that safety is involved. For premises not controlled by the Institute, the ordinary requirements for lawful search shall be followed.

**Section D:** Students detected or charged in the course of serious violation of institutional regulations or infractions of ordinary law shall be informed of their rights. No form of harassment shall be used by Institute representatives to coerce admissions of guilt or information about conduct or about other suspected persons.

**Section E:** Upon verbal or written notification of charges, a student may be placed on an emergency suspension pending the hearing and determination thereof, when the continued presence of such student could constitute a danger to the safety of person or property on the premises of the Institute. In the event of such a suspension, the student, upon written request, shall have the right to a hearing before the appropriate Institute judiciary within five Institute business days after said request.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS IN THE CLASSROOM**

Students have the right to be informed about the content and educational intent of a course, and about the procedures and standards by which they are to be evaluated. Accordingly, at the beginning of each course, students should be provided with:

1. A syllabus of the course including content and objectives as appropriate.
2. The policies which govern various factors used in the evaluation process along with a description of the method by which the final grade will be determined. Factors to consider include homework, examinations, projects, papers, laboratory work, and attendance. Should changes in the content, procedures, or standards become necessary, the reasons for these changes should be explained to the class.
3. A statement of definition of academic dishonesty where such may be open to question. Particular attention should be paid to collaboration on out-of-class assignments. The official policy, with regard to academic dishonesty, can be found in this handbook.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS**

When people gather together in communities, their rights as individuals may not be exercised in the same fashion as they might otherwise. Individuals' rights impinge upon each other and laws are established in the larger society to govern in such cases. At Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, these regulations are set forth so that individuals will be aware of their responsibilities and be able to exercise their rights individually and collectively as stated in the Student Bill of Rights. Out of concern for individuality and respect for student privacy, Rensselaer does not

seek to impose a common morality on all students. At the same time, the Institute has the responsibility to establish certain standards of conduct within the campus community.

In general, Institute regulations are concerned with conduct on the campus, but students must recognize that whether on-campus or off-campus, they are subject to local, state, and federal laws. Their responsibilities as citizens require that they conform to these laws, realizing that Rensselaer will not make any effort to protect students who violate their citizenship obligations from the consequences. At the same time, the Institute is concerned with the student's rights as a citizen with equal protection under the law.

Any invasion of individual rights of privacy or activity that causes suffering or extreme physical exhaustion, or grave personal offense, or that interferes with scholastic work, or that constitutes any danger to person or property (including but not limited to activities commonly referred to as "hazing") is strictly forbidden, whether the conduct occurs on-campus or off-campus.

Except as prescribed in this Student Bill of Rights, off-campus misconduct will not typically be the basis for disciplinary action by the Institute. However, when such conduct constitutes a threat to person or property within the Rensselaer community or under other circumstances, it will result in disciplinary review and/or action. Rensselaer assumes the responsibility to regulate the private conduct of its students when such conduct could constitute a hazard to or an infringement on the rights of others, a violation of the law, or a disruption of the legitimate academic and administrative processes of the Institute.

Student organizations sanctioned or recognized by the Institute are subject to the same regulations as individual students. Institute recognition means that such groups accept corporate responsibility to protect members of the Rensselaer community and their guests from any violation of their rights in group activities and in activities of individual members. Such organizations are generally required to designate officers, but such action in no way diminishes the group's corporate responsibility. Failure of the officers, when acting in their official capacity, to protect the rights of members of the community and to uphold policy shall be considered behavior also subject to individual disciplinary action.

Rensselaer accepts its responsibility to protect the members of the community against any infringement of their rights by exercising its discretion to subject to disciplinary action any student who violates the rights of others. Authority for the administration of student disciplinary and judicial processes at Rensselaer is vested exclusively in the Dean of Students Office, by delegation from the President.

These policies are based first on the recognition that institutional existence is a privilege granted by public trust, subject to the sanctions and responsibilities defined by the society of which the Institute is a part. Second, society generally provides legal canons, ethical mores, and conduct expectancies pertaining to individual and group behavior, and these are a fact to which the Institute cannot be indifferent.

## **GROUNDINGS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

A violation of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action may be construed to include: (a) active violation; (b) attempt to violate; and (c) solicitation of or aiding another in the commission of a violation. Disciplinary action may be instituted in any case in which an individual or group of students is found in violation of any of the following regulations:

1. Conduct which could be construed to be a violation of any federal, state, or local law.
2. Conduct which disrupts or interferes with the personal or group rights of other members of the Institute community or with any activities of the Institute including, but not limited to, access to facilities and performance of normal duties.
3. Conduct which violates personal, group, or Institute rights to be secure against unlawful intrusion or seizure including, but not limited to: (a) theft or possession of stolen property; (b) possession or use of unauthorized Institute keys or access devices; (c) unauthorized entry; and (d) refusal to leave or to release any property when ordered to do so by any person having jurisdiction over it.



4. Damage to property including, but not limited to, vandalism.
5. Academic dishonesty, as defined in this document.
6. Fraud, including, but not limited to, forgery, misuse, and/or alteration of Institute records, documents, or identification.
7. Use, possession, or distribution of controlled substances (illegal drugs, as defined by state and federal law) and precursors of controlled substances or drug paraphernalia, except as expressly permitted by state and federal law and Institute regulations.
8. Being in any place for the purpose of unlawful use, possession, or distribution of a controlled substance.
9. Disorderly, lewd, harassing, or indecent conduct.
10. Physical assault, or conduct that threatens, encourages, or causes physical harm to persons or property.
11. Hazing, as defined in this document or by New York State or State of Connecticut statute.
12. Willful failure or refusal to testify as a witness after having been directed to appear at an Institute investigation or disciplinary proceeding, unless the testimony would tend to implicate said student in a violation of Institute regulations, or where the procedures governing the investigation or proceeding expressly grant a right of non-participation; or knowingly providing false testimony or evidence at an Institute disciplinary proceeding. An Institute disciplinary proceeding includes, but is not limited to, formal or informal action by the offices of the Dean of Students, the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education or the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education, hearings before any Judicial Hearing Board described in this Handbook or in Institute policies such as the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy, and procedures adopted by the Trustees in connection with the Rules for Maintenance of Public Order.
13. Conduct which endangers the safety of the Institute community, including, but not limited to, tampering with fire-warning devices, fire protection systems, portable fire extinguishers and other fire safety equipment; setting a fire on Institute property; use of cooking equipment in unauthorized areas of the residence halls; reckless operation of a motor vehicle.
14. Use, possession, or storage of dangerous weapons, chemicals, explosive devices, or materials including, but not limited to, firearms, air guns, prohibited knives (such as switch knives, swords, daggers, gravity knives, throwing stars, and knives with blades more than three inches long), ammunition, slingshots, metallic knuckles, bows and arrows, fireworks, and bombs.
15. Failure to comply with an Institute official in the performance of his or her duties, including, but not limited to, failure to provide valid identification or knowingly furnishing false information.
16. Failure to honor financial obligations to the Institute or to any element thereof.
17. Conduct which violates Institute or student government regulations established in a specific area or department by those having jurisdiction over it including, but not limited to: Parking, Public Safety, Residence Life, Financial Aid, Health Services, the Folsom Library, Computing and Information Services, and the Rensselaer Union.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Disciplinary Actions and Appeals of a violation of the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy are determined in accordance with said Student Sexual Misconduct Policy, page 30, not through the Student Judicial System.

## **JURISDICTION WITHIN THE RENSSELAER STUDENT JUDICIAL SYSTEM**

Jurisdiction is, by definition, the right, authority, and power to hear and adjudicate the controversy that people seek to bring before a hearing officer or board.

The jurisdiction of the Rensselaer Judicial System includes on-campus events as well as certain off-campus events. Hearing officers and boards within the system shall have the authority to hear and decide any case which is "Institute-related."

To be "Institute-related" a case must involve: (I) a violation of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action (GDA) by a Rensselaer student or student group, with said violation occurring on campus; or (II) a violation of the GDA by a Rensselaer student or student group, with said violation occurring off-campus under one or more of the following conditions:

1. The victim is a student or Rensselaer-affiliated individual or group, including the Institute itself (the status of the victim need not have been known by the perpetrator in the commission of the offense).
2. The alleged violator has used his or her status as a student or Rensselaer group to facilitate the commission of the offense.
3. The violation is committed during a Rensselaer-sponsored or sanctioned event.
4. The violation is a serious infraction that is likely to cause severe damage to the reputation of Rensselaer or the Rensselaer community (Examples include, but are not limited to, malicious conduct resulting in egregious harm to others, conduct that may be construed as a danger to members of the Rensselaer community, acts of violence affecting the public's safety and welfare, or possession, sale, and/or distribution of illegal drugs or weapons).

The Rensselaer Judicial System is comprised of the Dean of Students Office (including Student Living and Learning hearing officers and Office for Student Success hearing officers), hearing/appeal boards, Student Judicial Advisers, and the President. The object is to settle issues as informally as possible but to ensure fairness to all parties. Disciplinary cases are heard first in the Dean of Students Office, and civil cases (including student government disputes) are heard first by the Judicial Board. The standard of proof in Rensselaer's judicial system is a preponderance of the evidence.

## **COMPONENTS OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM**

### **DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE**

The Dean of Students Office shall have initial jurisdiction in alleged violations of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action and of the Statement of Relationship between Rensselaer Social Fraternities and Sororities. The Dean of Students Office will issue verdicts and assign penalties, either of which may be appealed to the appropriate board. All decisions of boards are recommended to the Dean of Students Office for implementation or, in civil cases, to communicate the outcome to the parties involved.

### **JUDICIAL INQUIRY**

A judicial inquiry is initiated when the Dean of Students Office is made aware that a student or group may be involved in, or have been witness to, a violation of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action. A student is required to be present at said inquiry when requested by the Dean of Students Office or designee. Failure to comply with this request may result in a hold being placed on a student's records, grades, transcripts, registration, and degree, and the inquiry being conducted in the student's absence.

