



RICE UNIVERSITY

Center for Teaching Excellence

FACULTY TEACHING HANDBOOK

Center for Teaching Excellence

Rice University

Herring Hall 129

cte.rice.edu

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Introduction to the Faculty Teaching Handbook

Dear Colleagues,

Rice, in my experience, is a very rewarding place to teach. We are fortunate to be surrounded by bright and driven students, who join us from all over the globe, eager to learn and determined to use their knowledge and values in the service of a better world. As educators, we have the unique opportunity to contribute to their growth, and the responsibility to empower them to become life-long learners. This Faculty Handbook was created by the Center for Teaching Excellence staff to offer you not only a clear statement of policies and procedures that will prepare you for the academic year, but also to share with you the array of teaching resources available at Rice that can help you engage your students in the classroom.

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) is one of the most valuable resources for Rice instructors as they begin or continue their teaching and mentoring careers. The CTE is composed of professional staff with pedagogical expertise and faculty fellows representing the different academic units. In my role as the Chair of the Center for Teaching Excellence Faculty Fellows, I want to encourage you to take advantage of the resources and the community that the center provides to help you create a learning environment in which our students can thrive.

The CTE has developed extensive programming across campus, which includes the annual symposium on teaching and learning, panels and discussions on teaching innovation and pedagogical sciences, and regular reading groups, as well as training for graduate students and undergraduates from all schools and departments. In addition, the CTE supports teaching excellence at Rice by offering one-on-one classroom observations and private consultations at the request of individual faculty. But the biggest resource the CTE offers is its community of dedicated teachers who are enthusiastic, experienced, and creative in the classroom. There are many ways in which you can engage with the CTE: schedule a meeting with the CTE faculty, reach out to a faculty fellow in your school or department, peruse through the books at the CTE library, participate in a workshop, or join a reading group.

In the 10 years that I have been at Rice, I have been fortunate to meet many great colleagues that are committed to teaching excellence. I know that we all share the goal of preparing our students so that they have the technical knowledge, creativity, motivation, and integrity to solve the most challenging problems that we face as a society. Teaching our students to think critically, consider innovative solutions to complex challenges, and

work in diverse groups will continue to be an integral part of our institutional mission. I am excited to work with you as we achieve this common goal.

Welcome to the 2025-2026 academic year!

Best regards,

Emily Houlik-Ritchey, Chair of the CTE Faculty Fellows

Associate Professor of English

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of English & Creative Writing

Information about the Center for Teaching Excellence

The CTE's mission is to foster outstanding teaching through evidence-based practices, strong community building, and research in pedagogical sciences. Please visit the [CTE's website](#) for more detailed descriptions of this year's programming, along with a variety of curated resources. You may contact any faculty member using their emails listed below, by emailing cte@rice.edu, or by signing up for an appointment on [Calendly](#).

About the Center for Teaching Excellence

Faculty

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Faculty Fellows

[Faculty Fellows](#) are appointed to the CTE by the Provost based on outstanding teaching, often reflected in the receipt of teaching awards, nomination for prizes, and input from Deans and the Office of the Provost. Engineering, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences have three fellows each; Architecture, Business, and Music have three fellows in total. Nominations are solicited from deans, chairs, and CTE Fellows in the

Spring of each year, and these nominations are then submitted to the Chair of the CTE Fellows. See the CTE website for a [full list of current and past CTE Faculty Fellows](#).

Emily Houlik-Ritchey
Chair, CTE Faculty Fellows (2025-2028)
Associate Professor of English
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of English & Creative Writing
eh27@rice.edu

Faculty Programming

- [Instructor Network to Support Teaching Innovation and eLevate Learning \(INSTILL\)](#): INSTILL mini-grants provide an opportunity for faculty to do the planning and organizational work necessary to implement a concrete improvement in one of their courses. Sessions consist of consultations, independent work time, and collaboration facilitated by CTE faculty and affiliates. Participating faculty receive a nominal grant for every INSTILL session that they attend as recognition and incentive for implementing evidence-based changes in their classroom.
- [CTE Reading Group](#): Each fall and spring, the CTE leads a Reading Group on an important book in the field of teaching and learning. The CTE Reading Group is open to all faculty, staff, and graduate students at Rice and is a terrific chance to discuss current issues and research in teaching with colleagues from many disciplines.
- [Pedagogical Sciences in Practice](#): This series of presentations and panels highlights Rice faculty research in pedagogical sciences and provides comprehensive guidance for faculty and graduate students who are carrying out research on learning in their classrooms. CTE faculty and partners are available to consult at all stages of the research process, including submitting the IRB application, designing assessment tools, analyzing data, and preparing publications or presentations.
- [Social Support for Teaching at Rice \(SST@R\)](#): This series of informal gatherings serves to strengthen interpersonal connections in Rice's teaching community and enhance collaboration among faculty, staff, and graduate students.
- [Faculty Learning Communities](#): Faculty learning communities span the academic year and encourage faculty to engage with evidenced-based pedagogies in a collaborative, supportive, peer-led environment.

