



RICE UNIVERSITY

**Wiess School of Natural Sciences
Department of Mathematics**

**GRADUATE STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

**Academic Year
2026–2027**

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ACADEMIC INFORMATION

This handbook outlines the academic requirements, policies, and procedures governing graduate study in the Department of Mathematics at Rice University. It is intended to provide graduate students, faculty, and staff with a clear and comprehensive reference for expectations, degree progress, and departmental processes. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with all policies described herein. This handbook supplements, but does not replace, the following official regulatory documents:

- Rice University [General Announcements](#) (GA), which serve as the authoritative source for all degree requirements, academic policies, and University regulations.
- [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) (GPS) Policies, which govern candidacy, leaves, petitions, academic standing, and thesis submission.
- [Code of Student Conduct](#), which outlines behavioral expectations for all students.
- Rice [Honor System](#), which governs academic integrity.
- [Office of International Students and Scholars](#) (OISS) Policies, which govern visa compliance and employment authorization for international students.

THE HONOR SYSTEM

Graduate students are expected to observe the provisions of the Rice University Honor System. In particular, all written examinations and certain specifically designated assignments are conducted under the honor system. The student body at Rice, through its commitment to the honor system, accepts responsibility for assuring the validity of all examinations and assignments conducted under the system. The Honor Council is responsible for investigation of all reported violations and for trial in those cases where the facts warrant. The Honor Council conducts a continuing program to orient new students and faculty members to the responsibilities and privileges of the system.

THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE

The Graduate Committee is responsible for evaluation of the academic progress of the graduate students in the Department of Mathematics. The Graduate Committee is also responsible for counseling, and most other individual academic issues of first- or second-year graduate students. Normally students with academic problems or concerns will discuss them with their advisor or the Graduate Committee Chair. For Academic Year 2026-2027, [Brandon Levin](#) will serve as the Graduate Committee Chair.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Requirements for Continued Support

Many students are supported (during the academic year) by teaching assistantships and university fellowships or research grants. However, continued support is not guaranteed. Unsupported students are responsible for the cost of tuition and fees.

Normally, students who are achieving satisfactory progress towards their degrees will be supported for five years. For students who enter our program with previous training, this figure is four years or less (depending on the training). Support beyond this time frame is decided on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Committee and the principal investigator (in the case of a research grant).

Requests for sixth-year funding must be submitted by the end of the fall semester of the fifth year and must include a detailed report on the progress towards dissertation. Such funding is not guaranteed and is contingent on available resources and satisfactory progress toward the dissertation. No student will be supported beyond the sixth year.

Students who fail to make satisfactory progress in any way may lose their funding. Some examples, any one of which constitutes failure to make satisfactory progress are: Failure to attend required classes, failure to perform TA duties satisfactorily, failure to maintain satisfactory grades, failure to pass the preliminary exams or advanced exams by their deadlines, or failure to proceed satisfactorily on thesis research.

Departmental Teaching Assignments

The department considers teaching experience an essential part of training for a graduate degree. As part of the degree program, all students must perform various duties of approximately eight hours per week (on the average) during the academic year. In particular, all students are required to be in residence at Rice, including finals unless otherwise noted. Students in their first semester are exempted from all TA responsibilities, except calculus midterm and final exam grading. All other exceptions must be sought in advance from the [Graduate Committee Chair](#), in writing.

The [Graduate Committee Chair](#) makes duty assignments each semester after consultation with dedicated teaching faculty and [Department Chair](#). There will be a faculty member in charge of each class. When a student is assigned to duties associated with a particular class, then the faculty member associated with that class becomes his/her/their teaching supervisor for that semester. The student should then immediately contact that faculty member and inquire as to the precise nature of his/her/their duties.

Grading final exams is a primary duty of all graduate students, even those teaching their own class, as well as those supported by VIGRE and RTG awards, by various internal Rice fellowships, or by grants of the faculty. It has often been the case that students teaching their own course grade their own final exams. However, when the instructors of the sections of a course arrange for a common final exam, a graduate student instructor should become part of the grading team, doing work comparable to what would be required to grade all the problems of his/her/their section.

