MCS@Rice & MDS@Rice Student Handbook

DIGITAL DIRECTORY AND INFORMATIONAL GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

https://engineering.rice.edu/about

HISTORY

As we look at the complex challenges facing the world, engineering is key to improving our quality of life, security and sustainability. Since the founding of the Rice Institute in 1912, engineering has been a central part of the school's focus. Guided by Edgar Odell Lovett's idea of "No Upper Limit," the George R. Brown School of Engineering at Rice University has earned a place among the top schools in the country by partnering with the sciences, humanities, social sciences, architecture and business to ensure that our solutions are developed within the context of an increasingly complex world.

Today the school is comprised of nine academic departments, with research that's enriched by 17 engineering-related institutes and centers. About 37 percent of Rice undergraduates are engineering majors and approximately 34 percent of graduate students are in the School of Engineering.

MISSION

Empower the next generation of leaders with strong technical and data science skills, creative problem solving and the ability to integrate across disciplines to address humankind's most pressing problems.

VISION

By leveraging our unique strengths and culture, the George R. Brown School of Engineering at Rice University will be recognized as a leader in transformational research, unparalleled education, and service to humanity.

CORE VALUES

Rigor	Excellence
Integrity	Curiosity
Leadership	Service
Collaboration	Passion

MCS@RICE PROGRAM

Our program is designed to give working professionals the practical skills needed for career advancement in the tech world. With the flexibility of online learning, students can develop a deep understanding of topics like machine learning and AI, cybersecurity and software engineering.

MDS@RICE PROGRAM

Our program is designed to support the needs of working professionals who want to apply data science knowledge, theory and techniques to solve difficult, real-world problems, beginning with raw and dirty data and ending with actionable insights.

http://www.students.rice.edu/students/Conduct.asp

Students are bound to, and must abide by, the Rice University Student Code of Conduct. As an academic community, it is necessary for Rice University to articulate and enforce standards of behavior. Such standards are not intended merely to prohibit misbehavior and to punish violations of regulations, but to educate about behavior and charactertraits that the community wishes to promote or discourage; to protect members of the community from harm or unwarranted interference; to hold individuals and groups responsible for their actions and the consequences of their behavior; and to cultivate an environment conducive to our community's primary purpose — education.

"Rice expects its students to behave – at all times – reasonably, respectfully, and responsibly."

HONOR CODE - OVERVIEW

As a student, you are expected to uphold the Honor Code on all your studies and assignments throughout your time at Rice University. You are ultimately responsible for understanding and abiding by the Honor Code policy **as it applies to each course** you take. Some professors require every submission to include the Rice University Honor Pledge in the header of the assignment. http://honor.rice.edu

"On my Honor, I have neither given nor received, any unauthorized aid on this [exam/paper/etc.]"

1. Do not violate the Honor Code

- Interpretation varies across professors; therefore, it is the **student's responsibility to clarify** any ambiguities with the professor.
- **Ignorance is not a defense** for an Honor Code violation.
- Assignments that are termed "non-pledged" are still covered under the Honor Code but may have more open rules than "pledged" assignments.
- Failure to **cite the source(s)** of ideas or quotations is plagiarism.

2. Do not aid in a violation

- **Do not give answers** on exams or other pledged assignments to other students who have not completed these assignments.
- **Do not discuss pledged assignments** before the due date.
- Make sure you leave your exams and other assignments in secure locations.
- **Aiding another person's violation is a violation** of the Honor Code. Allowing someone to copy your work may be treated similarly to copying someone else's work.

3. The Honor Code applies to all student communications, regardless of method or modality

- Any violation of the Honor Code, whether the result of in-person, telephone, virtual (i.e. video conferencing) or online interactions (texting, messaging or team apps such as Slack or WhatsApp, discussion boards, etc.), is still a violation.

4. Report any suspected violations to the Honor Council

Not only have you agreed to follow the Code by coming to Rice, but also **enforce it.**

- **Report all suspected violations directly to the Honor Council.**
- Submit any evidence that you have collected to support your accusation to the Honor Council.
- **Do not report violations to the professor** of the course.
- The accuser's identity is not revealed unless the matter proceeds past investigation to a hearing. The accuser's identity is revealed at the hearing.
- The identity of the accused student(s) will never be revealed to the student body, regardless of the case's verdict.
- If you think you have personally violated the Code, report yourself. This does happen, and it is looked on very favorably by the Council and usually results in a highly reduced penalty.