2025-2026 programming theme: “Creativity in the Classroom”

Preparing our students to be thought leaders and innovators will require dedicated training towards developing their abilities to tackle issues and ask novel questions creatively. To do so requires us as educators to similarly approach their instruction as a

creative act—one that models the skills we aim to cultivate in our students. In addition to our ongoing programming, we will be hosting several workshops to discuss how you might creatively reimagine instructional practices and learning environments, and foster creativity in your students.

Collaborative Consultations

- The CTE faculty are available to consult confidentially with any member of the Rice community about their **teaching**. These consultations cover a variety of topics, including course design, pedagogy, exam and assignment design, and teaching-related research.
- The CTE faculty are also available to work with **programs and departments** on campus in a wide variety of ways. We welcome the opportunity to consult with deans, department chairs, undergraduate and graduate advisors, curriculum committees, course instructors, and others on issues of curriculum design, teaching, major/minor design, course design and assessment, evaluation, and research.
- The CTE is a hub for teaching-related research on campus, and welcomes the opportunity to consult with individual faculty and departments on **research projects in pedagogical sciences**.

Campus-wide Teaching & Learning Events

- [Annual Teaching and Learning Symposium](#): We encourage all members of the Rice community to join our annual Symposium on Teaching and Learning held each January. The Symposium provides space for colleagues to share insights across disciplines and explore current scholarship on teaching and learning.
- The CTE also hosts the [University Awards Ceremony](#), in collaboration with the Offices of the President and the Provost. This celebration of our faculty's commitment to teaching, their mentorship of students and colleagues, their outstanding scholarship, and their service to the university takes place at the end of each academic year.

Infrastructure Related to Teaching

General Technology Resources

[Learning Environments](#), under the Office of Information Technology, oversees teaching-related technology. They offer a variety of workshops and resources through

their [Training Center](#). They also maintain a repository of information on [AI at Rice](#), including details on Rice's partnership with Grammarly.

ESTHER

[ESTHER](#) is the Rice site for both student and faculty services. For faculty, this includes:

- DegreeWorks for Advisors: a degree-tracking tool that allows major and minor advisors to see a student's progress toward their degree. It also allows faculty to view a student's transcript (for general advising, letters of recommendation, etc.). Note that you will only be able to view students for whom you have some kind of official role (instructor, advisor, etc.).
- Course Syllabus: this is where you post a copy of your syllabus each semester.
- Course Demand: illustrates the number of students who are interested in your course (during the "course shopping" period) as well as the number of open seats and the length of the waitlist (once registration is open).
- Registration Restriction Overrides: electronic alternative to a Special Registration Form; this section allows instructors to waive certain course requirements, such as pre-requisites or seat limits.
- Course Roster: view your current rosters and waitlist(s).
- Grade Entry: for both mid-term (first-year students only) and final grades
- Grade Change Request: if you discover that you made an error in calculating a student's grade after that grade has already been submitted, you may submit a grade change request to the Registrar. Please consult the [Faculty Grading Guidelines](#) for more information.
- Course and Instructor Evaluation Display: repository of student evaluations accessible in perpetuity to anyone affiliated with Rice.

Canvas

Canvas is Rice's Learning Management System. Canvas is supported by the [Learning Environments](#) team.

- When you log in to Canvas with your NetID, you will see separate sites for each of your courses.
- Each course site allows you to post a syllabus, announcements, course content (such as PowerPoint slides or videos), assignments, and grades. You can also administer surveys and quizzes through Canvas.
- Options for Canvas training sessions, including workshops, one-on-one appointments, and recorded trainings, are available through the [Canvas Training Calendar](#) under "Help and Resources".

GradeScope

Gradescope is a grading tool that can be integrated into Canvas. There are options for students to submit assignments directly to Gradescope, or for instructors to scan and upload hard copies of submitted assignments. Using Gradescope streamlines the grading process so that you can be more efficient in managing assignments and assessments. For more information, take a look at Gradescope's [Getting Started Guide](#).

Navigate

[Navigate](#) is an online tool that connects students to faculty, staff, and university resources. It allows faculty to view academic information about students who are enrolled in their classes, and to identify an individual student's academic support team if needed; you will only be able to view students who are enrolled in your courses unless you have an additional support role. Faculty who also serve as advisors (major/minor advisors, Divisional Advisors, etc.) can also view student transcripts, send emails or text messages to groups of students, take notes on your meetings with students (visible to other faculty and staff with access), and set up appointment blocks for students to schedule advising appointments.