As required by fellowship guidelines, recipients of NSF Graduate Fellowships and Ford Foundation Fellowships will not be required to perform these (teaching and grading) during their years of tenure status. However, a minimum of one year of such training is required for the Ph.D. The recipient may choose to teach a class during their tenure status. In some cases, the graduate committee may decide that recipients of other external fellowships are exempt from teaching and grading duties.

Duties of TA's

In general, TA duties include grading exams in lower division classes, running evening help sessions, holding office hours, running review sessions, writing problem solutions, and grading homework in advanced classes. Other duties of an instructional nature may be appropriate. It is very important to communicate frequently with the faculty teaching supervisor to make sure that you understand which duties are expected of you. You should also communicate any special constraints that might affect your ability to handle certain duties. If your duties are averaging more than eight hours per week, speak to your supervisor and then to the [Chair of the Graduate Committee](#). Students who are supported as TA for a sixth year should be prepared for a heavier load of duties, including but not limited to teaching a class for which they are instructor of record.

It is your responsibility to understand what is needed and when it is expected, and then to follow through. Do not assume anything, get clarification!

Classroom Teaching

Graduate students are normally expected to teach their own section of a calculus class at least once during their time at Rice. It is strongly recommended they also teach in the summer term before the academic year in which they will teach. Students are expected to acquaint themselves with the relevant guidelines for instructors in the mathematics department and at Rice more generally.

Annual progress reports

All graduate students are required to submit to the Graduate Committee and the student's academic or thesis advisor by the last day of classes in the Fall term a summary of their progress in the previous year and their goals for the subsequent year. These should be one page in length and will detail the mathematical topics they are studying, the problems they plan to work on, and techniques they would like to bring to bear. Like proposals to funding agencies (e.g., the National Science Foundation), these should be written so that research mathematicians in other fields can assess them. The student's academic or thesis advisor should submit comments to the Graduate Committee upon receiving the report.

The Committee will consider the progress of each student based on the student's transcript and summary, and the advisor's comments. A summary of the committee's view as to whether the student is making reasonable progress or, in the case of unsatisfactory progress, how and by when the deficit must be repaired, will be provided to the student in writing by the [Chair of the Graduate Committee](#) no later than 24 hours prior to the Spring semester deadline to add courses.

Dismissal, Grievance, and Petition Procedures

The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies has developed procedures for grievances and petitions, which are available at https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/rights-responsibilities/dispute_resolution/. These govern exceptions to departmental and university requirements, problem resolution, and dismissals. The department has a standing committee to hear graduate student grievances.

Tutoring Policy

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

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Course Selection

Courses for first- and second-year students will be determined by a meeting with their assigned advisor. Thereafter, the research advisor will assume this role. Some graduate students come to Rice after doing graduate work at other institutions. Such a student may be allowed to count certain courses taken elsewhere towards the departmental requirements.

For foreign students, special English courses are offered by the School of Continuing Studies, and

the Office for International Scholars and Students. For foreign students admitted with a paper-based TOEFL score less than 600, an internet-based TOEFL score of less than 90, a computer-based TOEFL score of less than 250, or an IELTS test score of less than 7, it is mandatory for them to take one of these courses. Other non-native English-speaking students have found these courses very beneficial, as verbal English is frequently harder to understand and communicate than anticipated. The department will usually pick up the cost of these courses.

Most graduate courses carry numbers at the 500- and 600-level. In some cases, courses below the 500 level may not be applicable toward Master's degree requirements, even though they may be recommended for students lacking a strong undergraduate background in a certain subject. The need for such courses may be determined by the graduate committee during a meeting with each student at the time he/she/they enter(s) graduate school, or subsequently by the student's advisor. Research, seminar, and teaching courses make up the remaining credit hours needed to meet the university requirement of 90 semester hours for the Ph.D.

All students in their second year or higher are expected to register for the Colloquium (MATH 680) and the Current Mathematics Seminar, CMS, (MATH 590). First year students should register for two credits of Supervised Reading (MATH 690) with your first year advisor, with the expectation of meeting regularly to check in. First year students must register for Teaching Seminar (MATH 591) in fall semester and second year students must register for Teaching Seminar (MATH 591) in both fall and spring semesters. MATH 690 is then generally intended for MATH graduate students pursuing reading courses with a prospective advisor or other faculty member, at early stages of her/his/their training, during fall and spring semesters. Graduate students who have not yet chosen an advisor should sign up for 9 credit hours of MATH 700 during summer semesters.