If a student is requested to be present at a judicial inquiry, he or she will be informed of the nature of the concern, of the option to consult a Student Judicial Adviser before speaking to the hearing officer, and will be reminded to review the judicial process. The student is responsible to answer fully and truthfully all questions. Failure to do so may be considered a violation of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action (knowingly providing false testimony or evidence). The student has the right to refuse to answer specific questions only if the student's responses would tend to incriminate him or her in a violation of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action. The student must, however, state his or her reasons for refusing to answer. The student may have a Student Judicial Adviser present at a judicial inquiry only with expressed permission of the hearing officer.

The judicial inquiry may not necessarily result in disciplinary action but is part of the fact-finding phase of the judicial process. The student will be asked questions about the incident. Other persons may be present only rarely and at the hearing officer's sole discretion. The hearing officer may choose to adjourn the inquiry at any time in order to obtain further information from other sources.

**Note:** A student may view judicial documents used as evidence against him/her if requested. However, names other than that of the individual student should first be redacted to protect the confidentiality of any others named in the requested document(s). Students do not have access to internal communications, hearing officer notes, Dean's notes, or confidential memoranda.

Following this fact-finding phase, the hearing officer decides whether disciplinary action is necessary and may then either adjourn the inquiry or make a judgment and assign a penalty at the conclusion of the Judicial Inquiry. If the student accepts the judgment and penalty, the case is considered resolved. A letter confirming the matter will be sent to the student and placed in the student's general file in the Dean of Students Office for a period of time which will be indicated in the letter. In addition, at the sole discretion of the Dean of Students Office, and to the extent applicable law permits, a copy of the letter may be sent to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s). The decision of a hearing officer may be appealed to the appropriate hearing board by either party. The written appeal must be sent to the Board Chairperson via the Senior Judicial Administrator in the Dean of Students Office within three (3) Institute business days of receiving the hearing officer's decision.

## **APPEALS**

The finding issued and sanction assigned within the Student Judicial System may be appealed to a board and ultimately to the President. A student may request an appeal to the appropriate judicial body through the hearing officer or Senior Judicial Administrator. This process will be discussed with the student. Appeal requests must be submitted in writing from the appellant specifically, within the time limit designated; must include the specific reasons/rationale and supporting information for requesting an appeal; and can be only for the reasons/grounds stated subsequently. Upon receipt of the appeal request, the appropriate judicial body will proceed accordingly.

Once a student accepts a judicial decision, or if an appeal request is not submitted according to the above requirements and by the date and time designated, the decision stands as final and cannot be further appealed.

## **GROUND FOR APPEAL**

Grounds for appeal include only: demonstrated procedural error; new evidence that could not have been discovered by the accused student prior to the time of the original decision which would be likely to change the results of the previous outcome; and/or sanctions that are not appropriate for the violations.

**Note: A mandatory minimum sanction cannot be reduced or appealed, other than for mitigation purposes relating to organizations as specified in the Good Samaritan Policy.**

## **JUDICIAL HEARING BOARDS**

There are several hearing boards that will hear appeals of the decision of the Dean of Students Office or other Institute action. In certain instances these boards may hear a case without a judicial inquiry; these are:

- Civil cases between students or student groups including all student government disputes.
- Cases referred directly to a hearing board by the Dean of Students Office. However, such a referral would only be due to rare and/or extenuating circumstances.
- Cases not initiated in the Dean of Students Office, such as Faculty Academic Board cases and the academic grading portion of academic dishonesty cases.

Hearing boards will hear cases depending upon their nature and may issue verdicts and assign penalties. Both parties involved have the option to accept the decision of the hearing board or, where an appeal is allowed, appeal to the Review Board. If both parties accept the board's decision, it stands as final.

Hearing boards are governed by their own bylaws. To request a hearing of one of these boards you must provide a written appeal, per the previous specifications, within three (3) Institute business days of notification of the original judicial decision.

## **JUDICIAL BOARD**

The Judicial Board has jurisdiction in alleged violations of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action by students or groups except where other Institute policies or procedures grant jurisdiction to other panels (e.g., Sexual

Misconduct Policy), and in civil cases between students/groups. The Judicial Board is comprised of seven students.

### **GREEK JUDICIAL BOARD**

The Greek Judicial Board can hear cases involving alleged violations of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action, the Statement of Relationship between Rensselaer and Social Fraternities and Sororities, and of the Interfraternity Council (IFC) or Panhellenic Council (PC) By-Laws by a recognized fraternity or sorority. The Greek Judicial Board is comprised of seven students.

### **FACULTY ACADEMIC BOARD**

The Faculty Academic Board shall hear the appeals of final course grades, but only after a student has been unsuccessful in resolving this dispute with his or her professor, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the School, and when the student alleges the wrongful assigning of a grade. This allegation must be based upon a violation of the course syllabus, a violation of Institute policy by the professor/ instructor, or a violation of the student's rights under the Student Bill of Rights. The Faculty Academic Board is comprised of three faculty members appointed by the Provost. A decision issued by the Faculty Academic Board is final and not subject to further appeal by either party.

### **THE JOINT BOARD**

The Joint Board has civil jurisdiction over alleged violations of Institute rules, rights, or regulations by an academic unit, an administrative unit, or by Rensselaer itself when the complainant is a student or a student group. The Joint Board will not hear a matter unless genuine, demonstrable attempts to resolve it with the unit and its supervisor have been unsuccessful. The Joint Board's decision may then be appealed directly to the President by either party within five (5) Institute business days of receiving the Joint Board decision. The Joint Board consists of three Judicial Board members, three faculty members, and one administrator. The Judicial Board Chairperson also chairs the Joint Board.

### **REVIEW BOARD**

The decision of a lower board (other than the Faculty Academic Board) may be appealed to the Review Board, by either party. The written appeal must be sent to the Review Board Chairperson via the Senior Judicial Administrator in the Dean of Students Office, within five (5) Institute business days of receiving the lower board's decision. The Review Board will then meet to discuss the merits of the appeal. Based solely upon the written evidence before it (including the letter of appeal) the Review Board will decide one of the following: to uphold the decision of the lower body; to modify the verdict or sanction(s) of the lower body; to refer the case back to the lower body with instructions for further action; or to conduct a hearing. If the Review Board decides to conduct a hearing, it will determine what information will be examined or further clarified. The Review Board is an appeals board and only reviews lower board decisions. The Review Board consists of two students, two faculty members, and one administrator.

### **THE PRESIDENT**

The decisions of the Review Board and the Joint Board may be subject to final determination by the President of the Institute, at the written request of either party involved, within five (5) Institute business days of notification of the board's decision. Appeals of Review Board decisions are made by either party via the Senior Judicial Administrator in the Dean of Students Office. Appeals of Joint Board decisions are made by either party directly to the President. The President is unconstrained in the procedure he or she chooses to employ in the context of such a review including making a determination based solely on the written evidence (including the letter of appeal).

### **DEVIATION FROM PROCEDURES**

Deviation from the above listed procedures will not invalidate a decision or proceeding unless it causes significant prejudice to the accused student, which the student must bring to the attention of the applicable panel, committee, or board immediately upon belief that such prejudice occurred.

In determining whether a deviation caused significant prejudice, the applicable panel, committee, or board shall consider whether the course of the proceedings would have been substantially different had the deviation not occurred.

The applicable panel, committee, or board also shall determine whether the accused student gave adequate notice of the alleged procedural event.

## **STUDENT JUDICIAL ADVISERS**

Student Judicial Advisers exist under the provisions of the judicial system which allow students to be advised with respect to Rensselaer judicial proceedings. Student Judicial Advisers advise students of the policies and procedures, as well as their rights and responsibilities within the judicial system. Advisers do not, however, investigate, prepare, or present/argue judicial cases.

A student may request a Judicial Adviser at the time of the inquiry, or three days before the "final" inquiry. See Amendment VI: Judicial Advisers of the Rensselaer Union Constitution.

## **LEGAL COUNSEL**

The presence of an attorney at a judicial inquiry or hearing is at the sole discretion of the hearing officer, and/or the Senior Judicial Administrator and board Chairperson. Requests for an attorney to be present to advise an accused student will be considered only in instances where the student has been arrested or has had a criminal complaint filed against him or her. If it is determined that a student will be permitted to have an attorney present, the student must notify the Senior Judicial Administrator, in writing, a minimum of 72 hours in advance of the hearing, indicating the name, business address, and phone number of the attorney who will be in attendance.

The role of an attorney is limited in the judicial process. He or she is present only to advise the accused student and can confer with the student during the judicial proceeding. However, the attorney is not entitled to address the hearing officer or board and may not communicate specific questions, responses, or statements for the student. Moreover, all correspondence regarding the judicial matter, including the filing of an appeal, must come directly from the student(s) involved. Institute officials involved in the judicial system may elect to discuss procedural matters with attorneys. However, as a general practice, communication and inquiries from attorneys will be referred directly to Institute Legal Counsel.

## **TYPES OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to:

### **Disciplinary Warning**

Issued to students to indicate that their behavior is in violation of Institute regulations and that repetition may bring more serious consequences.

### **Disciplinary Probation**

A formal warning period which indicates to a student that further policy violations may result in more serious consequences including suspension or expulsion.

### **Removal from Residence Facilities**

The student's room rental agreement is void and he or she is required to vacate Rensselaer residence facilities permanently or for a specified period of time.

### **Disciplinary Suspension**

The student is separated from Rensselaer for a specific minimum period of time and is required to leave the Institute. Return to campus, by a student on disciplinary suspension, may occur only with prior notification and approval of the Dean of Students Office. The student may apply for readmission at the end of the specified

suspension time. Readmission is at the sole and absolute discretion of Rensselaer and a student may be required to fulfill specific conditions prior to and following readmission.

### **Expulsion**

The student is permanently separated from the Institute without opportunity for readmission at any time. The student is required to leave the Institute within the time determined and cannot be in or on Institute property without the prior notification and approval of the Dean of Students Office.