Setting up office hours in Navigate

1. Log in to Navigate at <https://riceuniversity.campus.eab.com/>
2. On your Dashboard, go to the tab labeled "My Availability"
3. Click on "Actions" then "Add Time"
4. Edit your care unit, location, and services as follows:
Care unit: Faculty Advising
Location: Faculty Office
Service: Office Hours. If you are also serving as a major advisor in your department, you may also use the "XX Major Advising" service to set up time slots specific to major advising.
5. Check the box "Add this availability to your personal availability link" if you want to generate an individualized link that students can click on to set up an appointment with you. This link can be included in your email signature line or on your syllabus, for example.
6. To sync your availability and appointments with an external calendar, click on the Calendar icon in the left-hand menu, then go to Settings and Sync >> Sync Settings. Detailed instructions for syncing Outlook, Google, and iCal calendars are available in the Navigate help center.

Once you have set up available time blocks, students can schedule appointments with you by clicking on your personal availability link.

Policies and Procedures Related to Teaching

In this section, you'll find policies and procedures related to teaching, including how to find your course schedule, rosters, and classroom information; important semester dates; resources for creating your syllabus; and university-wide policies related to teaching.

Schedule

Find Course Schedule

To find your course information see the [Rice University Course Schedule](#). Your course's meeting location cannot be found on this publicly facing website and is housed in [Esther](#) by accessing your "Course Rosters."

Find Academic Calendar

The Registrar's Office has a [Google Calendar](#) you can subscribe to with all semester dates.

Important Dates

Important Dates for Fall 2025 (updated August 2025)	
First Day of Class	Aug 25, 2025
Labor Day (No Scheduled Classes)	Sep 1, 2025
Midterm Recess (No Scheduled Classes)	Oct 13, 2025 - Oct 14, 2025
Thanksgiving Break (No Scheduled Classes)	Nov 26, 2025 - Nov 28, 2025
Last Day of Instruction	Dec 5, 2025
Study Days (No Exams or Assignments)	Dec 6, 2025 - Dec 9, 2025
Final Exams	Dec 10, 2025 - Dec 16, 2025
Last Day of the Semester	Dec 16, 2025
Grades Due	Dec 23, 2025

Important Dates for Spring 2026 (updated August 2025)	
First Day of Class	Jan 12, 2026
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (No Scheduled Classes)	Jan 19, 2026
Spring Recess (No Scheduled Classes)	Feb 12, 2026 - Feb 13, 2026
Spring Break (No Scheduled Classes)	Mar 14, 2026 - Mar 22, 2026
Last Day of Instruction	Apr 24, 2026
Study Days (No Exams or Assignments)	Apr 25, 2026 - Apr 28, 2026
Final Exams	Apr 29, 2026 - May 5, 2026
Last Day of the Semester	May 5, 2026
Undergraduate Commencement	May 9, 2026
Grades Due	May 12, 2026

Additional Information about Schedules (from the [Registrar](#))

Course schedule drafts for the next semester are sent in month 2 of the current semester (e.g. the draft for Fall 2025 was sent in February 2025). The finalized schedule is posted at the end of month 3 so that undergraduates can start browsing the courses before registration officially opens.

Standard time blocks

MWF classes meet for 50 minutes per session; TR classes meet for 75 minutes per session. Times that are in high demand are designated “prime time,” and the number of courses that departments can offer in these prime time slots is limited. A full list of meeting times, as well as “prime time” designations, is available [here](#). Toggle the options in the drop-down menus to see the available time slots for your course configuration. Consult with the person in your department who is responsible for course scheduling for more information.

Final exam scheduling

The final exam schedule is usually posted during Week 8 of the semester. All undergraduate courses are assigned final exam times, even if no final exam will be given by the instructor. To view the assigned time for your final exam, search for your course in the [Course Schedule](#), then toggle the “Show Final Exam” button in the Course Meeting/Location column.

Rosters and Registration

Find Course Roster in Esther or Canvas

In [Esther](#):

- Faculty Services tab >> Course Roster
- Includes pictures, name, student ID, year, major, college, and netID
- Can be downloaded as an Excel file

In [Canvas](#):

- Found under “People” in each Canvas course page
- Updated from Esther twice a day
- May include students’ self-designated pronouns

Waitlists

Before registration opens, you can choose to create a waitlist for your courses by working with your department coordinator. Initially, you have two basic options:

- No waitlist: If your course fills, students can only register with your approval via special registration.
- Waitlist: If your course fills, students can place themselves on a waitlist that populates the course in the order of the waitlist. HOWEVER, the waitlist will be automatically purged by the Registrar during week 2 of add/drop. Once this has been done, students will be able to add classes without a wait-list on a space available basis or will need to obtain the permission of instructor, via a Special Registration Form ([Undergraduate](#) or [Graduate](#)), to add a closed class. For more information, please see the [Registrar’s Waitlist FAQ](#) page.