For more information regarding the Honor Code, please reference: http://honor.rice.edu.

The Honor Code is a special privilege and responsibility at Rice University. You pledged to uphold the Rice Honor Code when you matriculated at Rice, and we take the Honor Code very seriously. The work you submit for this class is expected to be the result of your own work. Attempting to take credit for someone else's work by turning it in as your own constitutes plagiarism, as defined by the Rice Honor Code.

As stated, the guiding principle is that all graded work is to be done individually. However, you are encouraged to discuss problems with the course staff and classmates. The specific limits on access to materials varies by type of assessment.

All graded work other than exams:

Allowed

- Any material provided as part of the course, including videos, notes, and solutions.
- Your course work, including graded work and any notes.
- Any website, book, or other material. However, you may use at most the equivalent of two lines of code or math per assignment (or other work), and you must reinterpret any text in your own words. You must cite any source used.
- Communicating with course staff
- Communicating with other students in the class about general approaches to problems, but not about specific solutions.

Not allowed (an incomplete list)

- Copying large parts of solutions for any source other than what is provided as part of the course or your own work
- Copying small parts of solutions *without citation* from any source other than what is provided as part of the course or your own work.
- Communicating with other students in the class about a specific solution
- Communicating with anyone outside the class. This includes doing things like posting questions to StackOverflow.
- Posting sample solutions to any public forum.

Exams:

Allowed

- Any material provided as part of the course, including videos, notes, and solutions.
- Your course work, including graded work and any notes.
- The official reference material for any application used as part of the course. The course will provide a specific list.
- Communicating with course staff

Not allowed (an incomplete list)

- Any other website, book, or other material
- Communicating with any other person about the exam
- Posting sample solutions to any public forum.

Courses can modify the above to allow for group work.

The president of Rice University, pursuant to the university bylaws, has general control and supervision over all matters pertaining to the university and its activities, subject to the advice and approval of the board of trustees. Pursuant to that authority, the president approves all university policies as well as delegates to university leadership (including the provost, vice presidents, vice provosts and deans) the ability to develop policies and procedures for their areas of responsibility consistent with university policies.

https://policy.rice.edu/
https://ga.rice.edu/

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Students must meet both academic and professional standards to continue academic work and to graduate. In accepting admission to the MCS@Rice or MDS@Rice program, all students agree to be governed by the standards and procedures for dismissal or disciplinary action.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- A minimum cumulative grade point average of **2.67 is required** for graduation.
- Only grades of **D and higher** are counted for credit toward graduation.
- Must complete **30 credit hours** of course work.

OTHER POLICY TOPICS

- **Grading Policy** - You will receive your assessment scores and feedback through the Canvas system. You can look either at the original assessment or go via the Canvas "Grades" feature. You may request a regrading of your work if you think it was graded incorrectly. You do so by emailing the instructor with a specific description of which deductions you think were incorrect and why. Examples include that the grader overlooked or misinterpreted part of your answer. A regrade request must come within 7 days of your score and feedback being posted within Canvas.
- **Attendance** – attendance is required for a small number of courses and strongly encouraged for all live class sessions. The benefit of this program is the time spent during these live sessions, interacting with your classmates and faculty, with much of the learning coming from these interactions. You will not be penalized for not attending, but please note that attendance in these live sessions is a major part of not only learning the content, but also the experience as a whole.
- **Exam** - exams open on Thursday of the week you have your final live session and will be due at 10:00pm CST on Sunday night. There is a time limit to complete exams, typically three hours. The time limit begins when the student opens the exam. All exams will be proctored by ProctorU.com.
- **Deadlines/Late Submissions** - Homework and exams are due on Sunday nights (10:00pm CST). All other quizzes and activities will vary by course.