Advanced graduate students doing thesis research, who have passed their qualifying and advanced exams, should sign up for a minimum of 3 hours of MATH 800 in fall and spring semesters (the advisor will determine the actual amount of credit given out of the possible 15 hours variable credit), and a minimum of 9 credit hours of MATH 800 during summer. Please note graduate students are not permitted to take more than a total of 18 hours per semester without departmental approval.

The research course serves two main functions:

1. It helps to fulfill the number of semester hours of graduate credit that Rice requires for the Ph.D. (60 hours past the Master's).
2. A graduate student is required to take a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester in order to establish his/her/their status as a full-time student, enabling Rice to pay a stipend. Full time student status is also a visa requirement for foreign students; see the website of the [Office of International Students and Scholars](#).

Academic Record

Graduate students are expected to maintain an overall graduate-career grade average of B or better (see requirements for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D.). This average includes only grades in courses that a student takes as a Rice graduate student; and, it includes only courses that count toward the 30-hour degree requirement, or that are specifically required of the student by the graduate committee or the student's advisor. In practice, almost all Ph.D. candidates have grade point averages of B+ (3.33) or higher.

General written qualifying exams

There are 3 exams on the topics of algebra, analysis, and topology. These are typically offered 3 times a year, in August and January just before classes begin and in May just after finals. Past exams

and syllabi are available on the department webpage. Students must perform satisfactorily on all three exams by May at the end of the fourth semester. The judgment of satisfactory performance on the examination for either the M.A. or Ph.D. degree is the responsibility of the Graduate Committee.

General guidance and recommendations for qualifying exams:

1. Students should consider attempting at least one exam in August and January, and at least two in May of the first year. Starting in August of the second year, students should attempt every exam not passed at every opportunity.
2. Students should attempt all six problems when taking an exam. The Graduate Committee prefers complete solutions, with good exposition and clear logic, but students should turn in their work for each problem. There is no set score that determines a pass since some exams may end up being more difficult than others.
3. Students should choose the subjects for the exams during the first year based on individual strengths, familiarity with the subject, and advice from the faculty, especially their first-year advisor and the [Graduate Chair](#). Advice from peers regarding any aspect of the exams should be considered secondary to the advice of the faculty.

Advanced Oral Exam

Advanced Oral Exam: A PhD student is expected to complete their advanced oral exam within 6 to 12 months after passing their last written qualifying exams (if a longer timetable is required, the student and faculty advisor should communicate with the [Graduate Chair](#)). Preparation for the exam should be carried out in close consultation with the faculty advisor, and involves:

1. Choosing a special field (e.g., low dimensional topology, several complex variables, group theory, etc.)
2. Writing a syllabus: this consists of a list of specialized topics and resources (chapters of texts and research papers).
3. Choosing examination committee, which consists of the faculty advisor and a permanent or tenure/tenure-track faculty member (students may also have an instructor on the committee if the advisor thinks this might be useful).

The format of the syllabus is largely up to the faculty advisor, as is the choice of committee. Once these items have been decided the student submits all information to the Graduate Committee for final approval. The student is responsible for coordinating with the committee to schedule the exam, which typically lasts 1.5-2 hours, and reserve a room; in particular a two-hour time block should be scheduled. The exam is question/answer format and should be held in-person if at all possible (though online exams are acceptable if in-person isn't possible). The exam is over when the committee is satisfied. After the exam is over, the advisor should complete and submit the "oral exam assessment form" to the DGS within 24 hours. While students failing the advanced examination may, with the approval of the Graduate Committee, retake it on the same or possibly on a different topic, they generally are not allowed to take the advanced oral examination more than twice.

Thesis Advisors

On passage of the advanced exam, the faculty advisor assumes the role of thesis advisor. Students wishing to change their thesis advisor after the advanced exam (but prior to candidacy) should submit a request to the [Chair of the Graduate Committee](#). This should include a letter of support from the new advisor addressing whether the student must retake her/his/their advanced exam before making the change. The Graduate Committee will decide whether the change of advisor is approved and whether this is contingent on retaking the advanced exam.