Special Registration

- Special Registration Forms are used for add/drops, to grant instructor permission to enroll, to audit a course, or to override a prerequisite, (see the [Registrar’s website about Special Registration](#).)
- You now have the option to complete the special registration process online, via the Faculty Services tab in [Esther](#). Click on the Faculty tab and select “Registration

Restriction Overrides”; then select the semester from the dropdown and enter the SO number for the student you would like to special register. You should then see options to override pre-requisites, seat limits, etc.

- Note: if your course is full, students will almost certainly approach you about the possibility of special registration. You should think about how you will handle these requests before the first day of classes.

Classrooms

Find Class Location

- Your course’s assigned classroom is listed on your Course Rosters in [Esther](#).
- For building codes and descriptions, see the [Registrar’s website](#).
- [Printable campus map](#). You can also search for buildings using [Google Maps](#).

Classroom Information

To see images of campus buildings and classrooms, and to learn about room capacity and available technology, refer to the [Classroom Technologies website](#) managed by the [Office of Information Technology: Learning Environments](#).

Classroom assignments are usually released about 1 month before the start of classes, and can be viewed via your “Course Rosters” on [Esther](#).

Non-scheduled Class Meetings

- To request the use of classroom/computer labs for activities for *non-scheduled* class meetings, use the [Online Room Request Form](#).

Your Syllabus

Faculty Senate Requirements

From the Faculty Senate’s [Syllabus Standards](#) Page:

Faculty members and course instructors are required to provide a course syllabus to students on or before the first day of class. The syllabus should be uploaded into [ESTHER](#), and may additionally be distributed in hard copy and/or on [Canvas](#). For archiving purposes, updated versions of the course syllabus can be uploaded into ESTHER through the end of the semester. Each syllabus must include the following information:

1. Instructor’s name, office number, and email address.
2. Office hours or a statement of either an “open-door” policy or hours by appointment.
3. Overall course objectives and expected learning outcomes.
4. Grade policies.

5. Absence policies.
6. List of required texts.
7. Special materials required for the class, if any.
8. Number of required examinations and papers.
9. Statement of expectations regarding coursework and the [Rice Honor Code](#).
10. A statement encouraging any student with a disability that requires accommodation to contact both the course instructor and [Disability Resource Center](#).
11. A statement on mental health resources, including a link to the [Wellbeing and Counseling Center](#), encouraging students to reach out to the Wellbeing and Counseling Center with any mental health concerns.

It is permissible to include a statement indicating that the information contained in the course syllabus, other than the absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

The [Center for Teaching Excellence](#) provides a syllabus outline that aids in meeting the above requirements.

Sample Statements for Syllabi

The CTE provides [sample syllabus statements](#) for

- Disability Accommodations
- Mental Health
- Title IX Responsible Employee Notifications
- Religious Accommodations
- A variety of options related to generative AI

Additional Syllabi Resources

The CTE's [Course Workload Estimator](#) can help you estimate the workload for your course(s).

Textbooks and Course Materials

- To submit your textbook requirements or other required/recommended course materials, log in to [Canvas](#) and click on Account >> Follett Discover.
- If students have financial limitations that prevent them from purchasing course materials, they can submit a request for funds through the [Access and Opportunities Portal](#).

Esther Upload

- Once your syllabus is complete, you must upload it to the syllabus database in the Esther Faculty Services tab.
- You can choose to make your uploaded syllabus public. If your syllabus is public, it can be downloaded by anyone via courses.rice.edu; if your syllabus is not public, it can only be viewed by those in the Rice community via Esther.

Attendance

Rice students are expected to attend all activities for all classes for which they are registered. However, whether attendance is measured and/or graded is at the discretion of the instructor. For more details on excused absences and scheduling conflicts, please refer to the [General Announcements](#).

Grading and Evaluation

More detailed information on [Faculty grading guidelines](#) and [grade designations](#) are outlined in the General Announcements.

Assigning Letter Grades

Your course syllabus should clearly explain how assessments are weighted and how letter grades will be assigned (i.e. what percentage or number of points constitutes an A+, A, A-, B+, etc.).

Standard Grading Scale for GPA

Grade Points

A+	4.0	C+	2.33
A	4.0	C	2.0
A-	3.66	C-	1.66
B+	3.33	D+	1.33
B	3.0	D	1.0
B-	2.66	D-	0.66

Undergraduate Pass/Fail Option

- Students may designate a limited number of courses as “pass/fail”.