- o **Canvas Deadline** - Canvas has a "due by" and an "available until" deadline. The Canvas system will allow submissions until the "available until" deadline, but any submissions after the "due by" deadline will be marked late. As described, graded work will not be accepted after the posted deadline, so these two deadlines are the same.
- o **Late Submissions** - late submissions are not accepted. However, you may request an extension if there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. You do so by emailing the instructor with a justification and the designed extension length. Examples include emergency medical issues by immediate family or dependents, last-minute required work travel, and natural disasters. It is expected that students will have other classes, a job, families, or other responsibilities, and deadlines from such activities are not considered exceptional circumstances. You should request an extension as early as possible, as extension requests received after the deadline are received much less favorably.

WITHDRAWAL AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Leaves of Absence are only granted by GPS to graduate students in good standing with the university with the recommendation of the department chair. Students must have their library accounts clear before being approved for LOA. Students must pay a reinstatement fee of $150 upon their return from an official leave. Leave of Absence requests should be started at the department level. Please visit with your Student Success Advisor for more information.

PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL

Students who drop out of graduate school either before the term begins or during the term should inform their department in writing. The department should complete the Withdrawal Form (available in the GPS forms library) and submit it, with the student's letter, to GPS via the online document submission site.

Students who later wish to resume study must reapply to the university. Readmission requires the recommendation of the department chair and the approval of Graduate Studies. Accepted students must pay a readmission fee of $375.

For more information on withdrawal options, please see your Student Success Advisor.

REGISTRATION & COURSE ENROLLMENT

http://esther.rice.edu/

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Online registration for classes each semester via ESTHER is the **student's responsibility**.

PROCEDURE

1. **Clear all holds** on account prior to registration. Students with holds on their account will not be able to register. For help please visit https://registrar.rice.edu/students.
2. **Determine course schedule, required textbooks**, and **academic calendar**:
3. **Register for classes** during registration week. Students who have not registered for at least one class during registration week will be assessed a late fee. http://esther.rice.edu/
4. Register for appropriate number of credit hours.
5. Students have through the first week to add a class and through the second week to drop a class.

DEGREE WORKS

Degree Works is Rice University's official degree audit system. Use Degree Works to monitor progress towards the completion of your declared degree, major, minor, and certificate requirements.

Login to ESTHER > Student Services and Account > Degree Works.

For questions see registrar's FAQ site.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

MCS@Rice

	Core Courses (15 hours)
COMP 614	Python Programming
COMP 613	Java Programming
COMP 630	Databases
COMP 610	Software Construction (Capstone)
COMP 682	Algorithms
	Additional Requirements (15 hours)
	Area of Specialization
	Elective Courses (9 hours)

MDS@Rice

|	Core Courses {15 hours)
COMP 614	Programming For Data Science
COMP 642	Machine Learning
COMP 643	Big Data
COMP 665	Data Visualization
COMP 680	Statistics for Comp & Data Science
	Additional Requirements (16 hours)
	Elective Course
	Area of Specialization
	Capstone

**The MCS@Rice and MDS@Rice programs do not grant waivers for any course, regardless of work experience and education history. Students are required to take all courses prescribed in the given curriculum.

TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS

Transcripts can be ordered online via ESTHER or via the National Student Clearinghouse. While both methods of online transcript ordering offer 24/7 convenience and secure transactions via major credit cards, **ESTHER is the preferred method** of order submission; however, electronic transcripts must be ordered through the National Student Clearinghouse.

https://registrar.rice.edu/students/transcripts
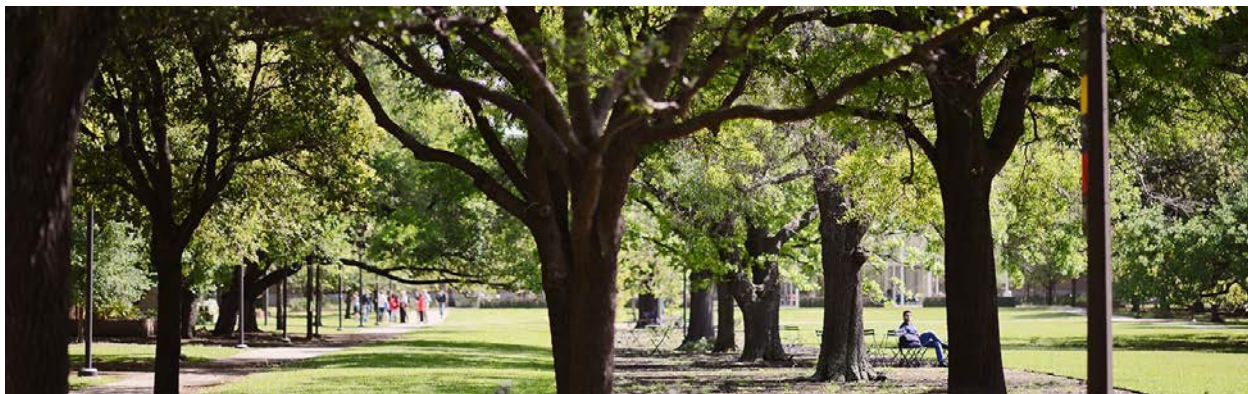
ESTHER