Ph.D. Candidacy

Candidacy requirements are as follows: passing the written qualifying exams, and the advanced oral exam, as well as completing at least 30 hours of coursework (including 6 hours of research MATH 800 and other required courses) approved by the Graduate Committee. Candidates for the Ph.D. are expected to have attained an overall course grade average of B+ (3.33) or better. If the academic course work is of satisfactory quality, the student's oral exam committee will recommend to the [Chair of the Graduate Committee](#) that the student be admitted to Ph.D. candidacy. In less obvious situations, the decision to recommend candidacy may be postponed pending further consideration. Applications for approval of candidacy for the Ph.D. degree can be downloaded from the Internet and must be filed with the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies before the start of the 9th semester. In all cases, the final Ph.D. thesis oral examination can be given only after candidacy has been approved.

The formal petition for candidacy must include the title of the thesis approved by the thesis committee, an unofficial transcript, and a list of departmental requirements for candidacy from the General Announcements. The petition should be signed by the [Chair of the Graduate Committee](#). It is not necessary that all required courses be completed before Ph.D. candidacy is attained. Students are strongly encouraged to seek Ph.D. candidacy as soon as practicable and not wait until the time boundaries (August 15th, before the start of 5th year) are reached.

A student may apply for a Master's degree as they work towards their Ph.D. candidacy. Links to the above-mentioned forms can be found in the **Practical Information Section** of this handbook under **Procedure for Submitting Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Forms.** After the student has been admitted to Ph.D. candidacy, the principal task is to do research.

Master's Requirements and Procedures

There are two paths to a Master's degree. It is important to distinguish these, as the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies requires different paperwork in each situation. The relevant forms are available on their website.

The Non-Thesis Master can be awarded prior to doctoral candidacy. The requirements include satisfactory performance on the written qualifying exams in algebra, analysis and topology; 32 semester hours in a program approved by the Graduate Committee, of which at least 15 hours should be at the 500-level or higher and 24 hours should be taken at Rice; an average of B or better; and at least one full semester in residence at Rice University. Students seeking this degree must file a petition for a Non-Thesis Masters with the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. The Thesis Master also requires 32 semester hours in a program approved by the Graduate Committee, of which 24 hours should be taken at Rice. The written qualifying exams are not required, but a Master's Thesis must be submitted and publicly defended. Students seeking this degree must file a petition for Candidacy for a Master's Degree.

Under normal circumstances, students admitted to the doctoral program receive the Non-Thesis Master.

Ph.D. Requirements

- Complete with a grade of B or better a course of study approved by the department (students may transfer credits from another university only with the approval of the Graduate Committee, in accordance with the procedures laid out by the Registrar) • Have completed four semesters of residency at Rice.
- Pass three written qualifying examinations, covering basic material in algebra, analysis, and topology. The judgment of satisfactory performance on the general examinations for either the MA or PhD degree is the responsibility of the Graduate Committee.

- Pass an advanced examination that covers material in the student's chosen field of specialization.
- Write an original thesis on a topic chosen in consultation with a Ph.D. advisor, and present an oral defense of the thesis acceptable to the department.
- Spend two years in full time study at Rice.

Theses

The Ph.D. thesis is an exposition of the original and independent work performed by the candidate; this statement is also true of the M.A. thesis or research report, but the latter may constitute a "progress report" on research under way, rather than an exposition of completed work. It is expected that the exposition will not only detail the explicit contribution of the candidate, but in addition, will discuss the relationship of that contribution to the general body of knowledge. It is the candidate's responsibility to arrange with his/her/their committee the date of the Final Thesis Oral Examination.