### **Fines**

Separate from reimbursement or restitution, monetary fines may also be levied.

### **Alternative Action**

Alternative action may be required as part of a penalty and includes, but is not limited to: educational programming and training, counseling, assessment, restriction or loss of privileges, restitution, apology, and community service. This service will be unpaid and benefit a charitable or non-profit organization including Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

### **Group Disciplinary Action**

Institute-recognized, sponsored, or sanctioned student groups are subject to the same disciplinary action as individual students and may also have the following or other penalties applied: limitation of social and other organization privileges or programs; alternative action, removal, or limitation of funding; and suspension or expulsion. If membership within the group is an element in the violations of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action, the penalty may also include a limitation on membership.

### **Group Suspension**

The suspension of a student organization denotes the revocation of Institute recognition for a designated period of time and includes, but is not limited to: the loss of Institute recognition and all privileges thereof, including exclusion from all Institute programs and services, student government, funding, advertising the organization and/or displaying the organization name or house letters; the inability to participate in or sponsor any activities as an organization, to participate in recruitment and pledging activities; or for organization members to hold positions related to their membership in the suspended organization (i.e. IFC or Panhellenic positions, applicable student government or judicial board positions). These conditions are in effect for the duration of the suspension.

Any organization, which violates its sanctions and/or conditions of suspension, is subject to the permanent loss of Institute recognition.

### **Group Expulsion**

The expulsion of a student organization denotes the permanent revocation of Institute recognition and all privileges thereof, without the opportunity for reinstatement at any time. An organization that is expelled is permanently excluded from all Institute programs and services including, but not limited to: student government, funding, advertising the organization and/or displaying the organization name or house letters; the inability to participate in or sponsor any activities as an organization, to participate in recruitment and pledging activities; or for organization members to hold positions related to their membership in the suspended organization (i.e., IFC or Panhellenic positions, applicable student government or judicial board positions).

## **INSTITUTE-RECOGNIZED STUDENT GROUPS AND ALCOHOL**

As stated in the Institute Regulations on Alcohol section in this handbook, any Rensselaer recognized student organization found to have served alcohol to an underage individual at any event (on- or off-campus) will, at minimum, be subject to a mandatory two-semester suspension. In addition, all organization alcohol privileges are subject to revocation while a group is under investigation and for the duration of the disciplinary process.

At the end of the designated suspension period, an organization can be reinstated if all conditions have been met. Conditions for reinstatement include a probationary period for a minimum of one semester following a

suspension, but are not limited to, educational programming/training, restrictions on alcohol, and hiring a Rensselaer approved adviser to live in residence.

## **DISCLOSURE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

**Note:** 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 binding order of a court or government agency, (b) a student signs a confidentiality waiver for said agency or government entity, or (c) such disclosure is otherwise in compliance with state and federal laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

## **POLICY ON TRANSCRIPT NOTATION**

It is the policy of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute that students who are found in violation of the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy or rules of conduct set forth in this Handbook or other policies of Rensselaer and receive the sanction of 'Expulsion' or 'Suspension' will have a notation on their official transcript of Rensselaer.

A student who is found responsible for a violation of the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy, or rules of conduct set forth in this Handbook or other policies of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, withdraws from the Institute before the implementation of a sanction of Expulsion or Suspension, while such conduct charges are pending, and declines to complete the disciplinary process, will have a notation on their official transcript of Rensselaer.

Transcript notations for expulsion shall not be removed from a student's transcript, unless such expulsion is vacated for any reason. Transcript notations for suspension may be removed after one year after conclusion of the suspension by the student submitting an appeal to the Vice President for Student Life requesting removal of such notation. The decision of the Vice President for Student Life is final and not subject to appeal. Requests for removal of transcript notations for suspension may be submitted annually thereafter or until the student graduates, whichever is greater. Notations regarding suspensions will also be removed if such suspension is vacated for any reason.

## **NOTIFICATION**

Upon final disposition of a case, the Dean of Students Office has the option, but not the obligation, to submit an anonymous description of the disciplinary situation, with penalties assigned, to the Polytechnic for publication.

## **TEMPORARY ACTIONS**

### **Records Hold**

Pending resolution of a disciplinary matter, at the discretion of the Dean of Students Office, a student's records, grades, transcript, registration, or awarding of a degree may be withheld. This action may also occur if a period of probation or suspension is imposed or if a student fails to comply with the sanctions imposed.

### **Suspension of the Judicial Process**

Rensselaer reserves the right to suspend the Institute judicial process during breaks, recesses, and the months between the spring and fall semesters, when boards are not in session. Additionally, depending on the circumstances, alleged policy violations that occur toward the end of each semester may not be heard until the following semester is in session.

# ADDITIONAL POLICIES

## 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 this handbook.

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 instructor: 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 and is not eligible to request an F examination for the course.

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

Academic Fraud is defined as 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

Collaboration is defined as deliberately facilitating an act of academic dishonesty in any way or form; for example, allowing another student to observe an exam paper or allowing another student to "recycle" one's old term paper or using one another's work in a paper or lab report without citing it as another's work.

### Copying

Copying is defined as 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

Cribbing is defined as the use or attempted use of prohibited materials, information, or study aids in an academic exercise. Examples include using an unauthorized formal sheet during an exam.

### Fabrication

Fabrication is defined as the unauthorized falsification or invention of any information in an academic exercise. Examples include the use of "bought" or "ready-made" term papers, or falsifying lab records or reports.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as representing the work or words of another as one's own through the omission of acknowledgment or reference. Examples include 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



Sabotage is defined as the destruction of another student's work. Examples include destroying a model, lab experiment, computer program, or term paper developed by another student.

### **Substitution**

Substitution is defined as utilizing a proxy, or acting as a proxy, in any academic exercise. Examples include taking an exam for another student or having a homework assignment done by someone else.

## **FACULTY PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

"If there is a reason to believe a student in a course may have been involved in academic dishonesty, then contact the student(s) and schedule a meeting to discuss the allegations. This meeting should occur within ten (10) Institute business days of having discovered the possible dishonesty.

When meeting with the student, review the circumstances and evidence related to the suspicion of academic dishonesty and allow the student the opportunity to provide his or her perspective on the situation. Take notes during the meeting to document important information. After reviewing the situation, including speaking with others who might be involved or have knowledge of the situation, make a determination as to the nature and extent of the violation, if any, by the accused student. If it is concluded that a student has violated the Institute academic dishonesty policy, it is the faculty member's responsibility to determine the academic (grade) penalty (i.e., failure of the course, significant reduction of the final grade, etc.) and to communicate this decision to the student in writing. This communication should occur within five (5) Institute business days of having met with the student. Included in this written notification should be information regarding the student's option to appeal the grade decision and of the procedure/time limit in which to do so.

Faculty who choose to apply an academic sanction to a student found responsible for committing academic dishonesty must complete the *Academic Integrity Violation Case Summary and Report Form*. Documentation should be submitted with the report that includes exams/assignments involving cheating, crib sheets, witness statements, or other materials deemed relevant to the case. The incident of academic dishonesty will be kept on file in the Dean of Students Office as a record of the incident and a way to track repeat/multiple offenses by the same student(s).

In addition to the academic penalty, the faculty member can request that judicial action be taken against a student for violating Grounds for Disciplinary Action, specifically academic dishonesty. Such requests should be made in writing to the Senior Judicial Administrator or Dean of Students. The documentation will be reviewed, assigned to a hearing officer, and proceed in accordance with Institute protocol."

## **APPEAL PROCESS FOR ACADEMIC PENALTY FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Decisions regarding grades are initially the responsibility and jurisdiction of the course professor, and the school in which the academic dishonesty occurred, as there is no one in a better position to make this determination. Any appeal of a grade or academic penalty for academic dishonesty falls under the same authority. Therefore, a student can submit a written appeal of an academic penalty to the Department Chair within five (5) Institute business days of being notified of the faculty member's decision. If the course professor is the Department Chair or Dean of the school or there are other circumstances that could create the perception of bias, steps must be taken to use other appropriate individuals for the appeal process.

The Department Chair (or designee) will then make a determination based on the facts/circumstances of the case and the appropriateness of the original sanction. This determination should be made and communicated to the student and the professor within ten (10) Institute business days of receiving the appeal. Included in this written notification should be information regarding the student's option to appeal the grade decision and of the procedure/time limit in which to do so.

If the student or professor believes he or she has grounds for appealing the decision of the Department Chair (e.g., new evidence), both parties have the option to submit a written appeal to the Dean of the School within

five (5) business days of receiving the decision. The Dean will then render a decision based on the facts/circumstances of the case and the appropriateness of the sanction. This determination should be made and communicated to the student and the professor within ten (10) Institute business days of receiving the appeal.

The decision of the Dean of the School may be subject to final determination by the Provost (or designee), with good cause and at the written request of either party involved, within five (5) Institute business days of notification of the Dean of the School's decision. The Provost is unconstrained in the procedure he or she chooses to employ in the context of such a review. The Provost is the final level of appeal and his/her decision stands as final for both the student(s) and professor involved. The Provost will render a decision based on the circumstances of the case and the appropriateness of the sanction. This determination should be made and communicated to the student and the professor within ten (10) Institute business days of receiving the appeal.

Students found in violation of the academic integrity policy are prohibited from dropping a course in order to avoid the academic penalty.

### **PREVENTION OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

For those courses or academic exercises in which either the instructor or student considers proper definition of academic dishonesty to be open to interpretation, the instructor is expected to outline his or her particular standards. An example for which such definition seems particularly necessary would be collaboration on out-of-class assignments.