CASHIER / PAYMENT

https://esther.rice.edu/

ESTHER > Student Service and Account Information > "Payment Suite" button

All students are expected to pay tuition each enrollment term by the payment deadline. Please contact the Office of the Cashier with any questions regarding your bill at cashier@rice.edu or713-348-4946. Failure to pay your entire bill by the due date will result in a late payment fee. Additionally, accounts that are past due will result in a hold on your account, which will prevent you from registering for courses.

Students cannot delay tuition payment while waiting for tuition reimbursement from their company. If necessary, please either set up a payment plan (see below) or seek student loans to bridge the gap between payment due dates and company reimbursements. For those who need to submit grades to their company for reimbursement, grades are typically available approximately 4-6 weeks after the end of the term.

Billing statements – Billing statements are generated electronically and are available via your Esther account

"Failure to resolve an outstanding balance with the Office of the Cashier may result in withdrawal from Rice University by the Office of Enrollment."

14

(http://esther.rice.edu); once the e-bill has been generated, you will be notified via your Rice email address.

If someone other than yourself will be making your tuition payments, you can set them up as authorized users in the Bill Payment Suite, accessible via your ESTHER account.

PAYMENT METHODS

- **Online:**
    ESTHER > Payment Suite with an electronic check or credit card (MasterCard, American Express or Discover – **VISA is not accepted**). A convenience fee of 2.85% ($3 minimum) is charged if using a credit card. This fee is charged by the credit card servicer and covers the cost of processing credit card payments. **No fees when paying with an Electronic Check.**
- **In Person:**
    Cashier's Office (check or debit card only)
- **By Mail:**
    Check made payable to "Rice University" and includes the student's name and Rice ID number on the check.

    Mail to:

    Rice University
    Cashier's Office
    PO Box 1892
    Houston, TX
    77251-1892

- **Payment Plan:**
    Students can choose the Payment Plan option via their e-bill, during the first billing cycle of each semester. Payment plans available for current tuition, fees, and insurance.

    https://cashier.rice.edu/payment-plans

LIVE SESSIONS

Live Sessions are conducted via Zoom. Though attendance is not required for all of the courses (it is for a small number), the expectation is that all students will make every effort to attend each live session for their course. One of the primary benefits of this program is the added knowledge you construct as you interact with your peers and faculty, applynewly acquired skills and walk through your solutions during the live sessions.

Typically, live sessions are not lectures (unless otherwise noted by your Student Success Advisor or professor). Instead, a live session is a time to actively contribute in class, which is why recordings of live sessions are not available to students.

You will not be penalized for not attending, but you will miss out on additional learning opportunities and the collegiate experience as a whole.

When preparing to register for the upcoming term, verify that your desired course's live session day and time do not conflict with your personal schedule.

CLASSROOM PREPARATION

Students complete both synchronous and asynchronous material each week. Students are required to complete readings, watch lecture material, and complete assignments prior to the live session each week. Students are expected to come to class having completed all asynchronous material prior to attending each live session (unless otherwise stated by the instructor).

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Students are required to be in a quiet place for all live sessions. Background noise and excessive moving around during the session is distracting. Proper attire is required. You are required to be connected to Zoom and be ready for class at the designated class time each week. Please ensure you allow enough time to connect to the live session, both audio and video, so others are not waiting for you to connect, and class is not delayed. During class sessions, you must be able to participate using your microphone and you are expected to have your camera on for the duration of the class so that you are visible to the instructor and other students in the class, just as you would be in an in-person class.