- Instructors have no knowledge of this designation and grade the students as if they were taking the course for a grade.
- For more information, see the [Registrar's website on Pass/Fail options](#).

Mid-Semester ("Pumpkin" and "Bunny") Grades

- First-year undergraduate students receive mid-semester grades so that they can seek academic assistance or drop a class.
- These grades are not recorded on the student's transcript nor calculated in the grade point average, but they are available to the students' academic advisors.
- Faculty who teach first-year students will be asked to submit these grades during the seventh week of the semester.
- These grades are entered like final grades (see below).

Other Progress Reports

- The Office of Academic Advising for Athletics requests periodic progress reports for all athletes at designated points throughout the semester using Navigate.
- If you are concerned about a student in your course, you may also submit a spontaneous progress report through Navigate at any point in the semester. Within your course roster on Navigate, select the student's name and then click "Issue an Alert"; based on the reason for the alert, the information will be sent to the appropriate support office. Another option is to reach out to the college Magister to let them know that you have a concern.

Final Exams

- Final exams are not required.
- An exam is considered a final exam if:
 - It covers more than the material learned since the previous exam, or
 - It is the only exam in the course, or
 - It requires comprehensive knowledge of the entire course
- Exams that meet any one of these criteria may ONLY be given during the designated final exam period. In other words, a final exam may not be given before the end of classes.
- Additional details regarding final exams are available in the [General Announcements](#).

Final Grade Entry

- Toward the end of the semester, the Registrar will send a grade entry roster via email. This will include CRNs and Grade Entry PINs for each of your courses.

- To submit final grades (or mid-term grade for first-year students), go to ESTHER >> Faculty Services >> Grade Entry.
- Select the term and enter the CRN and Grade PIN to pull up the grade entry table. Letter grades are selected from a drop down menu for each student.
- Other (OT) grades should only be used if a student has completed the course, but does not show up and/or complete the final exam.
- Incomplete (INC) grades should be used if the student has contacted you in advance about circumstances beyond their control that prevent them from completing their work within the normal semester time frame. The decision to offer an Incomplete is at the discretion of the instructor.
- See the [Registrar's website on final grade entry](#) for more information.

Course and Instructor Evaluations

- Faculty can access their student evaluation results via the Faculty Services tab in [Esther](#).
- For each course, you will have a Course Evaluation as well as an Instructor Evaluation. Quantitative ratings are on a scale from 1 (Excellent) to 5 (Poor), so lower numbers represent a higher "quality".
- If you believe there is a course-wide inaccuracy in your evaluations, you may also submit a response to student narratives for a specific course. You are limited to one response per class, and your response will be viewable by anyone who views the qualitative evaluations in Esther. To submit a response, follow the instructions found on the [Registrar's website](#).
- Unlike many other institutions, Rice University makes all end-of-semester student course evaluations (qualitative and quantitative) available to all students and instructors. Students are able to review and use this information when making their course selections during registration. Historically, qualitative comments are often written as if they are addressed to future students rather than to the instructor themselves; HOWEVER, students now receive a notice regarding how these evaluations are used towards tenure and promotion decision processes to encourage higher quality and fair responses.
- The CTE recommends that instructors discuss the importance and use of student evaluations with their students before the evaluation period begins to emphasize their responsibilities in the process. The timing of the evaluation period can be found on the [Registrar's website](#).

Student Support Services

In this section, you'll find information about student support services, including offices on campus that support students academically, physically, and mentally so they can thrive at Rice. College Magisters and Core Teams are a good first point of contact if you are worried about a student but aren't sure what support they need. You can view a student's residential college and Magister(s) in their Navigate profile.

Academic Support Services

Office of Academic Advising

The [Office of Academic Advising](#) supports Rice students both before and after they declare a major. Faculty advising is supported by professional staff as well as peer student advisors, and OAA offers training and resources to all advisors. Specialized advising is available for new and transfer students, students who are undecided about their major; students who are pursuing health or law professional degrees; student athletes; and students in need of academic support.

- Email: aadv@rice.edu
- Phone: 713-348-4060

Divisional Advisors

- [Divisional Advisors \(DAs\)](#) are faculty members who provide academic advising to students who have not yet declared a major. DAs are affiliated with the Residential College system and are divided by school of study; specifically, each college has two DAs for each Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Engineering; one DA each for Humanities and Business; and shared DAs for Music and Architecture.
- You may refer students to their DA for general advising-related questions, or you may reach out to the DA directly if you have an academic concern about a student.
- You can view the DA team assigned to any particular student by viewing their "Advising Team" information in the student's Navigate profile. By default, DAs for all divisions will be listed; to find the appropriate DA, determine the division in which the student is officially declared.