Course supervisors are expected to provide adequate and conscientious proctoring for exams. Faculty and proctors may ask a student for identification during an exam or exercise, and take reasonable precautions to lessen probability of academic dishonesty occurring, such as requiring that all personal belongings, texts, etc., be placed away from desks in the exam room.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT PREVENTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute complies with all federal, state, and local non-discrimination laws and is committed to providing a working, living, and learning environment free from discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, disability, military status, veteran status, genetic information, genetic predisposition, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis prohibited by law.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is also committed to providing equal opportunities for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, disability, military status, veteran status, genetic information, genetic predisposition, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis prohibited by law. Equal opportunity extends to all aspects of the academic and student life relationship.

### **Reporting Complaints of Discrimination, Harassment, or Retaliation**

Individuals may file a report of discrimination, harassment, or Sexual Misconduct (Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, or Stalking) with the Institute, including an anonymous report, by visiting <https://sexualviolence.rpi.edu>. Inquiries or Complaints may also be referred to Rensselaer's Title IX Coordinators, Title IX Liaisons, the Rensselaer Department of Public Safety, and/or to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights:

Office for Civil Rights, New York Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
32 Old Slip, 26th Floor  
New York, NY 10005-2500

Telephone: 646-428-3900  
FAX: 646-428-3843; TDD: 800-877-8339  
Email: [OCR.NewYork@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.NewYork@ed.gov)

Individuals may file a Complaint directly with local law enforcement agencies by dialing 911. Individuals who want to report a sexual assault on a New York college campus to the New York State Police may call the dedicated 24-hour hotline at (844) 845-7269. In an emergency, call 911 and ask for the New York State Police. For confidential support resources, individuals may call the New York State Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline at (800) 942-6906; in New York City, call (800) 621-HOPE (4673) or dial 311.

## **Title IX Coordinators**

Rensselaer's Title IX Coordinators are Larry Hardy, Director of Employee Relations and Professional Development; Jacqueline Turner, Deputy to the Vice President for Human Resources, Elizabeth Brown-Goyette, Human Resources Specialist. Their offices are located in the Gurley Building, 21 Union Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. They may be reached by telephone at (518) 276-6163; (518) 276-3980, or (518) 276-4093, and they can be reached by email at [HardyL2@rpi.edu](mailto:HardyL2@rpi.edu), [creecj@rpi.edu](mailto:creecj@rpi.edu), or [browne8@rpi.edu](mailto:browne8@rpi.edu).

Rensselaer's Title IX Coordinators are responsible for how Rensselaer manages discrimination and harassment-related complaints and for identifying and addressing any patterns or systemic problems involving discrimination and harassment, including Sexual Misconduct.

The Title IX Coordinators are available to meet with individuals who are involved with or concerned about issues or Institute processes, incidents, patterns or problems related to discrimination and harassment, and Sexual Misconduct on campus or in Institute programs. All allegations involving discrimination, harassment, or Sexual Misconduct should ultimately be directed to a Title IX Coordinator. Additional information about discrimination, harassment, and Sexual Misconduct can be found by visiting <https://sexualviolence.rpi.edu>.

## **ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS POLICY**

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute honors its role as an educational institution by establishing policies and guidelines that regulate the consumption of alcohol on campus and by developing proactive alcohol and other drug awareness, educational, and behavior-change programs.

Rensselaer is committed to educational goals in this area. The Institute's aim is to develop an alcohol and other drug policy that is clear and consistent; to inform and educate individuals with regard to the policy, and the risk factors associated with alcohol use and abuse; to create an environment that promotes low risk use, safety, and individual accountability; and to maintain a healthy campus community where problems associated with alcohol and other drugs are minimal.

The overall philosophy of the Institute is that each individual member of the campus community is responsible for his/her own actions. When making decisions to consume beverage alcohol or to provide beverage alcohol to others, individuals must be mindful of the inherent consequences and risks involved. In addition, individuals are responsible for understanding and complying with applicable laws. The Institute will not be responsible for enforcing State and Local laws, nor will it shield individuals from the legal consequences of their actions should they choose to violate these laws.

Rensselaer's policies and regulations are designed to encourage consistent and reasonable standards in our academic community. It is expected that all members will contribute to maintaining a positive and healthy environment by adhering to this policy. The Institute Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy contains sections on:

- I. The Law: New York State Statutes Regarding Alcohol Liability
- II. Institute regulations on alcohol (printed below)
- III. Procedures and guidelines for on-campus events at which beverage alcohol is served

- IV. Specific area policies for alcohol
- V. The Law: Statutes Regarding Other Drugs
- VI. Institute regulations on other drugs (printed below)
- VII. Policy Enforcement
- VIII. Violations/Sanctions
- IX. Institute alcohol and other drugs review committee

In accordance with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act (1989), the complete Rensselaer Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy is available at: <http://studenthealth.rpi.edu/healthpromotion#AlcoholandDrugPolicy>. Extra copies are available at the Student Health Center, or by contacting [readdk@rpi.edu](mailto:readdk@rpi.edu).

## **INSTITUTE REGULATIONS ON ALCOHOL**

(Section II, Rensselaer Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy)

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of alcohol is prohibited on Institute property or as part of any activity sanctioned or sponsored by the Institute. The administration at Rensselaer will not authorize events where drinking under the legal age, as determined by the State of New York and the State of Connecticut, will be knowingly permitted. Individuals and organizations who sponsor approved events involving beverage alcohol shall assume full responsibility and liability for the event and for the behavior of event participants and attendees.

In our continuing commitment to uphold the law and Institute policy, any Rensselaer recognized student organization found to have served alcohol to an underage individual at any event (on- or off-campus) will, at minimum, be subject to a mandatory two-semester suspension. In addition, all organization alcohol privileges are subject to revocation while a group is under investigation and for the duration of the disciplinary process.

- A. Consumption of beverage alcohol on campus is permitted only by persons age 21 or older:
  - in the privacy of their rooms in residential facilities;
  - at campus events where an alcohol permit has been obtained;
  - in areas licensed for beer and wine service.
- B. Possession or consumption of alcohol on campus by any person who is a student under age 21 is in violation of the New York State and State of Connecticut law and the Grounds for Disciplinary Action (GDA) and a violation of Human Resource Policy Guidelines if the person is an employee.
- C. Any person under age 21 who misrepresents his/her age in order to obtain alcohol has violated the GDA if that person is a student. If that person is an employee, Human Resource Policy Guidelines have been violated.
- D. Any person who supplies or makes alcohol available to someone under age 21 has violated New York State and the State of Connecticut statutes. If that person is a student, he/she has violated the GDA; if that person is an employee, Human Resource Policy Guidelines have been violated.
- E. In accordance with State law, no money may be charged for any event at which beverage alcohol is present unless a license or permit is obtained from the New York State Liquor Authority or the State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection Liquor Control Division.
- F. An alcohol permit must be obtained from the Alcohol Review Committee (c/o Student Health Services) for any event occurring on Institute grounds at which alcohol is served or present. Exceptions are:
  - licensed designated area of the Rensselaer Union;
  - buildings leased or rented to faculty, staff, or private non-student groups.

An event (on- or off-campus) is defined as any gathering for a specific purpose where there are more than **six (6)** people in attendance and alcohol is present.

- G. Campus events that are open to all students, or where 20% or more of the attendees will be under age 21, may not be granted an alcohol permit.
- H. The consumption of alcohol or possession of an open container of alcohol is prohibited in all public or common areas on campus including, but not limited to, corridors, stairwells, athletic facilities, elevators, lounges, classrooms, labs, or outside campus areas (i.e. Quad) unless an alcohol permit has been obtained for a designated area. At no time may alcohol be consumed in potentially hazardous environments.
- I. Events shall not include any activity which encourages the abusive use of alcohol.
- J. The serving or availability of alcohol at events being held in or about a predominately freshman residential facility is prohibited.
- K. The presence, possession, or use of large quantities of alcohol on campus including, but not limited to, kegs, beer balls, and any other bulk containers of alcohol, is prohibited on Institute grounds with the exception of areas holding a New York State or State of Connecticut license for beer and wine service.
- L. Beverages containing grain alcohol are prohibited.
- M. Alcohol will not be permitted at Rensselaer athletic events.
- N. Displays of any alcohol-related items or materials, including but not limited to alcoholic beverage containers (empty or full), banners, or signs, visible to the public, are not allowed in any residential facility.
- O. Off-campus events: It is expected that all Rensselaer faculty, administrators, and students will comply with governmental laws related to alcohol. Any Rensselaer group that plans an off-campus event involving alcohol must adhere to the Rensselaer Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy.
- P. Human Resource policies for staff are addressed in the Human Resources Policy Guidelines Manual.

## **INSTITUTE REGULATIONS ON OTHER DRUGS**

(Section VI, Rensselaer Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy)

The use, consumption, possession, sale, manufacture, or transfer of any illegal drug or controlled substance (as defined by State and Federal law) by any student or employee of the Institute for which the individual does not have a legal license or valid prescription, is strictly prohibited and, for students, a violation of Grounds for Disciplinary Action. A violation of Grounds for Disciplinary Action as related to illegal drugs will result in mandatory educational programming and/or training and disciplinary warning or disciplinary probation or disciplinary suspension or disciplinary expulsion. Furthermore, a student convicted of a drug offense is declared ineligible for federal student financial aid.

Rensselaer is an educational institution and not a law enforcement agency, and therefore does not apply sanctions of the law. However, Rensselaer will not disregard the law and will not shield individuals from the legal consequences of their actions should they violate the law. In addition, individuals who have violated the law are also subject to disciplinary action. Students will be disciplined according to the procedures in this document, faculty according to the Rensselaer Faculty Handbook, and staff according to the Human Resources Policy Guidelines.

## **INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FOR DRUG ADDICTION (Approved, July 30, 2010)**

When a prospective or currently enrolled student is discovered to have an addiction to illegal drugs, that person shall be placed on an involuntary withdrawal effective immediately by the Dean of Students with concurrence of

the Vice President for Student Life. An involuntary withdrawal is a permanent separation from the Institute and includes rescinding admission to or disenrollment from the Institute. This action shall be taken when, in the sole and exclusive judgment of the Institute, the continued presence of such a person compromises the safety and welfare of the Rensselaer community.