DEPARTMENTAL ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES FOR LIFE EVENTS

Parental and Sick Leave

A graduate student who is expecting the birth or adoption of a child will be temporarily released from academic and instructional responsibilities as described below, as well as financially supported with a one-time payment equivalent to one month stipend, if they are the primary caregiver. It is important that the student communicate with the [Graduate Committee Chair](#) and plan for a meeting in advance of the arrival of the child to ensure timely administration of these additional benefits, as well as the student's academic advisor to ensure continued success in the graduate program. During the student's conversations with the [Graduate Committee Chair](#), they will discuss:

1. A six (6) weeks release from coursework, CMS and colloquium attendance, and TA responsibilities;
2. Postponement of departmental graduate program deadlines, for example, qualifying and advanced exam deadlines; (Note: University deadlines are fixed, however).
3. Additional time off from TA responsibilities, up to one semester, for the child's primary caregiver; and
4. Any additional financial support possibly available to the student, depending on the student's needs and department resources.

Similarly, any student who is experiencing medical issues should contact the [Graduate Committee Chair](#) to be temporarily released from academic and instructional responsibilities.

University Policies for Leave Absences

The procedure for requesting both parental and medical leave, as well as other types of interruptions of study are handled according to the guidelines in the [General Announcements](#) regarding leaves, interruptions of study, and withdrawals. The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies provides information on the types of leave available. The application form can be found in the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies [list of forms](#). These procedures will be discussed via communications with the [Graduate Committee Chair](#).

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Emergency Contacts and Safety Resources

Rice University maintains a robust network of emergency and safety services to support students on campus. In any emergency, students should immediately contact the [Rice University Police Department \(RUPD\)](#) at 713-348-6000. RUPD operates 24/7 and provides emergency response, campus patrol, and safety escorts. The [Rice Crisis Management Office](#) coordinates campus-wide emergency preparedness and issues alerts during severe weather, safety threats, and other urgent situations. Students are strongly encouraged to enroll in Rice Alert notifications and review campus emergency procedures, including evacuation routes, shelter-in-place protocols, and communication channels. The [Wellbeing and Counseling Center](#) provides confidential mental health services, including crisis intervention, individual counseling, and after-hours support through the on-call system. Students experiencing urgent psychological distress may contact the Center at 713-348-3311.

Title IX Support

Rice University is committed to maintaining a learning environment free from sexual misconduct, harassment, and discrimination. Title IX protects students from discrimination based on sex in educational programs and activities. Students who experience sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or gender-based discrimination are encouraged to seek support. Most University employees, including faculty, are mandatory reporters and must share disclosures with the Title IX Office so that students can receive appropriate resources and assistance. Confidential resources include the Wellbeing and Counseling Center and Student Health Services, whose staff are not required to report incidents to the Title IX Office. Students may contact the Title IX Office at titleix@rice.edu or 713-348-3311, or visit <https://safe.rice.edu> for reporting options and support services.

Registration Procedures

You should have received an email on how to obtain your student ID and instructions on how to set up your NetID and password. Rice's technology services are accessed by Single Sign On (SSO), which allows you to log in using your NetID and password with Duo two-factor authentication. ESTHER, is Rice's self-service web application for students to enroll and register for classes. If you haven't yet received instruction on how to set up your NetID, email graduate@rice.edu for assistance or visit <https://registrar.rice.edu/students/esther-login-duo>. If you have received your credentials, login to <http://esther.rice.edu>. For information on courses go to the Registrar's website: <https://registrar.rice.edu/students/courses>. Make sure you meet with your advisor to discuss course registration.

Accident and Health Insurance

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

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

Stipends

Mathematics graduate students standard stipend is disbursed in a bi-weekly cycle according to the payroll calendar found here: <https://controller.rice.edu/payroll-calendar>

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

Rice University has adopted iO, a centralized administrative platform for Human Resources, Payroll, and Finance. It is strongly suggested that all students confirm that their address on file is current, and that direct deposit is active. Direct deposit is set up in iO.

Please note that Payroll automatically enrolls payees in the Rice payroll card program (prepaid debit card) if direct deposit is not set up. Payroll cards are mailed out to the address on file in iO and your student account. Students' contact information is updated through iO.

Summer Research and Vacation Time

Rice Mathematics graduate stipends are awarded and paid on a 9-month academic year and a 3-month summer basis (12 month cycle).

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

Procedure for Submitting Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Forms

The following forms must be neatly and legibly filled, preferably online before printing; once all required signatures and supporting documents are gathered, turn in to the [Graduate Program Administrator](#) for submission to GPS.