STUDENT SYSTEMS

EMAIL

Your rice.edu email address is used for all official university communications, including correspondence from university officials, program officials, faculty, and the Student Success Team. Please be sure to check your rice.edu email regularly. If you prefer to receive email communication on another account, you may set up email forwarding to that email address.

ESTHER

The ESTHER system allows students to register for classes, add or drop classes, access grade reports, check completion of degree requirements, make payments, or perform any number of other self-serv functions.

CANVAS

Canvas is Rice's Learning Management System for all course-related needs. You will use your NetID and password to log-in to the system. In general, access to registered courses will be granted two weeks prior to the start of the first day of class each term.

OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (OIT)

Rice University's Office of Information Technology (OIT) offers many services to help you be successful. Here are just a few to get started:

NetID account: This account will be your main way to log into most systems at Rice. Some services work in conjunction with Duo. You can activate your account at https://mynetid.rice.edu/ You will need your student ID to activate your account.

Email: Graduate student email is managed externally through Rice Google mail. Official communication from the university will be sent only to this account so be sure to monitor it. Access your Rice email online at: https://myaccount.google.com with your netid@rice.edu and your Google Apps password.

Software available to you (free or discounted): Please check here before you purchase anything.

Unlimited Cloud Storage and Collaboration: Your Rice Google account comes with unlimited free storage in Google Drive to make it easy to collaborate and store your data. You also receive free unlimited storage in Box.

Canvas: Rice's learning management system will be an integral part of your courses. Help is available 24x7 for any issues.

Online info: Searchable knowledge base https://kb.rice.edu

There will be an Online Program Support Technologist that will help you navigate technical questions or issues. To contact, email onlinesupport@rice.edu or call 713-348-5575.

LOOKING FOR A JOB?

CENTER FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Career Development provides resources geared toward undergraduates, but the school hosts several career fairs throughout the year and posts jobs that can be useful to any Rice student. You will find the CCD modules in your Orientation course that will prepare you for your first meeting with a Career Advisor.

You will also want to complete your profile in Handshake – this is where you will make an appointment to visit with a Career Advisor, sign up for Information Sessions, or apply for jobs.

STUDENT RESOURCES

FONDREN

Fondren Library, located at the center of the academic quad, is a key center of learning in our educational community, providing access to scholarly information, research support, library instruction, and computing and study facilities. At Fondren Library and through our extensive Web sites, you'll find important services and resources to help you meet your academic and research goals.

UNIVERISTY ID CARDS

All students may obtain a University ID card. ID cards are issued at the Rice University Police department on campus.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The General Announcements page is the university's official catalog of courses, degrees, policies and curricular requirements.

DISABILITY RESOURCES

It is the mission of the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to be committed to providing access to the educational environment for students. The DRC also assists faculty, staff, and visitors with accommodation requests to help ensure equal access and opportunity.

STUDENT DISCOUNTS

Take advantage of student discounts by asking retailers if they offer one at checkout (ie. cinemas, Amazon prime, etc.). For a list of published discounts for Rice University students please visit: https://sa.rice.edu/hedgehopper.

Discounted technology/computer packages through Rice University are available through the CampusStore and Office of Information Technology:
https://www.bkstr.com/riceuniversitystore/shop/technology/technology-partner-sites
https://oit.rice.edu/services/hardware-software

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

RICE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS

Cashier's Office
Phone: 713-348-4946
Fax: 713-348-5851
Email: cashier@rice.edu
Web: http://cashier.rice.edu/

Center for Career Development
Phone: 713-348-4055
Email: ccd@rice.edu
Web: http://ccd.rice.edu

Disability Resource Center
Phone: 713-348-5841
Fax: 713-348-5199
Email: adarice@rice.edu
Web: http://www.drc.rice.edu

Online Program Support Technologist
Phone: 713-348-5575
Email: onlinesupport@rice.edu
Web: https://kb.rice.edu/93463

Rice University Police Department
Phone: 713-348-6000 (For Emergency and Non-Emergency Use)
Fax: 713-348-5156
Email: rupd@rice.edu
Web: http://rupd.rice.edu/

Wellbeing & Counseling Center
Wellbeing: 713-348-3311
Email: wellbeing@rice.edu
Web: https://wellbeing.rice.edu/