## Procedure

### ▪ IDENTIFICATION

Discovery of addiction to the use of illegal drugs may occur through external police, internal Public Safety, Student Life, or other information sources that make the condition known to the Administration of the Institute. Each allegation will be urgently investigated and corroborated through whatever channels are available. Rensselaer, in its sole and exclusive discretion, reserves the right to obtain medical advice and assistance to determine whether the subject of the inquiry is addicted to any substance. Definitions of what substances may be illegal will be determined using the laws of the United States or New York State, or State of Connecticut as references.

### ▪ Parent / Guardian Notification

Parents or guardians of the subject will be notified immediately of a person identified as being addicted to an illegal substance and subject to this policy. Once notified, parents or guardians are required to arrange for the immediate departure from Rensselaer of the withdrawn person.

Unless inconsistent with this policy, procedures contained in this handbook under Involuntary Leaves and Withdrawals will be used to implement this policy. Safety of the Rensselaer community will govern in any instances of inconsistency. Addiction to illegal drugs will not be accepted as a defense in any disciplinary proceeding for a violation of Rensselaer's Grounds for Disciplinary Action.

## GOOD SAMARITAN POLICY

Student health and safety are primary concerns of the Rensselaer community. It is imperative that someone call for medical assistance when an individual is a victim of and/or experiences alcohol intoxication, drug overdose, or serious injury after consuming alcohol or other drugs. In general, people may be reluctant to seek emergency or medical attention for fear of judicial consequences for themselves, the person in need of assistance, and/or the organization hosting the event where the situation occurs.

Since these situations are potentially life threatening, Rensselaer seeks to reduce barriers to seeking assistance. The Good Samaritan Policy is part of Rensselaer's approach to reducing harmful consequences caused by the consumption of alcohol and other drugs. The Good Samaritan Policy is the Institute's commitment to increase the likelihood that community members will call for assistance when faced with an alcohol or drug-related emergency.

An **individual** who receives emergency assistance and/or medical treatment due to alcohol or drug consumption and completes an alcohol and other drugs assessment, education activities, and/or treatment as assigned through the Rensselaer Health Center will not be subject to judicial action for violating Institute Alcohol & Other Drugs Policy.

A **person who calls** for emergency assistance and/or medical treatment due to alcohol or drug consumption on behalf of another person will not be subject to judicial action for violating Institute Alcohol & Other Drugs Policy, but may be required to attend an alcohol and other drugs education program if deemed necessary by the Rensselaer Health Center.

A **representative of an organization** hosting an event is expected to promptly call for emergency assistance and/or medical attention due to consumption of alcohol or other drugs. This act of responsibility will mitigate the judicial consequences against the organization resulting from violations of the Grounds for Disciplinary Action at the time of the incident for violating Institute Alcohol & Other Drug Policy. The organization's membership may

be required to attend an alcohol and other drugs education program if deemed necessary by the Rensselaer Health Center. However, failure to call for emergency assistance and/or medical treatment will be considered an “intolerable circumstance” affecting judicial sanctions against the organization if violations of Grounds for Disciplinary Action have occurred.

### **Alcohol and Drug Use Amnesty under the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy**

The health and safety of every student at Rensselaer is of utmost importance. Rensselaer recognizes that students who have been drinking and/or using drugs (whether such use is voluntary or involuntary) at the time that violence, including but not limited to domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault occurs may be hesitant to report such incidents due to fear of potential consequences for their own conduct. Rensselaer strongly encourages students to report domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault to institution officials. A bystander acting in good faith or a reporting individual acting in good faith that discloses any incident of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault to Rensselaer officials or law enforcement will not be subject to the Rensselaer code of conduct action for violations of alcohol and/or drug use policies occurring at or near the time of the commission of the domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault. However, the use of alcohol or other drugs will never function as a defense for any behavior that violates the Rensselaer Student Sexual Misconduct Policy.

### **NETWORK AND SYSTEM USE AT RENSSELAER – CYBER CITIZENSHIP POLICY**

The ethical principles that apply to everyday academic community life also apply to the use of information and networking resources. Every member of the Rensselaer community has basic rights and responsibilities. It is unethical for anyone to violate these rights or ignore these responsibilities.

Furthermore, everything that is technically possible is not necessarily ethical or legal. Anyone who uses Rensselaer's computer systems and networks is responsible for meeting the standards outlined in Rensselaer's policy.

To participate in community life, we expect for ourselves and extend to others the freedom to express ideas and a respect for privacy, for property, and for the environment in which we work. In community life, these expectations are reflected in the privileges and responsibilities afforded to each of its members.

The privilege of access to Rensselaer's information systems imposes certain responsibilities and obligations and is granted subject to Institute policies and local, state, and federal laws. (The phrase "Rensselaer's information systems" refers to Rensselaer's network and all of Rensselaer's information resources and services.)

Appropriate use should always be ethical, reflect academic honesty and community standards, show restraint in the consumption of shared resources, and be in compliance with Rensselaer's policies and state and federal law. It should demonstrate respect for intellectual property; ownership of data; system security mechanisms; and individuals' rights to privacy and to freedom from intimidation, discrimination, harassment, and unwarranted annoyance. Appropriate use of Rensselaer's information systems includes instruction; independent study; authorized research; independent research; communication; and official work of the offices, units, recognized student and campus organizations, and agencies of the Institute.

The complete text of Rensselaer's Cyber Citizenship Policy, outlining the privileges, responsibilities, and obligations of those who participate in Rensselaer's electronic community, is available at: <http://dotcio.rpi.edu/policy/comec>. Students may also request extra copies from the VCC Help Desk or the Dean of Students Office.

The Cyber Citizenship Policy is an Institutewide policy intended to allow for the proper use of all Rensselaer's information systems, effective protection of individual users, equitable access, and proper management of those resources. It should be taken in the broadest possible sense and applies to Rensselaer network usage even in situations where it would not apply to the devices in use (for example, student-owned

devices connected to the campus network). The policy is intended to supplement, not replace, all existing laws, regulations, agreements, contracts, and Rensselaer policies that currently apply to these services.

The policy contains sections on:

- Appropriate Use and Authorized Users
- Responsibilities and Privileges
- Prohibitions
- Relationship to Other Policies
- Reporting Violations
- Enforcement and Sanctions

As a condition of using information systems at Rensselaer, you must be familiar with this policy and observe it. Persons in violation of the policy are subject to the full range of sanctions, including, but not limited to, the loss of computer or network access privileges, disciplinary action, dismissal from the Institute, and legal action. Some violations may constitute criminal offenses and be subject to local, state, and/or federal prosecution.

## **TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

All students, faculty, staff, and others participating in Rensselaer programs are subject to the provisions, obligations, and responsibilities set forth in the Intellectual Property Policy of the Institute ([http://research.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/TheRensselaerIntellectualPropertyPolicy\\_0.pdf](http://research.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/TheRensselaerIntellectualPropertyPolicy_0.pdf)) as it may be amended from time to time. This policy is binding on all members of the Rensselaer community, whether or not an individual has signed a separate intellectual property agreement with Rensselaer or any third party.

This policy covers the ownership, distribution, and commercial development of intellectual property, whether or not such intellectual property is patentable, copyrightable, subject to trademark registration, or some other means of formal protection. Copies of this policy are available in all Deans' offices, as well as the offices of the Provost and Vice President for Research.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, Title IV of Public Law 90-247), as amended. This Act provides that students attending any post-secondary educational institution which receives federal funds are entitled to access to their education records kept by the institution in order to inspect and review those records. Students are entitled to petition the Institute for the amendment or correction of any information in their education records which they feel is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of their privacy or other rights. Guidelines are also provided for the conduct of informal and formal hearings at which a student may present evidence that the records are inaccurate or misleading and seek to have them amended or corrected. Rensselaer also intends to comply fully with provisions of the Act which limit the disclosure of certain information contained in students' education records to the following circumstances:

- a) with the student's prior written consent;
- b) as an item of directory information\* (as defined in the Institute's compliance policies) which the student has not refused to permit the Institute to disclose;
- c) under the provisions of the Act which allow a university to disclose information without the student's prior written consent (see the Institute's compliance policies).

**\* Directory Information:** The Institute intends to make certain "directory information" available for public use. This would be in connection with publicity of athletic events, honors, etc. The following constitutes directory information: the student's name, address, photographs, telephone number, email, date and place of birth, major field of study, academic load, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received, class year in school, and most recent previous educational agency or institution attended. A student who does not wish any of this information to be released for a given semester should notify the Registrar in writing by the end of the second



week of classes. Directory information is published in various forms during the year and Rensselaer can withhold information only in those cases where written requests are received in accordance with the above-mentioned guidelines. Students must fill out a request to prevent disclosure of directory information for each semester they wish to withhold such information.

Copies of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's complete Statement of Policy and Procedures in Compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may be obtained upon request from the [Office of the Registrar](#). Any student who believes, after seeking correction through the internal grievance procedures specified in Rensselaer's policy statement, that the Institute has failed to comply with the provisions of this Act, has the right to file a written complaint with the **Family Policy Compliance Office, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave SW, Washington, D.C. 20202**.

## **FIRE ALARMS AND PROCEDURES**

The Institute will conduct fire drills during the fall, spring, and summer terms. A fire alarm is an Institute order to vacate the building. Familiarize yourself with exits and evacuation procedures and follow the directions of staff and fire safety officers. Failure to do so and/or to evacuate is very serious and may result in judicial action.