The Program in Writing and Communication

The [Program in Writing and Communication](#) (PWC) provides undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty with the tools they need to communicate effectively through writing, speaking, and visual communication. PWC oversees a number of academic programs, including the First-Year Writing Intensive Seminars (FWIS) and the Center for Academic and Professional Communication (CAPC).

- All students must complete Rice's Writing and Communication requirement, which includes a FWIS, which is a content-based seminar for first-year students that can focus on any topic, and in which writing and communication pedagogy plays a significant role in assignments and grading. All faculty members are welcome to teach FWIS courses; if you are interested in learning more about developing a FWIS, visit the [FWIS website](#) or contact Dr. David Messmer, Director of the FWIS Program.
- CAPC offers consultations with faculty about how to teach communication skills or integrate writing or presentations into your course; workshops on effective communication skills for your students; and on-demand or by-referral support services.

Office of Academic Support for Undergraduate Students

The new [Office of Academic Support for Undergraduate Students](#) (OASUS) works closely with faculty and other key units to support students' academic goals and contribute to an inclusive learning community at Rice. There are a number of faculty resources that described in more detail on OASUS' website including: drop-in study, study groups, TA training, and accessible testing options, among others.

- Email: oasus@rice.edu

The Digital Media Commons

The [Digital Media Commons](#) supports the creation and use of multimedia in education, scholarship, and creative expression. They provide hands-on training, assistance with digital projects, and access to the tools (including checking out equipment and use of audio and video studios) needed to create digital audio, video, PowerPoint presentations, webpages, and more.

Student Disability Resource Center

Rice University's [Student Disability Resource Center \(SDRC\)](#) provides services to ensure equal access to the educational environment for undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities. The SDRC also collaborates with faculty and staff to support disability accessibility and inclusion across the university. Students who believe they may need accommodations are encouraged to contact the SDRC to discuss their needs and begin the application process. Each accommodation request is reviewed on an individualized, interactive process. The application process is outlined [here](#).

A student with a documented disability and approved accommodations will provide faculty with a letter on SDRC letterhead developed collaboratively between the student and the SDRC. This letter outlines the approved accommodations. Faculty with questions about implementing accommodations or supporting a student are encouraged to contact the SDRC:

Phone: 713-348-5841

Email: sdrc@rice.edu

Disability-related requests for faculty, staff, and postdoctoral scholars are coordinated through Human Resources (713-348-2232).

Office of Student Success Initiatives

The [Office of Student Success Initiatives](#) (SSI) supports Rice undergraduate students through high engagement strategies (such as proactive advising) to help facilitate students' successful transition, retention, and graduation from the university. Programs offered through SSI include:

- [First Year Programs](#), including new student orientation (known at Rice as "O-Week").
- [Programs for first-generation and limited-income students](#).
- [Rice Emerging Scholars Program](#) is a residential academic program designed to help first-year students for the challenging pace and rigor of STEM education at Rice.

Office of International Student Support

Did you know that approximately 25% of the degree-seeking students at Rice are international students? That's over 2250 students (12% of the undergraduate student body, and 40% of the graduate student body), from 113 countries and regions around the world!¹ The [Office of International Students and Scholars](#) supports all Rice international students and academic departments on matters related to immigration, international compliance, and cultural adaptation.

- Phone: 713-348-6095
- Email: oiss@rice.edu

¹ Rice University Office of Institutional Effectiveness. 2024. "Rice at a Glance." Retrieved on August 17, 2025 from <https://oie.rice.edu/rice-glance>

Multicultural Center (MCC)

The [Multicultural Center](#) strives to coordinate and implement comprehensive educational, cultural, and social programs designed to emphasize inclusiveness while promoting intercultural dialogue, awareness, and respect for diversity. The MCC also coordinates with cultural student organizations and clubs, such as the Black Student Association, the Hispanic Association for Cultural Enrichment at Rice, and the South Asian society.

- Phone: 713-348-5124
- Email: mino@rice.edu

Health and Wellbeing

There are a variety of services available to Rice undergraduate and graduate students to support their mental and physical wellbeing. Please see [Guiding Students to Get Help](#), produced by the Wellbeing and Counseling Center, for advice on how to encourage students to seek mental health support.

- If a student is experiencing a psychological or medical crisis that requires medical attention, call Rice Emergency Medical Services ([Rice EMS](#)) or Rice University Police ([RUPD](#)) immediately: [713-348-6000](tel:713-348-6000) (24/7).
- If a student is experiencing a crisis that is not an emergency, contact the following:
 - For mental health, sexual misconduct, or other concerns, contact the [Wellbeing and Counseling Center](#) at [713-348-3311](tel:713-348-3311) (24/7).
 - For physical health concerns, contact [Student Health Services](#) at 713-348-4966.
 - For general concerns about an undergraduate student, contact the student's [College Magister](#).