[All forms](#) that must be submitted electronically include:

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

Candidacy, Oral Defense and Thesis Submission Procedures

Students must submit a Petition for Approval of Candidacy before the beginning of their 9th semester. Turn in the signed form and supporting documents to the [Graduate Program Administrator](#) for electronic submission to GPS.

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

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

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

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

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

Computers and Printers

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

Remember your password; Rice uses a Central Authentication system for almost all its online services. If you forget your password, you must contact IT at helpdesk@rice.edu to have it reset.

The departmental server (math.rice.edu) has several math packages you can access, including Matlab, Mathematica, and Magma. It also hosts the department and personal webpages. Contact the [Operations Administrator](#) who will assist you to create an account for you with IT.

The department maintains several printers for academic use:

- Basement (HBH 44, Graduate Student Lounge)
- 4th Floor (HBH 438, Math Lounge)
- 2nd Floor (HBH 215, near staff offices)

All printers support double-sided (duplex) printing; please enable this setting to conserve paper. For setup instructions, contact the [Operations Administrator](#).

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

Departmental Copying

Students may use the department's copying machine located in HBH 215 for their studies and research work. The copier also has high volume printer and scanner capabilities. Please see the department [Operations Administrator](#) in the front office for the password required to use the machine.

University Copying

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

If you have a special printing need, please contact the [Operations Administrator](#) who will assist you.

Office Keys

All keys and Rice IDs are picked up at the RUPD (Rice University Police Department) office, located in the Annex Building off University Blvd on Stockton Drive (Entrance 8).

Each student will be issued a door key to his/her/their office. Office keys and after-hours building access are arranged by the [Operations Administrator](#). After hours building access as well as access to the Grad Student Lounge (44) is with swipe of your Rice ID. At the beginning of Fall Semester RUPD will receive a key and swipe access request for you. Your Rice ID is necessary to pick up keys. Offices are routinely reassigned each academic year as students arrive and/or graduate and keys are exchanged at the RUPD office. There is a replacement cost of \$25 payable to RUPD for lost or stolen keys. Keys may not be duplicated under any circumstances. All keys must be returned to RUPD when a student permanently leaves Rice. For questions about office keys and after-hours building access please email the department [Operations Administrator](#).

Mailboxes

Each student will be issued a personal mailbox, which are located in the workroom adjacent to HBH 220. Mailboxes are routinely assigned each academic year as students arrive and/or graduate.

Student Parking

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

Supplies

Supplies that are needed for research and university work are available in the mailroom next HBH 220.

Books

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

The department also has a library on the 3rd floor room 327. These books have been donated and must be signed out and CANNOT leave the building. Books located outside of HBH 448 are free to take and do not need to be returned.

Room Reservations

If you are teaching and need a space to hold office hours or need a room for special accommodations during exams please contact the [Operations Administrator](#) who will assign a room for you.

Society Memberships and Journal Subscriptions

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

Graduate Student Association (GSA)

The [Graduate Student Association](#) (GSA) represents all degree-seeking graduate students at Rice University. Its mission is to enrich the graduate student experience by advocating for student interests, supporting community-building initiatives, and promoting graduate student wellbeing and professional development. The GSA organizes social events, provides funding opportunities, and serves as a liaison between graduate students and University leadership.

TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All graduate student travel must be approved in advance. When departmental funds are used, both the travel and the maximum reimbursable amount must be approved by the [Department Chair](#). When travel is supported by faculty research funds – whether internal faculty funds or external sponsored research funds – approval must be obtained from the sponsoring faculty member, typically the Principal Investigator (PI) of the grant or the faculty member providing the funding.

Students may use the departmental P-Card only with prior authorization from the [Graduate Program Administrator](#). Otherwise, students pay upfront and seek reimbursement. Itemized receipts must be submitted within ten business days of returning from travel and must include proof of payment (e.g.,

the last four digits of the credit card number or other payment confirmation). Travel booked without prior approval may not be reimbursed. Missing receipts may reduce reimbursement. Repeated non-compliance may affect future travel eligibility.