Tampering with fire warning devices, fire protection systems, portable fire extinguishers and other fire safety equipment, creating a fire safety hazard, and/or activating a false alarm are serious offenses and will be dealt with as such. Additionally, any student who activates a false fire alarm is subject to a \$200 fine, legal prosecution, and disciplinary action (including expulsion) in any of the following circumstances:

- Knowingly reporting a false alarm
- Malicious intent to set off the alarm
- Avoidable accident
- Second occurrence of carelessness

When a fire alarm sounds in any Institute building, including Rensselaer-owned Greek Life structures, it must be assumed to be legitimate. Therefore, the following procedure will be observed:

Evacuate the building immediately and move away from the structure while awaiting the arrival of Public Safety and the Fire Department. No one is to re-enter a building or shut off the alarm system except Fire Department or Public Safety personnel.

## **SECURITY TECHNOLOGY, ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM, AND EMERGENCY PHONES**

The Institute has installed security technology, access control system, emergency exit alarms, and emergency phones to facilitate the safety and security of the campus. Tampering with security camera, access control devices, emergency exit alarms, and emergency phones creates a safety and security risk; these are serious offenses and will be treated as such.

## **HAZING**

No individual or group may haze another at any time including initiation into or affiliation with any organization or ongoing association or membership on- or off-campus. Under the law of New York State and the State of Connecticut, all organization constitutions and bylaws are automatically amended to prohibit hazing activities as defined by the Penal Law of the State of New York and the State of Connecticut.

Hazing is defined by Rensselaer as any conduct that subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of association with a group or organization, regardless of the person's consent or lack of consent.

Such activities and situations include, but are not limited to, paddling in any form; forced consumption of alcohol or other drugs; creation of excessive fatigue; required calisthenics; "kidnapping;" physical and psychological

shock; publicly wearing apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste; engaging in public stunts and buffoonery; morally degrading or humiliating games and activities; late-night activities; work sessions which interfere with scholastic activities; activities which are not normally performed by the active membership; and any other activities which are not consistent with organization law, ritual, or policy, or the regulations and policies of the Institute.

Member recruitment, orientation, education, and development programs must be constructive and strive to make individuals a part of the larger group by mutually understanding objectives and participating in programs.

## **EXOTIC DANCERS**

Rensselaer-recognized/affiliated student organizations are prohibited from having exotic dancers, strippers, or similar forms of activity as part of organization sanctioned or sponsored events or those open to the public and/or nonmembers including, but not limited to, rush or recruitment activities.

## **FOG EVENTS**

The use of fog-generating equipment is prohibited without prior Institute approval. These fog-generating devices are frequently used at parties, performing arts events, and concerts to create atmosphere (generally in combination with lighting effects), but often have the effect of activating the smoke detectors of building fire alarm systems.

## **CAMPUS CARD (ID)**

The campus card must be carried at all times and must be presented when requested by an Institute official, residence life staff member, a Rensselaer Union official, or campus Public Safety officer.

The campus card is issued to active students at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and is identification for the Institute. The card is the property of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, issued by the Campus Card Office to the cardholder only. Use of the campus card can be revoked at the Institute's sole discretion for any violation of policies and procedures of its use. Access privileges of the card are deactivated when the student's active status ends.

Campus cards are used for access to many buildings, your residence hall, meal plan, Rensselaer Advantage Dollars for campus food establishments, campus vending machines, campus laundry facilities, athletic events, and the Commons Mail Room.

## **INVOLUNTARY LEAVES AND WITHDRAWALS**

The Medical Director, the Director of the Counseling Center, and/or the Dean of Students may determine that a leave of absence or withdrawal may be granted based on medical, psychological, or safety factors if it would be in the best interests of the student or the Institute. This action may be taken if, in the opinion of either Director or Dean, a student exhibits behavior which creates, continues, or presents a risk of harm to the physical or mental health of the student concerned or others. The Dean of Students Office will, in its discretion, make exceptions to Institute regulations otherwise applicable to the student to the extent necessary to effectuate this leave of absence. This mandatory leave or withdrawal will be processed through the Dean of Students Office and is subject only to a written appeal to the Vice President for Student Life, if the student so chooses, within five (5) Institute business days after written notification. Action under this section shall not constitute disciplinary action against a student and shall not trigger any hearing or appeal rights under the Rensselaer Student Judicial System.

The Medical Director and/or the Director of the Counseling Center and/or the Dean of Students must consent to the readmission of any student who is granted or placed on a medical or psychological leave or withdrawal, in addition to the student complying with any other conditions for readmission that may have been imposed.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE AFTER SIGNIFICANT PHYSICAL OR EMOTIONAL TRAUMA OR ILLNESS**

The Vice President for Student Life may impose a leave of absence upon a student who has sustained an event which, in his/her judgment, has created, or may create in the future, impairment in the ability of the student to continue his/her education at Rensselaer at that time.

In arriving at this judgment, the Vice President for Student Life may request opinions from the Medical Director, the student's academic adviser, the student, his or her family, and other relevant parties.

Policies regarding this involuntary leave shall be the same as set forth for other involuntary leaves or withdrawals initiated by the Medical Director, the Director of the Counseling Center, or the Dean of Students, except that the Vice President for Student Life must also consent to the readmission of the student given a leave under this section.

## **PARKING RULES AND REGULATIONS**

All motor vehicles (including motorcycles and mopeds) must be registered. Parking at Rensselaer is limited and student vehicles are restricted by permit to specific areas on campus.

Parking permits and copies of the driving and parking regulations are available from the Parking Office or at: [www.rpi.edu/dept/parking](http://www.rpi.edu/dept/parking).

Parking regulations can be modified by the Parking and Transportation Office to meet changing needs. Student ticket appeals are decided by the Student Motor-Vehicle Court.

Freshmen living in a residence hall are prohibited from bringing a motor vehicle to the Rensselaer campus. Vehicles parked on or contingent to the campus must comply with campus and municipal parking regulations or may be ticketed and towed at the owner's expense.

## **RULES FOR MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ORDER**

New York State Education Law, Sections 6430-6435, requires all colleges and universities to adopt regulations for the "maintenance of public order on college campuses and other college property used for educational purposes and produce a program for the enforcement thereof." The law requires each college to file such rules and regulations with the New York State Education Department.

### **New York State Education Law Sections 6430-6435**

The trustees or other governing board of every college chartered by the regents or incorporated by act of the legislature shall adopt rules and regulations for the maintenance of public order on college campuses and other college property used for educational purposes and produce a program for the enforcement thereof. Such rules and regulations shall prohibit, among other things, any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers mental or physical health or involves the forced consumption of liquor or drugs for the purpose of initiation into or affiliation with any organization. Such rules and regulations shall govern the conduct of students, as well as visitors and other licensees and invitees on such campuses and property. The penalties for violations of such rules and regulations shall be clearly set forth therein and shall include provisions for the ejection of a violator from such campus and property, and in the case of a student violator his/her suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate disciplinary action and in the case of a student organization which authorizes such conduct, rescission of permission for that organization to operate on campus property. Such penalties shall be in addition to any penalty pursuant to the penal law or any other chapter to which a violator or organization may be subject. A copy of such rules and regulations shall be given to all students enrolled in said college and shall be deemed

to be part of the bylaws of all organizations operating on said campus which shall review annually such bylaws with individuals affiliated with such organizations.

Academic freedom is essential to a university community. Freedom of speech and freedom of assembly are essential to academic freedom. Every member of the academic community should be free to pursue full involvement in the educational process of the university without interference from others. All members of the university community should be able to express their views by words and actions and to express by words and actions their opposition to the views and opinions of others. In order to preserve these rights all members of the university community have a responsibility to conduct themselves so that such rights may be exercised without interfering with the rights of others and without fear of violence or injury or interference.

The following rules and regulations are adopted to maintain public order on the university campus and other university property.

1. Any act which would constitute a violation of federal, New York, or local law if committed off campus is prohibited on campus or on other university property.
2. No unauthorized person or persons shall interfere with reasonable and free access to, exit from, and normal use of any university building, classroom, or other university premises.
3. No unauthorized person or persons shall interfere with the freedom of movement or speech of any individual or group.
4. When a speaker is the object of protest or controversy, no unauthorized person or persons shall take any sign or other demonstration impediments into the building where the speech is to take place.
5. Every person who attends any lecture, speech, discussion, or public event shall treat all participants in an orderly and reasonably courteous manner.
6. No unauthorized person or persons shall disrupt or interfere with classes, educational activities, or any events sponsored by any university officer or official, faculty group, or student group.
7. No unauthorized person or persons shall utilize or threaten physical force, physical harassment, or physical obstruction.
8. No person or persons shall use language or actions likely to provoke or encourage physical violence.
9. No person or persons shall use, in public, language or gestures which are unreasonably abusive or obscene.
10. No person or persons shall, without proper authority, occupy any university buildings or premises.
11. No person or persons shall examine, disturb, or destroy university records without permission of the person authorized to deal with such records.
12. No person or persons shall cause injury or damage to person or property.
13. Any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers mental or physical health or involves the forced consumption of liquor or drugs for the purpose of initiation into or affiliation with any organization is prohibited.
14. The possession of dangerous weapons, chemicals, explosive devices, or materials including, but not limited to, firearms, air guns, prohibited knives (such as switch knives, swords, daggers, gravity knives, throwing stars, and knives with blades more than three inches long), ammunition, slingshots, metallic knuckles, bows and arrows, fireworks, and bombs is prohibited.
15. In addition to complying with the requirements of the foregoing specific regulations, which are not exhaustive, members of the academic community shall conduct themselves in a manner which does not unreasonably disrupt the academic community or unreasonably infringe upon the rights of others.

## **Procedures**

When requested by the Dean of Students or designee, persons engaged in any demonstration, meeting, or other occasion on campus or on Institute property used for educational purposes, or on other Institute property shall identify themselves in a manner satisfactory to the Dean or designee. Only persons who are current students, faculty, and staff will be permitted to engage in such activities on Rensselaer property, and may only do so by complying with these procedures.