Wellbeing Office

The [Student Wellbeing Office](#) offers individual support resources and education, and provides a first point of contact for students who have wellbeing concerns.

- Phone: 713-348-3311 (24/7)
- Email: wellbeing@rice.edu

Counseling Center

The [Rice University Counseling Center](#) offers free, confidential support provided by a diverse team of psychologists, social workers, counselors, and a consulting psychiatrist.

- Phone: 713-348-3311 (24/7)

Student Health Services

[Student Health Services](#) provides preventative and outpatient clinical care for undergraduate and graduate students. Appointments are included in student feeds, and no insurance is required.

Access and Opportunity Portal

[The Access and Opportunity Portal](#) coordinates requests for financial support for domestic and international undergraduate students.

- The Residential College Accessibility Fund is intended to support students' participation in residential life at Rice, such as helping students pay for tickets for, or transportation to, campus-wide events, or the costs of trips with their peers.
- The Access & Opportunity Portal supports academic- and course-related expenses not covered by financial aid, such as textbook purchases, laptop repairs or purchases, interview travel, accommodations, or attire, and expenses related to commencement.
- Finally, the Dean of Undergraduates office offers funding for emergency financial situations for students in active crisis with a need for an immediate, same-day resolution (such as in cases of eviction, upfront costs for emergency surgeries).
- Email: aop@rice.edu (Mon-Fri, 9am – 5pm)

The SAFE Office

The [SAFE Office](#) offers care management and navigation to students who report an incident of interpersonal violence, as well as to students who have been accused of perpetrating interpersonal violence. The SAFE Office also provides prevention education on topics related to sexual and domestic violence, sexual harassment, stalking, and Title IX and Clery Act requirements.

- Phone: 713-348-3311 (24/7)
- To report an incident of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, or other concerns related to sexual or interpersonal misconduct, please visit the [Equal Opportunity Services Office](#) website.

Additional Laws and Policies

The following section lists and briefly describes some of the laws, regulations, and policies that impact Rice University faculty and their interactions with students. Please note that this section offers a general overview of the policy and is not intended to substitute for university-required training. For more information about each policy, please see the associated links, contact the relevant office, or review the [Rice University Faculty Handbook](#).

FERPA Guidelines

[Note: The following policy language originates from the [Rice University Faculty Handbook](#).] More information on FERPA is available through the [Office of the Registrar's FERPA website](#).

Faculty should also be aware that students have a clearly established right to privacy under the Federal Family Educational Right to Privacy Act (or Buckley amendment). The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) generally provides that the education records of students -- including grades, graded assignments or exams, records, and letters of recommendation -- may not be disclosed to third parties without the student's written consent. For an undergraduate or graduate student, parents are considered to be "third parties" according to this law, and a faculty member would violate FERPA if he or she were to discuss the student's grades with the parents without the student's written consent.

Disability Accommodations and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

[Note: The following policy language originates from the [Rice University Faculty Handbook](#).]

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require that Rice provide accommodations for individuals whose disabilities impact them in their pursuits at the university. Rice, accordingly, provides reasonable accommodations such as adaptive technology and equipment, including assistive listening units and Braille embossers, audio texts for the blind, and other accommodations and assistance based on documented needs.

Title IX and Reporting Gender-Based Misconduct

Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual misconduct, sexual violence, and relationship violence. This policy applies to all

Rice University students at all times, whether they are on- or off-campus, and applies regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Nearly all Rice University employees (including all faculty and instructors) have a duty to report incidents that violate Title IX to the appropriate office. If a student reports an incident of gender-based misconduct, make sure the student is safe and has their immediate needs tended to (including medical, police, or other crisis services).

- To report an incident of gender-based misconduct, call 713-348-3311 or email titleixsupport@rice.edu and you will be connected with the appropriate office.
- To learn more about Title IX definitions and reporting requirements, please see the [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

If a student asks for confidentiality, or if you sense that a student may disclose information that you will be required to support, let the student know that you are required to report violations of Title IX. Inform the student that if they want to speak to someone confidentially, they can speak to designated “Confidential Employees” who are professional staff in the [Rice Counseling Center and Rice Health Services](#).

- Phone: 713-348-3311 (24/7)
- Email: wellbeing@rice.edu

Rice has also contracted for confidential off-campus support services. You or the student may call these services directly, or may call RUPD or the Rice Counseling Center for assistance in contacting or arranging transportation to one of these services:

- Houston Area Women’s Center: 713-528-7273
- The Montrose Center: 713-529-003

Religious Observances and Course Accommodations

[Note: The following policy language originates from the Dean of Undergraduates’ [Guidelines for Religious Accommodations](#).]

Both Rice's policy of non-discrimination on the basis of religion and our core values of diversity and inclusion require instructors to make reasonable accommodations to help students avoid negative academic consequences with their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements.