Supplier Setup and Reimbursement Processing

Students seeking reimbursement must be registered as suppliers in the Rice University supplier system before any payment can be issued. Students who have not completed supplier registration will not be able to receive reimbursements.

The [Graduate Program Administrator](#) manages reimbursement processing and must be copied on all approval communications. All travel and funding approvals must be documented in writing.

Pre-Travel Requirements

Before requesting departmental funding or booking travel, students must:

- Discuss travel plans with their advisor.
- Confirm academic relevance.
- Confirm funding source(s).
- Provide conference name, dates, and location.
- Provide estimated costs (airfare, lodging, registration, meals, ground transportation).
- Inquire whether conference organizers offer fee waivers or lodging support before requesting departmental funds.

Some conferences provide funding to offset participant travel costs. When the department has already paid for any portion of a student's travel (e.g., airfare, lodging, registration), any conference-issued funding is considered a reimbursement to the department, not additional personal funding for the student. Students must coordinate with the [Finance Specialist](#) when submitting conference funding checks. Students are responsible for ensuring that conference funding is turned in promptly, as these funds reimburse the department for expenses already paid on the student's behalf. Conference organizers should issue funding directly to the department whenever possible. Students should provide the following information when completing conference funding forms:

Make check payable to: Rice University

Mailing Address:

Rice University – Department of Mathematics

6100 Main Street, MS 136

Houston, TX 77005

Attn: Finance Specialist

Hotel Reservations and Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate

If you are reserving a hotel in any of the 13 states below, including Texas, you must request a tax exempt status.

Prior to traveling, you need to inform the hotel, request a hotel occupancy tax exemption, and present the Texas Hotel Occupancy and Tax Exemption Certificate upon check in and prior to making any payment.

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

form, or the [Graduate Program Administrator](#) can provide it upon request.

Participating States:

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

Airfare

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

Expense Reimbursements

To receive reimbursement for expenses the following is required:

- A detailed travel expense statement filled in its entirety (available in this [Box Folder](#) and on the [Math Finance blog](#)).
- Supporting detailed receipts - must be itemized and list the form of payment clearly.
- For Mileage reimbursement, please provide a copy of a Google map showing the route and number of miles traveled.
- Acceptance letter and any funding information from the conference.
- Approval email from the advisor, [Department Chair](#), or other sponsoring faculty member providing the funding, confirming authorization for expense reimbursement.
- Meals – individual **itemized** receipts from the restaurants are required; detailed receipts must show credit card number or the method of payment and detailed transactions e.g., food or beverage ordered etc.
- International travel receipts must include documentation of the foreign currency exchange rate for the day of purchase (or midway through the stay). Rates of exchange by date can be found [here](#).

Allowable reimbursements may include the following:

- Reasonable airfare costs - Airline ticket receipts should clearly show itemized cost of ticket and proof of payment, include boarding passes if available.
- Lodging - Hotel receipts must detail all applicable charges and clearly state room rate and taxes or lack thereof.
- Local transportation costs.
- Auto rental receipts should detail the daily rate and total cost. The cost of rental must not

exceed, and be compatible with reasonable local transportation costs. Optional rental agency car insurance will not be reimbursed; Rice is self-insured and will cover all Rice authorized domestic travel. If rental is located in a tax-exempt state, tax will not be reimbursed.

- Registration fees.
- Meals reimbursement will be limited to a per diem of \$37.50 for the first and last day of travel and \$50 for the remaining days **when funded by the Math department**. If you are traveling someplace where the cost of food is extraordinarily high and/or breakfast is not provided by the hotel or conference, or in extenuating circumstances, students are encouraged to discuss a possible increase with the [Graduate Committee Chair](#).

Departmental Purchase Card (PCard)

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

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

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

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

Exam Grading Meals Policy

Graduate students grading midterm and final exams in-person may charge up to \$20 for a meal to the department.

Meals – please ask for individual **itemized** receipt from the restaurants; detailed receipts must show credit card number or the method of payment and detailed transactions e.g., food ordered etc. Students should coordinate with the [Graduate Program Administrator](#).

Rice University is tax-exempt when the PCard is used. Students must inform vendors at the time of purchase so that sales tax is not applied. The PCard includes Rice's tax-exempt number.