Only peaceful demonstrations are appropriate in an academic community and the Trustees are confident that no member or group of the Institute community will go beyond the bounds set by these regulations. In order to maintain the safety and to safeguard the interests of all members of the Institute community, any group or individual planning a demonstration must submit an Application For Approval of Peaceful Demonstration to the Dean of Students Office at least seven (7) days prior to the proposed demonstration date and include its proposed location and the object of the intended protest, or other purpose. If a situation emerges for which a seven-day notice is neither appropriate nor practical, the Dean of Students shall exercise reasonable discretion by reviewing the application to reasonably assure student safety and to safeguard the interests of all members of the Rensselaer community.

At any demonstration, meeting, or other occasion, judgment as to whether the regulations are being observed shall be made at the scene by the Dean of Students or designee. The Dean of Students or designee may, before making a judgment, consult with appropriate individuals at the scene who are not involved in the demonstration, meeting, or other occasion.

Responsibility for exercising such judgment shall rest solely with the Dean of Students or designee. It must be emphasized that judgment as to whether the regulations are being observed shall not be exercised by demonstrators, those demonstrated against, or spectators in contradiction to the expressed judgment of the Dean of Students or designee, except at the risk of such individuals.

If the Dean of Students or designee at the scene of any demonstration, meeting, or other gathering determines that one or more of the regulations are being breached, he or she will request the participants to modify their conduct so as to comply with the regulations, indicating briefly and informally the nature of the breach of regulations and the requested corrective action. All participants and spectators shall comply immediately, fully and cooperatively with the requests of the Dean of Students or designee.

Should any participant or spectator decline to comply with the requests of the Dean of Students or designee, they shall be subject to ejection from the campus and, in the case of students, faculty, and other staff, subject to disciplinary action by the university including suspension, expulsion, or other disciplinary action. Thereafter if, in the judgment of the President or any one of the President's designees, there appears to be a clear and present danger of injury to person or property, or disruption of university operations is threatened, the President or designee shall seek the aid of Public Safety, the courts, or other civil authority in maintaining or restoring order including, when appropriate, ejection of the violators from the campus or other Institute property.

### **Hearings and Disciplinary Action**

In the event that any student, group of students, or student organization becomes subject to disciplinary action as provided for in these rules and regulations, steps shall be taken to determine whether:

- The regulations have been breached; or
  - The person(s) so violating willfully disobeyed any reasonable request of the Dean of Students or designee.
- a. In the case of a student, group of students, or organization comprised primarily of students, all alleged violations of the rules will be adjudicated within Rensselaer's Judicial System in accordance with its procedures which are published by the Institute.
  - b. No person who was involved in any incident which is the subject of a disciplinary hearing shall sit in judgment.
  - c. Nothing in these rules shall prevent an informal discussion and settlement of an incident through normal administrative procedures if the alleged violator shall request such informal settlement in writing. Settlement of such informal discussion shall provide for expulsion, suspension, rescission of permission for an organization to operate on public property, or other appropriate disciplinary action. Informal settlement shall not bar the right of appeal.
  - d. Violations alleged against members of the faculty shall be adjudicated in accordance with the Faculty Handbook.

- e. Violations alleged against staff members shall be adjudicated in accordance with the Human Resources Policy Guidelines.

Members of the Institute community are as citizens subject to penalties. In addition, they are subject to rules pertinent to the Institute community. Therefore, any student may be subject to disciplinary action, as provided herein, in addition to such penalties as may be imposed by civil authorities. In the event that visitors, licensees or invitees, or other persons who are not members of the academic community shall decline to comply with the request of the Dean of Students or designee or to comply with these rules, such persons shall be advised that they are no longer welcome on campus or on other Institute property and shall be requested to leave. If such persons fail to comply with such request, the President or the President's designees may resort to the courts or other civil authority to enforce the request.

These rules and regulations may be amended by the Board of Trustees.

## **NOTICE PURSUANT TO THE "CAMPUS SEX CRIMES PREVENTION ACT" AND CAMPUS CRIME REPORTING AND STATISTICS**

In accordance with Federal and State law, the following notice is provided: The Institute's Annual Security Report contains all campus crime statistics reported to the Department of Education. The Annual Security Report is published by the Department of Public Safety, which is the designated college campus office authorized to provide such the campus crime statistics for the Institute. The Annual Security Report is located at: [http://www.rpi.edu/dept/public\\_safety/stats/](http://www.rpi.edu/dept/public_safety/stats/). The U.S. Department of Education website address for campus crime statistics is: <https://ope.ed.gov/campussafety/#/>.

The Campus Climate Assessment is published by the Office of Human Resources, which is the designated college campus office authorized to provide such information for the Institute. The Campus Climate Assessment is located at: <https://sexualviolence.rpi.edu/>.

In addition, information about sex offenders, if any, living or working at Rensselaer, will be available at the Department of Public Safety. For more information about, and access to, New York's "Sex Offender Registry," go to: <http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/nsor/>. For more information, and access to Connecticut's "Sex Offender Registry," go to: [http://www.communitynotification.com/cap\\_office\\_disclaimer.php?office=54567](http://www.communitynotification.com/cap_office_disclaimer.php?office=54567).

## **STUDENT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY**

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy learning, living, and working environment in which no member of the Rensselaer community is, on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in any Institute program or activity. Gender-based and sexual-based harassment, including Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Harassment, and Stalking, are forms of illegal discrimination in that they deny or limit an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the Institute's programs or activities.

Rensselaer is also committed to fostering a community that promotes prompt reporting of all types of Sexual Misconduct and timely and fair resolution of complaints of Sexual Misconduct.

In support of these commitments and of the overall goals of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rensselaer has established Student Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures ("Sexual Misconduct Policy"), which sets forth the available resources, describes prohibited conduct, and establishes procedures for responding to complaints of Sexual Misconduct. The Sexual Misconduct Policy can be accessed in full at: <https://sexualviolence.rpi.edu>.

The expectations of the Rensselaer community regarding sexual conduct can be summarized as follows: In order for individuals to engage in sexual activity of any type with another person or persons, there must be clear,

knowing, and voluntary consent prior to and during sexual activity. Consent is sexual permission. Individuals who engage in Sexual Misconduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or termination. Employees, including faculty, contingent faculty, research professionals, staff, and members of the President's Cabinet, are prohibited from having sexual or romantic relationships with students.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute also strictly prohibits retaliation against any person for reporting an allegation of sexual harassment or Sexual Misconduct, or for filing, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in any investigation or proceeding involving allegations of discrimination, harassment, or an unethical action. Any person who violates this non-retaliation policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Rensselaer's Sexual Misconduct Policy applies to any allegation of Sexual Misconduct involving a Rensselaer student regardless of where the alleged Sexual Misconduct occurred. If you are a student of the Institute and a Complaint has been filed against you, or a student filing a Complaint against another student, the investigation and adjudication process set forth in the Policy will apply.

### **Student Sexual Misconduct Bill of Rights.**

As stated in the Sexual Misconduct Policy, all students have the right to:

- Make a report to local law enforcement and/or state police;
- Have disclosures of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault treated seriously;
- Make a decision about whether or not to disclose a crime or violation and participate in the judicial or conduct process and/or criminal justice process free from pressure by the institution;
- Participate in a process that is fair, impartial, and provides adequate notice and a meaningful opportunity to be heard;
- Be treated with dignity and to receive from the institution courteous, fair, and respectful health care and counseling services, where available;
- Be free from any suggestion that the reporting individual is at fault when these crimes and violations are committed, or should have acted in a different manner to avoid such crimes or violations;
- Describe the incident to as few institution representatives as practicable and not be required to unnecessarily repeat a description of the incident;
- Be protected from retaliation by the institution, any student, the accused and/or the respondent, and/or their friends, family, and acquaintances within the jurisdiction of the institution;
- Access to at least one level of appeal of a determination;
- Be accompanied by an adviser of choice who may assist and advise a reporting individual, accused, or respondent throughout the judicial or conduct process including during all meetings and hearings related to such process; and
- Exercise civil rights and practice of religion without interference by the investigative, criminal justice, or judicial or conduct process of the institution.

### **Responsibility for Handling of Sexual Misconduct Reports and Other Title IX Matters**

The Title IX Coordinators (Larry Hardy, (518) 276-3065, [HardyL2@rpi.edu](mailto:HardyL2@rpi.edu); Jacqueline Turner, (518) 276-3980, [creecj@rpi.edu](mailto:creecj@rpi.edu)); and Elizabeth Brown-Goyette, [BrownE8@rpi.edu](mailto:BrownE8@rpi.edu), (518) 276-4093) are responsible for the Institute's compliance with Title IX including the review, investigation, and resolution of reports of discrimination, and sexual harassment, including Sexual Misconduct. The Title IX Coordinators are assisted and supported by several Title IX Liaisons who are accessible to members of the Institute community for consultation and guidance.

Individuals may file a report of discrimination, harassment, or Sexual Misconduct (Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, or Stalking) with the Institute, including an anonymous report, by visiting <https://sexualviolence.rpi.edu>. Inquiries or Complaints may also be referred to Rensselaer's Title IX Coordinators, Title IX Liaisons, the Rensselaer Department of Public Safety, and/or to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights:

Office for Civil Rights, New York Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
32 Old Slip, 26th Floor  
New York, NY 10005-2500  
Telephone: 646-428-3900  
FAX: 646-428-3843; TDD: 800-877-8339  
Email: [OCR.NewYork@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.NewYork@ed.gov)

Individuals may file a Complaint directly with local law enforcement agencies by dialing 911. Individuals who want to report a sexual assault on a New York college campus to the New York State Police may call the dedicated 24-hour hotline at (844) 845-7269. In an emergency, call 911 and ask for the New York State Police. For confidential support resources, individuals may call the New York State Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline at (800) 942-6906; in New York City, call (800) 621-HOPE (4673) or dial 311.

## **SIGN POLICY**

All members of the Rensselaer community are expected to abide by the campus sign policy that is detailed below. This policy was developed to regulate the style, content, and posting of signs and posters as a means of reducing the litter and visual clutter on campus. It is important that this policy be reviewed before signs are posted.