Every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is never acceptable for an instructor to compel a student to choose between religious observation and academic work.

Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the coursework required during the period of the absence. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent.

Honor Code

[Note: The following policy language originates from the [Honor Code Faculty Handbook](#) and the [Honor System Handbook](#).]

History and Content of the Honor Code

Rice University's Honor Code, which applies to all students, has been in place since 1912. All assignments submitted by undergraduates, and all assignments submitted by graduate students relating to coursework are covered by the Honor Code. Individual instructors and faculty members can and should decide how the Honor Code applies in each assignment in their course and clearly communicate this expectation to their students. However, it is the student's responsibility to understand how the Honor Code applies to each assignment, and questions should be raised with the instructor before submitting the assignment.

Faculty Responsibilities

- Faculty members are required to report suspected violations of the Honor System by contacting the [Honor Council](#) officers.
 - Email: honor@rice.edu
 - Phone: 713-348-2426
- The Honor Council will notify the student that a violation has been reported; your name is not revealed to the accused student unless the case proceeds to a hearing.
- Determine any grades as if there were no violation. Adjustments will be made retroactively if needed, based on the outcome of the case.

Other Resources and Information for Faculty

Emergency Preparedness

Rice University uses several measures to communicate emergency information to faculty, staff, and students. This system is known as "Rice Alert," and you can sign up in a number of ways:

- Receive text messages or emails (designated in Esther)
- Find updates at emergency.rice.edu
- Use the Everbridge app for [iOS](#) and [Android](#)

Emergency Assistance

If you need emergency assistance while on campus, including medical emergencies, call Rice University Police Department and/or Rice University Emergency Medical Services.

- Phone: 713-348-6000 (24/7)
- Campus Phone: x6000 (24/7)
- Use one of the blue-light phones found on campus.

Technology Solutions and Services

[Technology Solutions and Services](#) (TSS) supports a number of accounts, services, hardware and software, and teaching and learning tools available to Rice faculty. This includes technology and devices you find in your classroom, as well as Zoom and Canvas. TSS is your central point of contact for technical support across Rice's campus.

[TSS's Learning Environments](#) group offers trainings, workshops, and one-on-one support with Rice's learning management tools, such as Canvas, Zoom, and Kaltura.

- Classroom technology assistance is available Monday through Friday, 7am - 9pm. Call 713-348-4989 and someone will be available to help you remotely.
- Email: teaching@rice.edu
- Phone: 713-348-4989

For help with hardware or other general concerns about technology, contact OIT.

- The TSS Help Desk is located in the Mudd Computer Science Building. The Help Desk hours are Monday through Friday from 8am - 5pm (except holidays).
- Phone: 713-348-HELP
- Email: help@rice.edu
- Request Help form: tss.rice.edu/request-help

Rice Digital Learning

[Rice Digital Learning \(RDL\)](#) broadens access to Rice University's world-class education, connecting learners worldwide while enhancing the University's reach, reputation, and impact, and empowering faculty to innovate teaching and learning. RDL leverages cutting-edge digital tools and evidence-based practices to offer personalized, flexible learning opportunities that advance academic excellence. RDL leads the University's digital and online learning strategy and manages Rice's online programs and courses listing in a central online platform. [Rice Digital Learning faculty resources](#) (available on the RDL webpage and supported by the RDL team) include program design and strategy, course creation and development, digital marketing and outreach, video production, recruitment and personalized engagement, and student success initiatives for online

master's and professional programs. RDL directly supports a range of offerings, including online master's programs, certificates, on-campus hybrid courses, and non-credit online courses, as well as [programs delivered through partnerships with Coursera](#) and edX.

Library Support Services

[Fondren Library](#) is the main library on campus. Fondren offers a number of instruction services that may help in your teaching, including:

- Electronic and physical course reserves
- Digital Media Commons (develop skills for multimedia projects)
- GIS/Data Center (work with geographic data)
- Kelley Center (access government information, statistical data, maps)
- Research Data Services (organize, clean, and visualize data)
- Woodson Research Center--Primary Sources (archives, rare books, and digital humanities tools)

Subject Librarians can help answer reference questions, prepare printed and electronic library guides, instruct students on how to use electronic media, and advise on research. Please see the [Subject Librarians' website](#) to see a full list of Subject Librarians and to learn more about their services.

Faculty Teaching Awards

At the end of each academic year, the CTE hosts the university's formal awards ceremony, which provides an opportunity for Rice administrators, faculty, staff, and students to celebrate the contribution of Rice instructors who have devoted themselves to both their students and to the craft of teaching. For descriptions of the various teaching awards, and to see a list of previous years' award winners, please see the [CTE's website](#).