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

- A. The term "sign," as used herein, refers to any written or graphical material on paper, cardboard, cloth, or any other materials placed on campus for public display for the purpose of advertising or information dissemination.

### **II. STYLE AND CONTENT**

- A. The Institute reserves the right to remove signs deemed to be graphically inappropriate, profane, libelous, in unsightly condition, or outdated information.
- B. The name and email address of the group or person posting the sign must be on each sign.
- C. Every sign must have a clearly visible and legible takedown date on the bottom right corner. For signs advertising events, this must be the day after the event. For all other signs, this must be at most 15 days from the date they are posted.
- D. Signs may be carried as long as they do not disrupt classes, traffic, or other educational and administrative functions of the Institute or members of the community.
- E. All signs advertising events must include the date of the event.
- F. No business external to the RPI community may post anywhere on the RPI campus without the express permission of the Career Development Center, a Rensselaer Union club or organization, the Dean of Students Office, or an Academic Department of the Institute.

### **III. POSTING SIGNS**

- A. Locations for posting signs:
  - 1. Outdoor signs must not be posted on telephone or power poles, trees, fences, doors, windows, benches, or the ground.
  - 2. Outdoor signs must also not be posted on Institute buildings with the exceptions of the Low Center for Industrial Innovation (CII), Darrin Communications Center (DCC), and the Jonsson Engineering Center (JEC).
  - 3. Signs must not be posted on the internal walls, floors, carpets, or doors of any building except as permitted by those having jurisdiction over that building.
  - 4. Signs may not be posted on the footbridge, except when placing them in a designated sign holder. Signs posted by an individual or group may occupy no more than six sign holders at one time and must visibly display contact information and take-down date. Banners may be hung with string on



the footbridge, and if requiring the use of a ladder to hang, must be approved by the Director of Student Activities in the Rensselaer Union or the Dean of Students Office.

5. Banners hung overhead in the CII walkway must be approved by the Director of Student Activities in the Rensselaer Union.
- B. Signs advertising events must be removed by the person or group posting the sign within three days following the event. All other signs must be removed within two weeks of posting. Properly posted signs may not be removed, unless as authorized by the person or group posting the sign, before this date. All signs may be removed on or after the takedown date.
- C. Signs must not be posted in such a way as to cover or obscure signs already on display.
- D. No sign may be posted in excess, as defined by the Director of Student Activities in the Rensselaer Union, at any postering location.
- E. Any material that may be damaging to the postering surface may not be used to post signs. Signs may be mounted on bulletin boards only with thumbtacks and staples. Nails, screws, chalk, adhesive-backed signs (bumper sticker type), and direct application of paint to any surface are prohibited.
- F. Duct tape may not be used to post signs.
- G. Signs placed or carried in a building must comply with rules established by those having jurisdiction over that building.
- H. No sign shall be posted in such a way that its removal shall be excessively difficult or dangerous.

#### **IV. OUTDOOR BULLETIN BOARDS**

- A. Only signs containing information pertinent to Institute activities or interests may be posted in campus bulletin spaces. No business external to the RPI community may poster on bulletin boards, unless sponsored by an organization listed in II.F.
- B. No more than one of any particular sign may be posted on any side of a bulletin board.
- C. Signs posted on bulletin boards may not have an area greater than 4 square feet.
- D. A group or individual may remove any sign on or after the takedown date to place a new sign on a bulletin board. All removed signs must be disposed of properly.

#### **V. ENFORCEMENT OF RULES**

- A. Potential outcome of sign policy violations include:
  1. Immediate removal of signs.
  2. Referral to the Dean of Students.
  3. Removal of privileges to poster in the Rensselaer Union.
  4. Monetary fines levied by the Executive Board on funded clubs.
  5. Removal of privileges to poster on campus.
- B. These rules will be superseded for student political signs during campaigning for student elections by the election rules passed by the Student Senate.
- C. In extraordinary cases, these rules may be waived by the Director of Student Activities, the Grand Marshal, the Dean of Students, the President, or one of the Vice Presidents of the Institute. Disagreements concerning waiving and interpretation of rules shall be resolved through discussion by these parties.
- D. Revisions to this policy must be approved by the Student Senate and the Dean of Students Office.

#### **TOBACCO USE POLICY**

In keeping with Rensselaer's desire to protect the health of its faculty, staff, students, visitors, other campus constituencies, and the public in general, it is Rensselaer's policy to provide a tobacco-free environment in all Institute facilities and outdoor areas in full conformance with applicable statutes including the New York State Clean Indoor Air Act (Public Health Law Article 13-E) and Section 31-40(s) of the Connecticut General Statutes. It is also the policy of Rensselaer to prohibit the sale of tobacco products on campus. Tobacco use is defined as the act of using any tobacco product in any Institute facility or outdoor area, including chewing tobacco, smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes (that involve the use of tobacco and tobacco products), and the act of smoking or carrying a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other smoking material or device.

## STEAM TUNNELS, DESIGNATED CONFINED SPACES, AND ROOFS

Rensselaer's campus has tunnels and designated confined spaces for access to steam pipes and utility chases at various locations. Confined spaces are marked with signs indicating that the space has been designated as a confined space, and entry is allowed by permit only. Because of the danger inherent in these locations, steam tunnels and designated confined spaces may be entered only by authorized personnel. Access to any roof of any Institute Building is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the Division of Administration and Environmental Health and Safety. Students found to have entered a steam tunnel, any designated confined space, or unauthorized access to a roof on an Institute Building are subject to disciplinary action.

## USE OF INSTITUTE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

Individual students or groups of students who wish to reserve buildings, classrooms, or outdoor facilities at Rensselaer should consult with the Facilities Coordinator or the Scheduler (Registrar's Office) who is responsible for referring such requests to the appropriate departments. Students should also be familiar with the "Rensselaer Guide for Events, Rooms, and Services (RoGERS) and the rooms and spaces that may be requested through the RoGERS webpage <http://mms.rpi.edu/RoGERS>. Sponsoring groups or individuals are responsible for reasonable control and care of participants, spectators, and property during events under their sponsorship.

## RENSSELAER UNION POLICIES

The Rensselaer Union has established policies and guidelines concerning the use of the Union and its facilities. The following is a partial list of the policies that are likely to affect a user of the building.

### I. UNION AFFILIATION

#### A. Individuals

Rensselaer students, faculty, staff, alumni, and their spouses and dependents shall be considered members of the Rensselaer community. As such, they, and their invited guests, shall be allowed the use of the Union building and facilities. Only activity fee-paying students may participate in student elections and hold office in clubs.

#### B. Clubs and Organizations

Clubs and organizations are divided into five categories. These categories are ranked in order of priority for use of the Union building and facilities. They are, in order, Funded, Recognized, Affiliated, Forming, and Not Recognized. In the case of the first four categories, they must meet the criteria for club approval.

- **Funded** denotes those clubs and activities that have been approved by the Executive Board and are financially responsible to the Rensselaer Union.
- **Recognized** denotes those clubs and activities approved by the Executive Board that are not fiscally responsible to the Rensselaer Union.
- **Affiliated**, in general, denotes those activities that are not recognized by the Executive Board, but are recognized by some branch of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (e.g., the Dean of Students Office, academic departments, etc.).
- **Forming** are those clubs that have started the process of becoming a Union recognized club.
- **Not Recognized** includes all activities that have not applied for classification, or do not meet the requirements for any other classification.

### II. USE OF THE BUILDING

#### A. Public Restrictions

1. Only members of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute community and their invited guests are permitted to use the services of the Rensselaer Union.
2. Consistent with the laws of the State of New York, no dogs or other pets are allowed in the building (except guide dogs).

## **B. Scheduling**

1. Meeting Rooms  
Persons or groups wishing to reserve a meeting room should contact the Reservation Services Coordinator in the Rensselaer Union Administration Office. Organizations that the Union funds or recognizes shall have the highest priority.
2. McNeil Room  
The Union has implemented a year-round McNeil Room scheduling policy. Persons or groups wishing to reserve the McNeil Room should contact the Reservation Services Coordinator in the Rensselaer Union Administration Office as far in advance of the event as possible.

## **C. Restrictions**

1. Tobacco Use Policy  
Smoking and the use of tobacco products are prohibited in all Institute facilities and outdoor areas.
2. Alcohol Policy  
Alcohol is prohibited in the Rensselaer Union with the exemption of the Clubhouse Pub and other spaces in the Union that receive Alcohol Review Committee permits and other permits as needed.

## **D. Advertising**

1. Sign Board Policy  
This is for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute events. Sign boards and banners are allowed to be displayed on the south balcony by reservation. Other spaces inside and outside the Union building require special permission.  
  
For the complete sign board policy and to reserve space, contact the Reservation Services Coordinator in the Rensselaer Union Administration Office.
2. Poster Policy  
There are several poster boards in the Union designated for general posting. Some areas are restricted to posters for certain activities and groups. All posters must be approved and stamped in the Rensselaer Union Administration Office; a maximum of five may be placed in the Union. During school elections, additional restrictions may also apply. A list of election rules is available from the Student Senate Rules and Elections Committee or in the Rensselaer Union Administration Office.
3. Flyers Policy  
Distribution of flyers and table tents is for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute events and must be coordinated with the Rensselaer Union Administration Office.

## **E. Political and Religious Activity**

Detailed information about student government policy related to political and religious activity in the Union, or activity conducted by the Union or one of its funded organizations, is available on the Rensselaer Union website: <http://www.union.rpi.edu>.

## RENSELAER UNION CONSTITUTION

In order to provide students with the most recent version of the Rensselaer Union Constitution, the complete document has been placed on the web at: <http://sg.rpi.edu/eboard/rensselaer-union-constitution/>

All students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the official Constitution. As always, a hard copy of this document is available in the Union Administration or the Dean of Students Office.

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Rensselaer admits qualified students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, disability, military status, veteran status, genetic information, genetic predisposition, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis prohibited by law.